

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Coach Darian DeVries

Press Conference



Q. You have multiple players, junior college players who received additional eligibility thanks to the court proceedings. Curious what your history with JuCo players is, how often have they come through your system? Would you like to see the NCAA take the tack that that eligibility for junior players doesn't count towards Division I, doesn't start their clock going forward - that's the rule - because that's still up in the air?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, to my understanding that ruling is still a little bit up in the air. I would think that was just a one-time ruling. Don't quote me on that. So most of our guys right now that came from the junior college level are still within their normal framework of eligibility.

But for us, they've been an awesome addition for us just because of the experience they have from the multiple spots they've been. We're pretty excited about that.

But moving forward, I'm not sure how that's going to play out for all those guys.

Q. What do you feel you guys are best at right now, or what area are you most confident in, and what area do you feel least confident or that needs the most work right now?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, what I think we're best at right now is just their coachability. From the first week in June until now, they've continued to just want to learn, want to get better. Like every week, you have good days and bad days, from a practice standpoint, that you feel like you did some things really well and other days maybe not as well, but that's also part of the preseason.

But I love how coachable they are, and I love how unselfish we play. I think even our communication, our connectivity shines through a little bit not only on the offensive end but the defensive end. That's starting to really come together as we've gotten further and further through the summer and fall.

I like the progress we've made. I think we have a lot of guys that have shown throughout practice that -- we have multiple guys that can score the basketball so you're not just relying on one or two guys every night. I think we have a lot of different ways we can score, a lot of different guys that can shoot the ball. So I'm excited about that piece.

And then defensively, I like how they bring great enthusiasm and energy to the defensive end, so that's something that we have to be really good at to be good on the defensive side because we're not going to be overly big and long and athletic, so we've got to be very sound in what we do from a discipline standpoint and then just be very aggressive in the way we approach it.

Q. For you in your first year leading the program, what would define a successful year for you? What defines success for this group?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I think I said this even from our press conference; it's not really about wins and losses. I think the successes coming from are we doing what we feel like we need to do every day, from a mindset, from an approach, and are we getting to where we want them to get to from that standpoint. Everything we value, whether it be in practice, on the floor, off the floor, are they doing those things. I like what they've done to this point.

I've always been a strong believer in if you can get a group connected enough in all the little things, the discipline things, the toughness things, you can have a group that can win a lot of games, and that's our goal.

Q. Curious how you're feeling about the health of your team right now. I noticed there was a couple guys that didn't participate today. Are they in long-term situations or do you expect them to be healthy when the season starts?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, it looks like we're investors in boots right now (chuckling).

Some of them are very short-term, some of them a little bit longer term. Certainly our practice depth has been cut into immensely here, so it's made some things challenging from



a practice standpoint.

We have a few of the guys that are getting closer to getting back. One guy out with some sickness today, so that's a minor one. One is out with a sprained ankle. But with these new roster limits and stuff, there's not a lot you can do to even add to that so it does make things a little challenging.

We're hopeful we're getting out this out of the way in the preseason and working our way back to getting healthy.

Q. Particularly about a player who's been working back toward full health, it seems like Nick Dorn is able to do more and more. What have you seen from him, and how has it matched on film, the player that you were recruiting to the one that now maybe you're starting to be able to get to work with a little bit more?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I'm a little worried after watching him run on the sidelines that Coach Cig might try and steal him from me because he can run, he can move. You've seen him; he's a big, physical guy.

As he's working his way back, we haven't had an opportunity to see a lot of the basketball piece. A lot of it has been shooting, some light movement stuff, but he's certainly getting closer and closer to full health before we get into more of that live contact.

We're excited about him getting back whenever that time comes, but I think he's another added piece that we're looking forward to seeing what he can do.

Q. You had mentioned after the last one against Mega that that lineup with Reed and Sam hadn't repped as much. With having Andrej here, how much has that helped them?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, it's helped us a lot just to have multiple guys at the 5 position so that from a practice standpoint we can do some more experimental-type things, going with a more -- a bigger lineup at times during practice. I thought Sam and Reed, we had done just very little of it heading into that, but we wanted to try it in a real game where we could sub people in and out.

I think it's going to be a lineup that's going to help us throughout the year, so we'll continue to work with it and see what we can do. Those are the type of things, because it is a different type of lineup, that you're trying to get different things on the offensive end and maybe even a little bit the defensive end, but having that side out there is certainly a good advantage if we can develop enough depth along that front line so that we can play that way.

Q. On Nick, what was it at Elon that you saw and then what was it in your conversations with him that made him a guy that you guys wanted to bring in?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I think what stands out most is just his shooting, and that's what we prioritize. He's got great length. He has the ability to get it off, great size from that position. He's not bashful, so I love that about him. He's very confident as a shooter.

Just an awesome, awesome guy, too. He's so fun to be around, and I can't wait for him to get out on the practice floor where we can kind of see his energy and enthusiasm.

Again, we're just looking forward to him getting back out there and getting healthy.

Q. (On outside festivities.)

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I think some of it -- we brought in a new one, we brought an old event back. I think from our standpoint, it was just, we want to make sure that we're a big part of the community, big part of the campus. We want to give as many chances as we can to have those interactions because I think we have a group that's fun to be around. They're a good group of guys, and we want people to be able to see them on a different level besides just on the basketball floor.

We've tried to get involved in as many community activities as we could, whether it be with youth or adults or whatever it might be so that they get as many chances to see them on a more personal level.

Q. I know he's a little bit banged up, but Josh Harris, what do you expect from him?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, Josh brings some very good physicality for us and he works incredibly hard. He's another one of those guys that unfortunately is out, so we'll see what that means for him here in the short term.

But we really liked his approach every day. He's one of those guys that's in the gym working, and he's trying to develop his game. Again, from an injury standpoint we'll see how that shakes out here for us for the next foreseeable future.

Q. You mentioned before Puerto Rico being most excited for your team kind of getting to spend some time off the court with each other. Have you noticed a growth and chemistry since the trip in terms of in and out of practice?



DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I thought the trip was great for us. Tayton and I, we were teammates, if you will, kayaking. I don't think we're the greatest kayaking team ever, but we did those type of things where you got to do some stuff that maybe you aren't in a comfortable position. You're doing things you've never done before.

I thought that was awesome for our team, for our staff, to be able to have that type of interaction, whether it be snorkeling, sand volleyball, jet-skiing, all those type of activities where something that I thought was really beneficial for us.

You just don't get to do that as often as you might think when you're on campus. You just don't hang out on that type of level.

That trip, those type of trips are great for you to get an early start, especially on a team like ours and a staff like ours that is essentially all new.

Q. You've got some guys on this team that were really good players on teams that weren't as good. What goes into recalibrating their approach and the way they think?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I think there's always something you want to take into account, some of those type of things. But for us, when we're going through the recruiting process, even though some of them were very short, what's important to them. I think for a lot of these guys, winning was very important to them. They have one year left, a lot of them. They want to go out as winners. They want to play in the NCAA Tournament.

Those are things when that's a priority to them you can tell pretty quickly that that's what they're motivated by. Their circumstances from whatever school they were, sometimes there's only so much control you have on a team or a roster that you can impact, but I'm excited about the group. Again, I think their approach is right. I think they're motivated by the right things.

Q. Trent Sisley seems like he's in the mix for major minutes. What's he doing well right now and what area does he need to step up so get those meaningful minutes in the regular season?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, I think Trent is doing really well. For a freshman coming in, from the first week in June until now, he's continued to get better. He's coachable. I think he's becoming more confident in what he's doing and what we want him to do and intermixing that together.

That's always a hard transition coming out of high school

is, like, how do you fit into what a new team is doing, the speed, the physicality of the game. But I don't think he has really a lot of problems with that. He's still got some of those growing pains every new college player has, but he's done a great job of continuing to try to work on them and address them.

But I like for him, for this group, he's not a guy that has to come out every night. We don't have to completely rely on him, but also in terms of he doesn't have to get his 20 every night, but he's also a guy that can. So that's what I think is critical for him.

It is nice to have the supporting cast he has around him so he can continue to grow and do it at a rate that I think he can be very comfortable with.

Q. You've brought an openness to this program that wasn't there before, and you touched on it a minute ago, but how important is it for you to do that? You've been kind enough to let us in twice - thank you for that by the way - but you were at an event last night, so you're really making an effort to do that. Why is that so important?

DARIAN DEVRIES: Again, I just think we're at a place where basketball is incredibly important, Indiana basketball is a important to a lot of people, so I want them to be able to have access to something they really find valuable and important to them.

That's what we want. We want people to feel like they're not watching from afar. We want them to feel like they're right on the inside and they're stride by stride with us as we go through it because from a fan standpoint, they have a huge impact on us winning and losing a lot of times.

That type of support doesn't happen everywhere. We have it here. We have a night where every time we toss that ball up, this building and our fan base impacts helping us win, and that's critical. So we want them to be a part of it. We want all of you to be a part of it. It's something that I'm sure I love covering, and I'm sure there's times you'll even have advice, but that's okay.

People love this game. They love this game here at Indiana, and we do, too, and we want everyone to feel a part of that.

Q. Defensively where do you feel like you guys have made the most strides since you came together as a team, and where do you feel like are one or two areas that you have to continue to make strides as the season comes up pretty quickly here?



DARIAN DEVRIES: Yeah, what I think always takes a little bit of time in how we play is we don't give them a ton of rules, so there's not a defined, hey, you're switching this, or a definite you're switching this or not switching this. Some of it is we're trying to be really physical but if he gets hit you have to switch.

It takes a while for them to kind of figure out, okay, did he get hit enough, not hit enough for us to switch, and then the communication piece is the second part of it. A lot of times they're a little hesitant because they're not sure on the call or whatever, but as time goes on, you can see that connectivity really starting to build.

This team I think has done a really good job of that, just like a lot of other teams I've coached. You can see it now and they're becoming more confident in what they're doing, more physical, they can play faster because of that, and that's something, again, that we have to be really good at. We have to be very connected as a defense and still have the ability to play hard and fast without slowing them down with a lot of rules.

I like the progress we've made. There's still room, plenty of room to grow there. But they'll continue to work at it, so that's something I think we've come a long way since June.

A lot of you saw it back in June; I don't think you would have said that maybe back then that we were a good defensive team. So I think we've made some strides and still got some work to do for sure.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports