

# Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Media Day

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

## Arizona State Sun Devils

### Natasha Adair



**Q.** We welcome you back to PAC-12 basketball media day here at Park MGM in Las Vegas. The Arizona State Sun Devils taking center stage. Coach Adair, second year at the helm. Great to see you.

NATASHA ADAIR: You as well.

**Q.** I'm sure it feels a little bit different coming back for season two than it did when you came in season one. You have ten newcomers. A lot to talk about with your team, but let's start with a state of the program and as you come into the season, where things are at.

NATASHA ADAIR: We're healthy, and I'll start there. It's just exciting to be able to be in the gym now with the team that you a year ago we just didn't have this opportunity.

But we talk about the energy, the enthusiasm, the competitiveness, and I think that's the energy right now, that we're healthy, but we're competing. I'm just excited moving forward less than a month away. Scrimmages coming up. I want to see us in live action, but I'm excited, pleasantly surprised with the newcomers, but we're competing.

**Q.** Coach, the loss of Tyi Skinner, just talk about how that gives you a really quick change of focus.

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, again, we know the impact that Tyi has had on our team, on the game, on the conference, just nationally. And to lose just that leader, because that's where I will start, it was a blow, but this group is no stranger to adversity.

With, like you said, the ten newcomers, it's next woman up. But I will tell you, Tyi three days after surgery was in the gym crutching around leading, leading. Hasn't stopped yet. In the huddles, talking, talking to Tray, talking to Jaddan, talking to the team. And that's what we will continue to have even if she's not on the court.

So a blow, but she's just going to lead in a different way.

**Q.** I would expect nothing less. Please send her our best. Certainly good thoughts for her recovery. We're going to open it up to questions.

**Q.** You and I had a conversation about Skinner going down with the ACL. I want you to share with everybody about her vision board and the fact that the Final Four is coming to Phoenix in 2026.

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, you know, again, she's no stranger to me. We've been together now four years. Oh, my gosh.

Even in her worst moment she said, you know what, there's a reason. And she said, Coach, we're not done yet. She said, The Final Four is here, and that's still the goal. I'm going to work. I'm going to do what I need to do. I'm going to lead in this locker room. You're still going to have to tell me to be quiet. I'm not going away.

So she's turned this negative, if you will, into a positive, but just having that vision of what's to come is going to motivate her even more.

**Q.** What is different in year two in terms of how you're going to look at your team on the floor, what you guys want to emphasize, what kind of team you want to be?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, now I think what's different is we're able to just bond, and we're able to compete, and we're able to as a coaching staff just to see what we have on a daily basis.

It was hard because a year ago we didn't have a preseason. We couldn't really go live because we had to contain bodies. So now you're going to see us play my style. Kind of fast-paced, gritty, in your face defense. We want to score in transition. We're going to rebound the ball for sure.

So I just love that we have versatility. We're pretty big in a lot of areas, so you're going to see us mix it up. I'm excited for you to see Adair basketball this season.

**Q.** Of the newcomers, I know that Tray is taking over



**for Tyi and doing a phenomenal job in that role. Jaddan is stepping up as well.**

NATASHA ADAIR: Yes.

**Q. Of your newcomers, who is jumping off the page here early in camp?**

NATASHA ADAIR: Jalyn Brown, transfer. Coming in, I mean, explosive on the perimeter. She can score. She is a three-level scorer, long defensively. We are going to turn that into -- (audio cut out). No stranger to that.

Maggie Besselink, to have her back on the floor, just IQ, versatile player, hybrid player. Can shoot the ball. I mean, she's just competing at such a very high level and a veteran, and I think just having that veteran leadership with so many young players.

Kadidia Toure, another transfer, rebounder. Double-double magnet. Used to winning, right? Coming from a program that's won a championship. So just relentless.

Sandra Magolico, she's another transfer, but again, experienced, just blue-collar. I mean, she is relentless in her pursuit of rebounding and how hard she's going to play.

I could go on and on and on, but I would say, you know, we just have so many different players and different styles in which we can play, but just right now those are the ones that I think are making an immediate impact.

**Q. When you went into the transfer portal this year, how is it different for you? People are more familiar with your style, what ASU is all about? What were you looking for, and what did people see when they looked at you?**

NATASHA ADAIR: The same, what you just mentioned. More that can play in my style that are used to playing uptempo, transition, defense-first, high energy.

Then, also, they were looking for an opportunity. You know, I think that's the biggest thing, and we had that opportunity to give in the best conference in the country.

**Q. With everything happening with realignment over the summer, I'm just curious how that impacted conversations with your actual student-athletes? Is it something that maybe they're seeing as down the line? Maybe you don't have to address with right now, if they have questions? And how you anticipate it will affect your job as a coach, especially when it comes to recruiting and everything like that?**

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, I think the first thing we focus on is being in the PAC, right, and this is a historical season, and we want to make sure we compete, that we put ourselves in a position to win a championship, win the PAC-12 championship.

Obviously in recruiting you have to talk about the realignment and what's to come, but we really sold a vision of the school, the program, what their impact could be within our program.

Down the road obviously we mentioned the realignment, but the focus is competing and winning in the PAC-12.

**Q. Your daughter recently made that transition to college athletics. Going through that journey with her, how has that helped you help your freshmen make that transition for the things off the court, the studying, the schedule, just being an all-around young woman? How has that journey with your daughter help you?**

NATASHA ADAIR: Oh, she brought up Ally. You don't know, but Ally is a freshman at Texas State. And, yes, I've been there four times already. I don't know if she needed help with the transition or me.

I think it's just about embracing change, right? Change is uncomfortable, what's new. Ask questions. Know that you have resources. I talk a lot to them about our resources and just as helping them through the process.

Every day is going to be different. There are upper classmen. Their big sisters help them along the way, but experience it all and know that you are going to have good days, you're going to have days that are uncomfortable, but remember your why. And just every day work hard, right? Work hard, but have fun.

My daughter also now is a SAC representative. She hosts all the recruits, so she's already ready. She is having a ball.

**Q. You have been very intentional with your team at being involved with the next level of basketball. We see the Sun Devils at the WNBA's Mercury games frequently. You have put players into the W. How on specifically do you prepare your Sun Devils for that next level?**

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, every day is the preparation. Everything is elite, whether it's preparing them on the court, preparing them in life. The beauty of where we are located is having a WNBA franchise right there 20 minutes away is important. And our players, when we go, they're able to

engage. They're able to see the intensity in which they play.

But also having former players that are now coaching in the WNBA, playing in the WNBA, they come back, and they talk to our players. Not about their specific organizations, but more importantly, what it took and what that day-to-day grind looks like on and off the court and in the community.

So really leaning on them as examples, but also knowing the players know that I've done it, and if that's an opportunity that they want and that they aspire for, that they know that they can achieve it.

**Q. From the first minute we've talked you have always talked about your program as a philosophy of player-led but coach-supported. I would love for you to talk about the two young women that you brought today who are going to join us on the stage here in a minute.**

NATASHA ADAIR: Jaddan Simmons, you all know her. I can't say enough about just her leadership through change. That just speaks to who she is as a person. She loves ASU.

Again, there's family history there, but what she's done for our program being the face of our program, she just is committed on and off the court, and she brings it in her work. She brings it in her energy.

Every player on the team will tell you, you know, who do you go to? Jaddan. Who do you listen to? Jaddan. Who is the example? Jaddan.

We do an exercise where we brag on our teammate, and it's not a day where another teammate doesn't brag on Jaddan for her leadership, but also a fearless competitor.

You will see her just kind of in that next gear, right? I'm always pushing her to that next gear, but she's going to take over, and that's the word we're going to use. She's going to take over. It's her turn. It's her time. I'm excited to say that.

Then Trayanna Crisp coming up under her wings, and no stranger to winning. A champion in high school. Knows how to score the ball.

A year ago she had a little adversity. She wasn't as healthy, but I will tell you she is healthy now, and she is leading. She is commanding that point guard, that off guard spot, whatever it may be, but just soaking it all in.

I think she's going to be a huge, huge surprise for everyone in this room, but not me.

**Q. I just have to say they've got their game day faces on right off stage. They're ready to go.**

NATASHA ADAIR: They're ready.

**Q. Coach A, it's great to catch up with you as always. Look forward to watching your squad this season.**

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