

Pac-12 Conference Women's Basketball Media Day

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Arizona State Sun Devils

Jaddan Simmons

Trayanna Crisp



Q. Joining us here, Jaddan, you could host this Media Day at this point. This is your third media day?

JADDAN SIMMONS: Yeah, it is.

Q. Do you want to just ask us some questions?

JADDAN SIMMONS: How is it going so far?

Q. You got it. I've just got to say, it's great to see you guys. I know we just heard from your coach and singing you guys' praises and everything you've been putting in in the off-season and what you bring to the floor. But for you coming into this year, what's your mindset? What were you working on in the off-season, and what excites you about this group?

JADDAN SIMMONS: Of course I've been working on the court, but I think mainly I've just been focusing on what's inside, the mental. I think I had a lot of downfall during games just because of myself, not so much because of the other team or what's going on.

Just making sure that I'm good mentally and I'm like telling myself, You're good. Everyone makes mistakes. So just trying not to be so hard on myself is the first thing.

Obviously I've been working on my three-point shot and just being a leader on and off the court.

Q. Tray, the last time we saw you was an overtime loss to UCLA at the Pac-12 tournament, which I would have to think propelled you into the off-season. Played 42 minutes in that game. What did that game and that experience do for you heading into the off-season?

TRAYANNA CRISP: Honestly, it just pushed me to want to be better the next season. I know that loss hurt me and the team as well, but it gave me that extra motivation, and it just told me keep working, honestly.

Q. Tray, your shoulders look broader. I'm not kidding.

TRAYANNA CRISP: Thank you.

Q. I know Tyi's been in your ear. What did you do over the summer to improve your game, to embrace this role?

TRAYANNA CRISP: I've just been working every day of the week, putting on my grind. I've been in the gym, the weight room, all of it, just trying to be better for the next season for my team.

And training as well. Like I knew for me I wanted to be better. I knew I could be better from last season. So just working on my shot, working on getting inside, being tougher, working on my defense as well.

Q. Jaddan, for you, a year ago you were 20th in the country in minutes played. There were so many games you just didn't come out, 37 minutes a game. How do you prepare for that in the off-season, and how do you prepare for just the grind that will be the season, especially without Tyi?

JADDAN SIMMONS: I've just learned to take care of my body, even though I hate cold tubs and all the extra stretching. I'm still like you have to do it in order to stay healthy, to play all those minutes. Each game, I just told myself like go get heated before the game. Go get taped. I'm making sure I'm getting everything rubbed out so I'm ready to go and so that I'm there for my team whenever they need me.

Q. For the first time, I think, since you've been on campus, you have the luxury of bodies. 14 players on the roster. What is that like now, and how has that changed how you see the floor?

JADDAN SIMMONS: It's different. Like you said, it's just so many bodies we have. We weren't used to that last year. We just had to go with what we had, and now we have so many people. Like we can go deep into the roster, and you can trust everyone, rely on everyone to just be

there, have your back, go hard.

I think it starts in practice because we always talk about getting each other better. How are we going to get better if no one's pushing you? It's just good to see that every day in practice. I'm really enjoying the new players and how we're getting along.

Q. Coach A mentioned you've got some family history. Obviously both of your parents went to ASU. Dad played football. He's in town here. He's the DB coach of the Vegas Raiders. Am I right about that? Have you gotten a chance to catch up with him? Did you go to the game last night?

JADDAN SIMMONS: I didn't. We left yesterday night. But I did get to talk to him. I told him congrats. It was his old team that he played, so he was excited. It was just good catching up with him.

Q. That play at the end by the D-back for the Raiders was exceptional. I bet it was all coaching. Tray, for you, a lot of people when they go to college and make the decision they want to go far away and just live a new life. You live a 30-minute drive from Goodyear, right? What's it like to be that close to home, be able to go home and have your family and friends come see you play?

TRAYANNA CRISP: It's a great feeling. That was a big decision for me. I just wanted to be somewhere where I knew I could go home, where I have family and friends here, people I can count on and they can count on me.

My mom moved, so it's no longer home for her no more. But for me, I just think it's great I'm able to go back to my high school and see some of my high school teammates play and things like that.

Q. What's the challenge of having ten new teammates? You talk chemistry is such an important part of basketball. How do you cultivate that? How do you create that? What has that process been like in this off-season?

JADDAN SIMMONS: It's just nice having a diverse team. We're able to connect in different ways. You learn stuff about different cultures. I think that's what like unites us is everyone wanting to learn how to connect with each other. I think that's the best way to do it, and I think that's what we've been doing.

The team is just so open. Like everyone hangs out. We're always laughing. They love TikTok videos. I'm not in them, but -- I don't know. We're just really united right now.

We still have a ways to go to still connect, but it's just change, which is what we need.

Q. When you look at the preseason poll and you're chosen or voted 12th, do you come into every day at practice with a chip on your shoulder? How do you absorb that, in addition to losing Tyi, to think where we're going and how we're pushing through this thing?

TRAYANNA CRISP: Honestly, like you said, it's just a chip on our shoulder. We go into practice every day wanting to be better than last season. For everybody that's coming in, they just want to be better and help us to win and things like that.

Q. What's the one thing that you want everybody to know about the ASU Sun Devils coming into this year?

TRAYANNA CRISP: We're coming. That's all I can say. We're coming.

JADDAN SIMMONS: I think just change is going to be our word. Like it's going to be different. Yes, we're going to leave the past in the past, but like you said, that chip on our shoulder will always be there until the season starts.

Also just being reminded that it's a new season. Like, yes, we want to prove stuff to people, but we're just more worried about ourselves right now, and I think that's what's keeping us together.

Q. The thing about Coach A is every time she walks in a room, I feel like this giant sun just walked in, and you just feel like it's a super upper. Is she always like that, or does she have a bad day?

TRAYANNA CRISP: She's always like that. She comes with the positive energy.

Q. That can just wear you down, can't it?

JADDAN SIMMONS: Yeah. She'll tell us like it is whenever we need to. But you see her coming to practice, playing music, like she just brings that energy. It's nice having that and seeing that.

Q. What is it like playing for her? We get to be around her and get to interview her, but being in this program and watching her come in and take this thing over in her first year, what would you say as you've watched her even evolve just in the time she's been in Tempe?

JADDAN SIMMONS: Obviously that last year was my first year with her, so I didn't know how it would go. Just I knew her resume. I knew what she did as a coach and what

she's accomplished, which is a lot, and I knew that I wanted to play under her because she just has that experience, and she knows how to keep players grounded and make sure that she's there not only on the court, but off the court.

It's just nice playing with her. She has great energy. She's a great leader.

Q. When you guys look at this season, what's the goal? Do you talk about goals, or do you just take it day by day?

JADDAN SIMMONS: We take it day by day, but yes, we do have our goals. We want to win. That's the biggest thing. Everyone wants to win, but we have to work harder to do it, and that's what we're willing to do and we're showing that. I see it, and I can see our goals coming in the future.

Q. Tray, do you have any TikTok tips for Mary? She's been working on her TikTok videos.

TRAYANNA CRISP: Honestly, just be loose. Have fun (laughter).

Q. I can't really. I have no idea what that is.

TRAYANNA CRISP: Loosen up a little bit.

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