

**October 23, 2008**



**An Interview With:**

## **MISSOURI COACH MIKE ANDERSON**

PETER IRWIN: We're joined by Coach Mike Anderson from Missouri. Your opening thoughts.

COACH ANDERSON: Well, I'll tell you what, it's an exciting time for me. This is year three with the Missouri basketball program. And I'm certainly excited about the seven newcomers we have, and we've got six holdovers from the last couple of years.

And so it's a nice blend of experience, as well as -- there's one word to describe it. I think it's kind of refreshing with this group. Now, like you guys have nametags, I think I had nametags at the first practice, but needless to say, I'm really excited about this year.

And I think we really have some guys that are excited about being Missouri Tigers and I think they'll play -- we may get a chance to play the brand of basketball that I really, really want to play.

PETER IRWIN: Questions.

**Q. You have a couple of freshman recruits from Kansas City. Can you talk about how they might play this year, might be redshirted, or do you expect immediate impact?**

COACH ANDERSON: I'll tell you what, one of the things that took place for us before school started we had an opportunity to go to Canada. So we actually had a chance to practice with our team five days prior to going to Canada.

And so I got a chance to really try to expedite these guys at practice, and so I had an opportunity to go play an exhibition over in Canada. We got a chance to see what these guys could do from a basketball IQ standpoint.

And I'll tell you what, Marcus Denmon is one of those young men from Hogan Prep High School, scored a lot of points in high school. You

always wonder how it will take place at this level here. And needless to say, I think he got a chance to have a tremendous future at the University of Missouri.

Second game he played 13 minutes. He had 23 points. And so there are some guys that -- I always say there's some guys that are practice players and there are some guys that, when the lights come on, boy, they're different players. Marcus is one of those guys. When the light comes on, he starts to shine offensively as well as defensively.

Steve Moore, 6'-9", about seven-foot wing span. He has made tremendous strides since the Canada trip as well as into practice right now. Gives us a guy with a big body. Has a lot of girth. He can bang a little bit and block shots.

I think he has a very good future as well. But those guys are doing, they're doing a great job so far.

**Q. You kind of touched on it, but is this the first year you feel like you have the talent and depth to rotate around to play the style of basketball you've really wanted to at Mizzou?**

COACH ANDERSON: I think you're absolutely right. I think with this team here, just from what I've observed thus far, I think we're going to have more options.

I think when you talk about having options and having depth to play the way we want to play, one of the things we always have been able to do is we've been able to score.

But our nemesis has been not stopping people, especially the way I want to play. And so with that being said, now I think bringing in some depth and some quality depth. These guys have been recruited to come in and play a certain style of basketball.

First of all, I like guys that are used to winning. So those guys are going to do the little things that it takes to win. I think we have more of those kind of guys.

But not only that, I think we have some guys, this is their third year. A guy like Leo Lyons,

coming in, I'm a new coach to Leo Lyons, so now -- and of course there's that adjustment period. But I think Leo has matured and now he understands what his role is.

A guy like DeMarre Carroll, who's the Newcomer of the Year in our league last year, played on a hurt ankle all year. So now he's in his fifth year. He's a senior now. So I think those guys, as well as Matt Lawrence, my first year with Matt Lawrence, sophomore year leading three-point shooters in the country.

So now we bring in an influx of new guys to go along with the group we have coming back. J.T. Tiller, third year playing for the same coach. Now you've got some guys that are more experienced. And understand their roles a little bit more.

Hopefully one of the big keys is going to be the leadership. And that leadership should come from guys like Leo Lyons, DeMarre Carroll, Matt Lawrence, and, of course, a guy like J.T. Tiller.

**Q. Do you feel like this is a team that can kind of surprise some teams, maybe in the North and in the Big 12, kind of jump into that upper half and get competing with maybe the top four we see in the preseason poll?**

COACH ANDERSON: I'm really excited about the team. When I get excited that means there's good things on the horizon. Number one, I'm used to winning. And, again, this team is going to be young, but I think we have a nice mixture. And I think a lot is going to depend on how these guys come about, how they come along.

I think the Canadian trip, it gave me an idea the potential of this team. And so now what we've done now is just we roll up our sleeves. Went back in the gym. We've been doing two-a-days they like that because I cut that out. This is the last of two-a-days but they've been working extremely hard. This team is going to be one of those teams, they're going to bring their helmets to the game every single night. I think when you bring that you'll give yourself a chance.

With that being said, I think we've got a chance to really develop this year and with our schedule we've got a lot of different kind of tests.

Early on we play in the Puerto Rican shootout, opened up against an Xavier team that was in the Elite Eight in that tournament and also is Southern Cal. Memphis, Seton Hall. You name it, you've got some great teams. Virginia Tech. So those are going to be some tremendous tests for us early on, and we'll get tested.

California coming into the Mizzou arena. I'm excited about that. The Border War series, every year against Illinois and, of course, we play on the road against Georgia. So I think the development of our basketball team, hopefully with that schedule, it will get us really, really ready for the Big 12, which I think is going to be good this year as well.

**Q. Based on what you've seen in practice so far, how are guys reacting to the extended three-point line?**

COACH ANDERSON: I think they still want to shoot it, I know that. They don't make it much, but they want to shoot it. No, I think those guys -- and that's what you do, I think, in practice.

You work and we do a lot of scrimmaging. We find out those guys that really are effective in terms of shooting it behind the line. A guy like Matt Lawrence. That line won't be a factor for him.

But some other guys it might be. A guy like J.T. Tiller that may be. Maybe it's something he worked on in the off-season. But it shouldn't be that much of a factor.

**Q. Your front line, I know you're going to count on those guys, Leo and DeMarre, but in the guard play who are you looking at especially to run the point? Is it J.T.? Is it young guys like Denmon and Paul? Do you think they can step in right away?**

COACH ANDERSON: That's going to be the big question mark with our basketball team. I think our front line is -- you've identified Leo Lyons, a proven guy. DeMarre Carroll. With those guys, Justin Safford along with a guy like Keith Ramsey, junior college All-American. They give us a tremendous line.

So the arc play is going to be important. I thought J.T. did a great job with what he did last year when he started. Pick a guy like Zaire Taylor. I think he's going to be a guy that's going to come in demand the point. What I like about him he's a big guard.

So now we get bigger guards that can do a lot of different things, and Zaire Taylor, a transfer from Delaware who sat out last year. We're looking for him to come in, and if there's any indication what took place in Canada, then I think he's going to be one of those guys that people are going to be talking about when the season is all said and done.

But no question, Denmon, Miguel Paul, Kim English, all those guys are going to factor into how good our team can be and their development is going to be very, very important.

The thing I like about it is our practices, even as we talk about it right now, they're very, very competitive. Very, very competitive.

And so what that does, it sets the stage for the games. We really get after them in practice. So guys that compete, they're competing for playing time. That hadn't been the case since I've been there.

And so with that said, now you are developing that depth that you've got to have to play the way we want to play.

**Q. I know it was your rival who did it, but can you talk about what Kansas's national championship means to the conference overall? In terms of your ability to recruit and attract attention.**

COACH ANDERSON: I think it tells you the state of the conference. I think the Big 12, I think this is, what, the 11th, 12th year of the conference. You've got a national championship team. And the funny thing about it is that I think -- I don't know, did they win the conference? I think it was like co-champions last year. So it just tells you this conference is really emerging.

And I had an opportunity to be in the Southeastern Conference, and of course we were in there when Arkansas actually first went in there. And at that time Kentucky just dominated the conference in everything. And, of course, Arkansas and South Carolina came in there I think it was in '92 and before you know it now all the other teams really start getting very, very competitive in terms of recruiting.

So won a national championship in '94 and look what happened. I think the next couple of years Kentucky won one. So hopefully, again, I think the Big 12, I think there's some great years ahead of the Big 12.

**Q. Following along those lines, Coach, do you feel like this is maybe more wide open than the Big 12 has been in the last couple years with maybe not the national championship-caliber team right at the forefront?**

COACH ANDERSON: I think you've got a lot of teams that were making that push anyway. So it just kind of opened up the door. I mean, when you look at I think Jeff Capel, some pretty

good talent there. They played well last season, a lot of guys returning. You talk about Texas. Rick, he has a stable of guys returning. So you've got some guys that are returning.

So on paper, I mean, you look and you say, okay, these guys here should be -- Baylor has a lot of guys returning, but I think the funny thing about basketball is the paper doesn't play. I think the guys play, and I'm sure each and every coach that comes up here, they're trying to prepare their team to be the best team they possibly can be.

And on any given night a lot of things take place. Took place last year. It will take place this year, too.

PETER IRWIN: Thank you, Coach.

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