

**October 21, 2009**



An interview with:

## **OKLAHOMA STATE COACH KURT BUDKE**

PETER IRWIN: We'd like to welcome Coach Kurt Budke.

Coach, welcome, from Oklahoma State. Your opening comments, and we'll take questions.

COACH BUDKE: I'm taking Baylor's place?

PETER IRWIN: Yes, sir, you're Baylor.

COACH BUDKE: You have to get rid of the 6'8" questions. I have nobody that's 6'8" and can dunk all the time. Get rid of those. I'll talk to Leon about that when I get home.

I'm sure everybody's come up here and said how excited they are about getting to start practice and getting things underway. I feel the same way.

We've got nine new players. We've got six freshmen in. We've got a lot of inexperience in.

But we felt like last year one of the things that hurt us was chemistry, and chemistry is huge in our sport. And I think it was the total difference between the year before where we were Sweet 16 to last year.

And so we brought some different people in, some young and enthusiastic, excited young ladies that are ready to play at Oklahoma State. So far, early practices have been a lot of fun.

I think this has a chance to be my longest, quickest, deepest team that I've had at Oklahoma State. So we truly are excited about the beginning of basketball.

PETER IRWIN: Coach, thank you. We'll take questions from the floor now.

COACH BUDKE: They're having to shift the 6'8" questions, I told you.

I do have a 6'1" that can dunk. She dunked in Homecoming in Hoops the other night. Pretty impressive dunk also.

**Q. Kurt, I'm not going to ask you any 6'8" questions. What about this senior year for Andrea and just what you expect from her?**

COACH BUDKE: I think Andrea -- Andrea has already proven she can lead the conference in scoring. We know she can do that.

I think what you're looking for out of Andrea this year is more leadership. I think, instead of averaging 23 points a game, a better year might be 18 points a game and 8 or 9 assists a game.

Now, she's got more options to throw to this year. I think Andrea's had her best summer by far. She's had her best preseason practice by far. She'll tell you herself that, you know, leadership is something she's really focusing on and trying to do a better job of.

So I know this: She's in tremendous shape, and she is playing the best basketball of her life right now. So there's going to be some big moments for her this year.

**Q. Kurt, talk a little bit about Garrison and what she brings to the program.**

COACH BUDKE: Lakyn is a transfer from Carl Albert. What Lakyn can bring to us is, one, Lakyn legitimately has range that is five, six feet behind the line. I know you all say, oh, you coaches, you think a foot behind the line is five feet. This kid can shoot it five feet behind the line.

Yet she can play the point guard, and she is tough. And what she can do for us is we can throw out a little different look this year, and you'll see Andrea playing a little bit of a two instead of just one all the time. Gives us a different attack point to use Andrea Riley.

Everybody is used to Andrea having the ball in her hands and preparing defenses to stop her from the point. We'll be able to switch that up a bit. I expect big minutes from Lakyn.

Lakyn averaged 25 points a game in junior

college last year. It's not like she can't score. She can score.

**Q. When you talk about chemistry, what's going to be different about this group? You said you were looking at bringing in some different types of people.**

COACH BUDKE: You know, you just have to be dedicated to the whole package when you're in Division I and when you're in the Big 12. You have to be -- you want to be a great person off the floor. You want to be dedicated to the academics. You want to be dedicated to your team. And what you have to do in practice every day to be successful in the Big 12.

We had some kids that thought they wanted that, but they weren't willing to sacrifice on a daily basis to achieve that. And so a couple of those kids have now transferred out, and we have some in that we think just have been a joy to be around with tremendous work ethic. That can do nothing but help chemistry.

**Q. Kurt, you mentioned Toni Young earlier. What do you see her role being as a freshman?**

COACH BUDKE: I think we have a rotation of about ten kids that as long as Andrea is on the floor with them, it doesn't much matter who's going to be around her. Toni can do things that many can't do. She can throw from the free-throw line. She can lay it on the rim. She can dunk. She can legitimately dunk. It's not those shots that other people try. She can get out and hammer it down.

It's just a matter of her getting used to the physicality of the Big 12, getting bumped around every single night. But she is long and athletic and has got a nice touch.

If she's willing, if her heart's big enough and she's willing to put the work in, she can be a star in this league someday.

**Q. Kurt, when you have this much turnover, do you have enough time to sort through all these players and get them ready to go by the start of the schedule?**

COACH BUDKE: I hope so. I would think, as a former junior college coach, one of my areas of expertise is having nine or ten freshmen come in and kind of start over as the year comes.

What you do is you don't just try to have everything in by game one. You try to have a

basic package in that they can remember, that they feel comfortable with.

The problem is this year we really upgraded our schedule in nonconference, and we open with Arkansas Little Rock, who won 27 games last year, has the whole team back. And then possibly Georgia Tech, possibly Ohio State, Marist, Michigan State. They're going to be thrown into the fire right away.

We have some games after that that hopefully we'll have a chance to let these kids settle in a little bit.

You know what, the advantage we have this year that we've never had before is a bench. And one of the best motivators in the world to play hard every minute you're on the floor is the threat of going to the bench because somebody's there ready to take your spot.

So I really do think these kids will play hard every second they're on the floor, or if they don't, they'll come sit by me.

**Q. Just wondering if you could talk about your thoughts on WNBA moving to Oklahoma and how that is maybe going to affect, you know, your program. Does it have an affect on your program?**

COACH BUDKE: I don't think it will affect us at all. I really don't. I think it's great for women's basketball in the state of Oklahoma. We already have a great state for women's basketball.

And with what Sherri's doing at Oklahoma and what we're doing at Oklahoma State, to add a veteran WNBA team like Detroit coming to Tulsa I think will just keep the excitement of women's basketball at an all-time high. I'm anxious to go watch it myself.

PETER IRWIN: Coach, best of luck to you.

COACH BUDKE: Thank you all. It's good to be back.

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