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An interview with:

## **TEXAS COACH GAIL GOESTENKORS**

PETER IRWIN: We're now joined by Coach Gail Goestenkers from the University of Texas.

Coach, welcome.

COACH GOESTENKORS: Thank you. Glad to be here.

PETER IRWIN: Would you like to make some opening comments for us before we take questions.

COACH GOESTENKORS: Just real excited about -- it's hard to believe. The summer goes so fast. I cannot believe we're starting another season, but I'm real excited about this season, probably more so than any season since I've been at Texas.

I feel like -- I feel really good about my team. We have great chemistry. We've only got ten players, but they get along so well, and they've worked so hard. I feel like we have a great understanding now of what is expected, what is needed, and they've really bought in. And I feel really good.

So we're just excited about the season. It's coming around quick, you know. I can't believe how quickly we play our first game. But we've got an unbelievable schedule, very difficult. Even before we hit the Big 12, and the Big 12 is going to be, I think, amazing, it's going to be wide open, I think. So many of us have an opportunity to win the conference this year. So I think it's exciting for all of us.

I think the league has always had great parity, but I think this year, more than any year since I've been here, the parity in the league is amazing. So just really excited about the season.

PETER IRWIN: Thank you. We'll take questions from the floor for Coach.

**Q. Gail, about the schedule. We were talking about that a little bit earlier and just how quickly the team has to acclimate. Do you like having that tough November schedule just to figure out where everybody stands that quickly?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: I really do. You know, I'm excited about playing some tough games early, especially that Connecticut game, obviously. We'll find out exactly where we are, who we are, who we want to become, and what we need to work on.

So I'd certainly rather have that early, give us some more time to really prepare for some of those other games as well. And see our improvements.

**Q. Given your opening comments about being excited about the season, do you feel like after these couple of years that you finally have your system in place and got your players acclimated to that?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: I do. You know, we as a staff talked this summer. We feel like we've really turned the corner. We feel like the players, they really understand the system now.

We only have two freshmen this year. So we're reviewing a lot of things that took us two years to put in, and now it's just a review. And the upperclassmen are really helping those freshmen along. So the learning curve is really small compared to what it has been the first two seasons.

**Q. Earnesia coming back, can you talk about what that's going to do in making you guys stronger.**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Yeah. Ernie, as I've said before, Ernie is what I consider my warriors. Those are the players that in the big games, in the tough games -- and the Big 12 is a war, make no mistake. You want your warriors out there on the floor.

So having her back, she will help us set a tone for all the tough games that we're going to

encounter this year. She's been through all the wars. She knows what's needed and what's expected.

**Q. Gail, with the limited roster that you have, how do you work -- do you look at everybody as pretty much being in your rotation? And, also, is depth a concern at all over the course of the long season?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Right. I feel like everybody's going to play. I've talked to the team. I feel like anybody could start of the ten players. I think we have great parity with those ten players.

So I have so much confidence in all of them. So I know -- and they know. They feel very important. They know they're all going to play, which I think is a great thing.

As far as the depth, I'm not really concerned. I went to the Final Four several years ago with eight players. So I've experienced that before and been pretty successful.

I guess my only worry would be injury. You know, I figured out a way, I think, to handle the fatigue. But, you know, the injury, that's another aspect. We're just going to hope for the best with the injuries.

**Q. Gail, you mentioned players are already looking for Cokie Reed to be inside. How uncommon is that for a freshman to earn that respect so quickly?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Usually post players in particular don't get many touches on the low block either because they don't want the ball, they don't demand the ball, they don't understand to how to post up. If they do get it, sometimes they don't know what to do with the ball.

Cokie is going to be really special. She posts up hard. She has a tremendous understanding of the game, and when she gets the ball, she knows what to do with it. She is demanding the ball. For a freshman. And our perimeter players are really looking for her. I feel like we're going to have a really good inside/outside attack.

We've been more finesse on the inside the last couple of years. Now I feel like we're going to have a power game as well.

**Q. Do you see Cokie and Ashley, Gail, ever playing on the court at the same time and just the advantages that might give you with two such big and mobile players?**

COACH GOESTENKORS: Right. They will play together at times. I don't know how much, but I know there will be times when they'll be together, I think offensively.

Cokie's got a really nice shot from 15 to 17 feet as well, so she can play in that high post area, and they can dominate the low block.

They're both really good shot blockers, so that could cause some problems. But on the defensive end, we're going to have to figure out how we would play them both together as well because I'm not quite sure who would be able to defend a four that would step out and face up. They both need work in that area.

PETER IRWIN: Coach, best of luck to you. Thank you.

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