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An Interview With:

KANSAS STATE COACH FRANK MARTIN

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by coach Frank Martin from Kansas State. Your thoughts about the upcoming season.

COACH MARTIN: Great to be here, and, like always, excited and anxious to get out on the floor and start competing in what I think is undoubtedly, by far, the best conference in the country, because of the success of the ten teams in the program and the fact that we will be the only BCS-level conference that will play everybody twice within the league.

So whoever ends up on top at the end of the regular season will be the only true conference champion in the country.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

COACH MARTIN: I'm curious, should I Twitter between questions? When I'm working you guys come Twitter between my decisions; now that you're working, I'll Twitter between your questions. It will be pretty good that way.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Is this Jamar's team? This is a guy that's been around the program for five years now. He's been part of the resurgence of K-State basketball leadership-wise, ownership-wise. Is this Jamar's team?

COACH MARTIN: He's more prepared to accept that responsibility today than he was back in April. He's lived it. He's breathed it. He understands and he's being a lot more consistent with the things that he needs to do to accept that responsibility.

And I'm a lot more confident today that that will be the case than I was when our season ended back in March or whenever it was.

He's had his best offseason, and he's probably put together his best whatever we've

gone five, six practices. You know, as far as the way he starts practice, the way he finishes practice and the consecutive number of practices, probably the best stretch he's had in his time here. So he's a lot more prepared for that.

Q. Talking about Jamar, you'll expect him to step up, but how difficult is it going to be to replace Jacob Pullen and everything that he's brought?

COACH MARTIN: I mean, that's never easy, you know? But how difficult was it to replace Mike Beasley three years ago, how difficult is it to replace Bill Walker, how difficult was it to replace Jason Maxiell when we were at Cincinnati. Those are the things you've got to deal with.

Jacob was great. And he'll continue to be great. I mean, heck, he's the leading scorer in the history of Kansas State basketball. He's helped us win a lot of games, but you know what else he helped us, helped prepare those guys after him for when it was their turn.

And that's the thing that I'm the proudest of his time at K-State, is that through his confidence, his work ethic, his commitment to our program, he's prepared Will, Rodney, Jamar, those guys, for their turn.

And now it's their turn, and that's why I'm so anxious to get out there, because I know those guys are ready to do it.

Q. I wondered if you could just talk about Jeremy Jones and how his JUCO experience maybe prepared him to come in and help you right away.

COACH MARTIN: He's fast. He's real, real fast. He's got the ability to -- you know, when that shot clock is winding down, he's got the ability to go get a basket or at least get a shot.

He also has a lot of JUCO in him when he plays the game, meaning passing and defense are few and far between. But he'll learn those, because he's a competitive kid, and he wants to do good. He's a beautiful kid. So as he continues to learn, and right now being around those,

Martavious Irving, Will, Rodney, all those guys, they've taken him in. And to his credit, he's like a sponge right now. He's just dying for people to help.

And our guys are doing that, and he's listening. But he's fast. He brings a sense of speed that we didn't have last year. And he's going to be fun to coach. I've really enjoyed my first six practices with him out there.

Q. Jordan last year was able to come off the bench and then affect games defensively especially towards the end of the year. Is he in a position now where he can anchor a defense instead of just being a help on the side?

COACH MARTIN: He's been pretty good in practice right now. I mean, he's protecting that rim. Jordan's made the progression that you look for in kids. He came in as a freshman, really -- if you got one good day a week out of him, you hugged him and kissed him. And then last year, as the year kind of progressed, he started becoming a little more consistent.

By the end of the year, he just wasn't a guy we put in there. He was a contributing player. And I could be wrong on this, but I think he ended up second in the Big 12 in blocked shots for a guy who played 15 minutes a game or so.

So it's something that he needs to do and do well for us. And he had his moments offensively where he did some good things.

And he's continued to grow. He's over 240 pounds. It's the first time in his career that he's been that heavy. And our projection for him has always been 250. That's the weight we want him at and that's what he's been working to get to.

But I'm pleased with his progress. And for us to be good he's gotta do exactly what you said.

Q. I'm wondering how long it took to shoot the pictures on the cover and did they leave any of your expressions off of it?

COACH MARTIN: Four years' worth of pictures, or four processions, regardless -- depending on where the photographer was at.

We did it -- I think it was in the spring sometime. And our promotion department, our SIDs, they do a wonderful job at K-State. And they came up with the idea, and I was fine with it.

I've gotten -- through e-mails and phone calls and, now that I'm a Twitter guy, through Twitter messages, nothing but positive remarks. I

can't go in our locker room, our players are killing me. But it's a credit to our people at K-State.

They come up with some great ideas, and if that works, that's what it was meant to be.

Q. In your opening comments, you mentioned the advantage of playing each team twice. Could you elaborate a bit on that more?

COACH MARTIN: I don't know if that's an advantage. I'd rather not play anybody in the Big 12 to be honest with you. But, no, what it is, it's -- if you look at the wins over the last five years by the ten teams in our league, they don't rival -- they don't fall second to any other ten teams in any league in the country.

You look at the success as far as NCAA wins, as far as players in the league, nonconference records, you go up and down the line, you look at every statue want to look, how many different teams have been to Elite Eights and Sweet 16s and yada yada yada. It's remarkable. And now we have to play each other twice.

By the end of the year -- Bill -- we did a function for Coaches Versus Cancer here in Kansas City a little over a week ago. And Bill Self while he was talking he said somebody can be 13-5 and win the league. 13-5 got you third in the league the last couple of years. 13-5 will probably be a strong record and one good enough to win the league the way it is right now.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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