

October 20, 2011



An Interview With:

TEXAS A&M COACH GLYNN CYPRIEN

THE MODERATOR: We're now ready to begin with the Texas A&M associate head coach Glynn Cyprien. Your thoughts about the upcoming season.

COACH CYPRIEN: First of all, I want to talk a little bit about Coach Kennedy's situation. Just so you guys know, he's resting peacefully back in Texas. And we're hoping for a speedy recovery. We're hoping to have him back pretty soon here. And our hearts and prayers goes out with him and hope to have him back real soon.

So with that, questions?

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Wondering, you're co-favorites with Kansas going into the season. How does a team -- I know it's a veteran team, but how are they dealing with those kind of expectations so far?

COACH CYPRIEN: Well, we addressed it on the first day for total about five minutes. And I think these guys, like you say, because they're a veteran team, understand it's not where you start but it's where you finish. And it hasn't come up again.

And, again, thank God we do have a veteran team and those guys are not really concerned about it at this point.

Q. When you have a situation like this, with a new staff and a veteran team, do you want the team to adjust to you or do you have to adjust to what the team has been doing well?

COACH CYPRIEN: Well, one of the positives in this situation is that we were able to go to Europe in August. So in July we got some practice time. Coach Kennedy was around the guys then, in July and August.

So that kind of put us ahead of the curve a little bit. So it's not about me. I'm obviously just a fill-in for coach, but these guys, because they are veterans, have an idea of how hard we want them to play and what we're trying to accomplish here in this short period before coach comes back.

Q. Can you talk about Khris Middleton and some of the improvements you've seen in his game and how your trip may have helped him?

COACH CYPRIEN: Well, Khris has really had a good summer and had a really good fall up to this point. First of all just strength-wise he's gotten stronger and we attribute that to we've hired a new strength coach and that's really helped him. Going into practice, he's really become a better leader, become more vocal.

Obviously, from an offensive standpoint we expect a lot out of him. But really for the last four or five days we've stressed defense and how he can really help this team on the other end of the floor.

So we are expecting big things from Khris, and I think he understands that, and, boy, he's really worked hard up to this point.

Q. Can you talk just a little bit about what the trip to Europe did for you guys and kind of meshing new staff, inherited players and what you got out of that?

COACH CYPRIEN: Yeah, it was obviously really the first time we spent time around the guys, getting the job so late, and then obviously in July we were able to practice.

But because of the recruiting schedule, most of us was in and out and so we really didn't have a whole lot of time to spend with the guys.

But got a chance to kind of see where we were at in terms of a team, philosophy wise and what adjustments we'd have to make as a staff. And it couldn't have helped any better, just the timing of the trip and everything worked out in our favor, especially with what we're going through right now as a program.

Q. Basketball is always an emotional game, especially when the team is on the road. I know there was some talk about some mischief being played with the A&M team bus when the football team played at Tech. What do you expect -- what kind of reception do you expect when you go to Austin and Lubbock and places like that? Do you think it will be a little extra spirited?

COACH CYPRIEN: Yeah, I think it will be a little more warmer than it would normally be based on our situation. But, you know, this is a great league and great rivals in this league. So we expect people to act a certain way. And the situation with steak was just something that doesn't happen all the time.

Q. And also I'm sure there's not a lot you can say, but when do you expect Coach Kennedy back? Any kind of a time frame?

COACH CYPRIEN: There's not a time frame, but I will tell you soon, real, real soon.

Q. How does your team feel about the move to the SEC, being that it was a very football-related decision?

COACH CYPRIEN: To be honest with you, we really hadn't talked about it as a team. In fairness to our veterans and especially our seniors, our goal is to obviously compete and win the Big 12. That's really all we've talked about.

And that's only fair to our seniors. That's -- we're looking straight ahead at this year and this year only.

Q. Know Dash was playing with the wrist injury and just really seemed to affect his shot. Wondering how is he and how he looked in Europe and what reports do you have on him in terms of that coming around.

COACH CYPRIEN: He's been 100 percent. And, again, for a point guard getting the opportunity to spend time with the new staff has been a blessing for him. And we expect great things from him. I think Dash is really going to have a breakout senior year, not in terms of numbers or stats, but just in terms of his leadership and the things that he brings to this ball club. So he's 100 percent, going strong, and again we expect big things from Dash.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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