

October 20, 2011



An Interview With:

TEXAS TECH BILLY GILLISPIE

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to take the opportunity to welcome Billy Gillespie. Your thoughts about the upcoming season.

COACH GILLISPIE: Excited to be back, excited to be back at Texas Tech and excited to have the opportunity to coach these young players that have given us everything they have since the day that I came back, and really excited about it.

Practice is going well. Got a long ways to go with ten new players, but really look forward. Glad to be here in Kansas City today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Obviously you've gone through a lot in the last few years, what's the biggest way you've changed as a coach now since the last time you were in this conference at A&M?

COACH GILLISPIE: Well, I think we always have to adjust. And I think all coaches are constantly adjusting. The best ones are, and I'm trying to strive to become one of the best.

And you always try to assess what you have and assess where you need to be and figure out how you're going to get there. I think that's what coaching is all about.

So I've been the luckiest guy in the world and you never want to take time away from the game. But that happened, made the most of that opportunity or most of that time and got another great opportunity, looking forward to making it happen.

Q. As you come back and look around, what's the same? What's different about the Big 12 that you initially see?

COACH GILLISPIE: I mean, I'm learning as you come back, because it's amazing how quickly the state of college athletics change. When

I was here before, Colorado and Nebraska were in the league, and you know you have a lot of things happen in our league as we speak.

And so I'm probably not the greatest guy to ask right now because I haven't gone through it again. I know what it was once like, and I think that I assume what it is still like.

But until we go through the season, I'll probably be able to answer that question better for you next year.

But I know this: Every single time you go to play, you'll have to be ready to play. There's great coaches, great fans, great players, there's great home court advantages, great excitement and great enthusiasm. It's one of the best leagues, if not the best league in basketball every single year.

And no matter how it changes or how it stays the same it's going to be a very difficult place to play, but we're getting ready for the challenge and looking forward to it.

Q. Not only changes in the conference, not only changes with the coaching staff, but huge changes with the roster at Texas Tech, with so many new players coming in, so much turnover there. Do you have a handle on what this team is, what it can do, just the players themselves?

COACH GILLISPIE: I really don't, Chuck. I mean, we're a work in progress. I think every team is probably a work in progress at this point. And they probably have a better feel for what they're going to look like when it's all said and done.

We have ten new players, and I'm telling you, they're working as hard as they could possibly work. We have three returning players that I'm very, very excited about that I think that have had some success, but I think they'll have great success this year. Hopefully we'll be able to bond the new guys with the returning guys and be something that's going to be fun to watch and be very, very competitive in this league.

But I'm so happy and so proud of these

ASAPsports

...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at asapsports.com

B. Gillespie - 10.20.11

guys. You know, they've got all the intangibles working for them. They do exactly what we ask them to do. If they're supposed to lift weights, they're lifting weights. There's never any reluctance. They want to be coached. They want to do what's right.

So we have to give them great leadership and see what we can turn it into before it's all said and done. But it is a challenge. I've never been around a team that's had ten incoming players with very little experience, absolutely no experience at this level. So we'll have to depend upon my experience a little bit, but also the experience of the three returning players.

Q. Can you just talk about Robert; you talked about how he's gotten out of his comfort zone in terms of being a leader but on the floor and his game what do you see that you like in terms of what he's improved since the summer?

COACH GILLISPIE: Robert has -- as I mentioned yesterday, I think I've never seen a player more outside of his comfort zone than Robert. And he's done that ever since we've basically had our first conversation.

And I think -- I'm not a prognosticator, those of you who know me know that I don't make bold statements but I will make a bold statement with him. I think he'll have an unbelievable season. And he's worked as hard as anyone I've ever been around in the six or seven months that we've been there.

He's dropped 25 pounds. He's changed his body fat from 18 to less than double digits. And you have to really admire that. It's not very easy to do.

The most important thing and the most admirable thing in my opinion is that he's not -- nationally he's not a vocal leader, but he's assessed what our team needs, and he's done what I've asked him to do in that regard, and he's become a very vocal leader.

Talking to these guys every single second of every single day, it's not easy to do if it's not natural for you. I do respect it. I think that's what great leaders do they figure out what needs to be done and they do it whether it works comfortably for them or not.

So really, really proud of him and I think he's going to have a great season. And because of all those intangibles but as far as basketball goes, we've been around some really good players that are interior players for the most part.

...when all is said, we're done.®

ASAPsports

visit our archives at asapsports.com

I think Robert's probably better facing the basket 15 to 18 feet. I think, again, that's where his comfort area is.

We've asked him to become a more physical player and play closer to the basket a lot of times to add that to his arsenal as far as his game is concerned. And he's getting better every single day.

He's been very well coached by his high school coach, Coach Snyder [phonetic] did a good job developing him. But he has great footwork, has great hands, and he's got great moves around the basket as well as facing.

So I think it will be a breakout season for Robert. I think -- and we're going to have to have him have a great season for us to have any success at all.

Q. You grew up in Texas and you were in a league with TCU. What do you think TCU can bring to the league beginning next year?

COACH GILLISPIE: I think that they -- I think because of the success they've had in football, they probably -- you know, it's always been a good school. It's located in a great spot. And they've always been very competitive and they've always wanted to do well athletically.

Going back, it's some of the best history in college football I think that they probably possess some of that going way back. And then here recently they've been as good as anyone in college football.

But being around the Metroplex area, I've noticed that they want to be competitive in everything. And they have the ability to do that. And I welcome them to our league next year. I think it's going to -- it's going to be a real challenge, because I think it takes away from opportunities of other people to go and recruit and I think they'll make up for most of those opportunities.

But I'll tell you, they are a progressive, emerging university as far as athletics go. And I think it's been led by the football program, but I think that there are other sports will do just as well.

Their basketball program has been in the World Series. I think they must have great leadership and they must have great commitment.

Now, they definitely want to win, and I think they'll be a great member of the Big 12 Conference.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.
FastScripts by ASAP Sports

B. Gillispie - 10.20.11