

**October 15, 2014**



An Interview With:

## **BRUCE WEBER**

COACH WEBER: Obviously, we're excited. Last year we had probably half our team was new. We had five freshmen last year and some transfers, so it was a little tougher transition, especially coming off a year where we had a very, very experienced team when I arrived at K-State.

So now these guys are a year older. It makes it a little easier for us, obviously, with practice, and just the preparing. Just feel like we have some good pieces. I don't think we've arrived by any means, but if some things happen -- injuries, I think, is a big key point with us, staying healthy and getting everybody healthy. Probably the development of the point guards will be a key for us, their maturity, how fast that comes.

And then just dealing with the schedule. Our schedule, we made it much more difficult in the nonconference, and then obviously the league is going to be, if not the best again, one of the best in the country.

**Q. Bruce, do you feel like this is your deepest team in terms of talent this season?**

COACH WEBER: Well, two years ago, obviously, we had great experience, and you had guys that had played a lot of minutes. We don't have quite that, but we probably have more players, or a similar number of players, where we can probably go two deep at each position.

Again, that's -- you know, just keeping guys healthy, staying healthy, that will be very important for us, but it's definitely much better than a year ago, where at times we had trouble -- especially if we went on the road, we had trouble having five-on-five in practice. We just didn't have enough people. Our walk-ons had to play an instrumental role.

So more depth with the big guys, no doubt about that. If we keep everybody healthy, I think

we'll be fine with the depth as far as the other positions go.

**Q. Bruce, you mentioned the point guards. How do you see Nigel and Jevon playing that? Do you see both of them playing a lot split time, or do you really want one guy to emerge and get a lot of minutes?**

COACH WEBER: Ideally, I'd like them to both play good quality minutes and get into that rotation. That means they're both playing well. I think they pushed each other in practice. Each one did some good things last year. Jevon, without practicing those first four or five games, he was pretty good. Then all of a sudden -- then lack of practice and habits and fundamentals probably caught up with him, and then he lost his confidence.

Then Nigel kind of stepped up. He started okay, and then kind of when Jevon came back, he hit a little bit of a lull, and then Nigel got going.

But both of them quickness, athleticism, pressuring the basketball, pushing the basketball. Nigel probably shooting, Jevon probably penetrating. So hopefully, we have a good mix between the two.

**Q. Bruce, tell us about Justin Edwards. What kind of player is he, and what's the expectation?**

COACH WEBER: We're very fortunate to get a transfer from Maine. I believe he scored a thousand points there in two years. I know he scored a lot. He was one of the better players in that conference.

He wanted to take a chance to play at a higher level, and some different teams in our league around the country, when he announced he was transferring, got involved. I flew to Bangor, Maine, and that was -- I didn't know there was such a place, to be honest. We went up and visited with him and got him on campus.

Very explosive. He gained 16 pounds last year, a lot of it through weight training that he hadn't done much in the past. He can get to the basket. He'll -- I promise you one thing, he'll have some dunks that we'll get on ESPN.

As far as all the other stuff, that's where he's got to develop, just a day-to-day guarding people, staying intense, those are the things that he'll continue getting better at, I hope. If he can do those things, he's going to give us a lot -- give us another option scoring-wise for Marcus Foster.

**Q. Coach, I was just kind of wondering. You know, it's easy for fans and people to relate to, when you recruit a top ten guy and he comes in and he's a big star. Marcus Foster, I don't think he was like one of those guys. So I'm just kind of wondering, how does that kind of guy come in right off the bat his first year and develop into a star? I guess, why wasn't he a more heavily recruited player?**

COACH WEBER: I think it kind of tells you -- so many kids around the country, the recruiting guys that do the ratings, they can't see everybody. And then they may see him one time, and he might have played poorly. Now they mark down whatever rating they have, they give him some rating, they saw him one time.

So we -- right when I got the job at K-State, he was one of the first people we called. We knew we wanted to get in Texas. We were looking for guys that we probably weren't going to -- it was too late to get involved with the top five or so. So now you went to that next group.

The first time I saw him, man, he's pretty good. He didn't have a great summer, and part of it, they had too many players on his summer team, his AAU team, and he kind of got lost in that mix. But when he got to campus, we like, man, this kid's pretty good. He should have been a top 100 kid.

It's fine. I think guys like that, probably a little more drive, a little more hungry. He was in the gym more than anybody last year. The big thing now is to keep that drive. With him, like a lot of guys that have success early, are you still hungry? Are you pushing for more? That will be the key to his season, I would say.

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