

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Media Day

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Steve Prohm

Iowa State Cyclones

STEVE PROHM: Thanks for everybody being here.

First thing I want to do, because NBA tipped off last night, is wish all of our former guys great success this season. Came out yesterday I think we've got eight guys in the NBA right now, on opening rosters. I think one of the 15 schools have that. Really proud of those guys. Seven of those guys have their degree. So proud of those guys.

Wish all of our guys, guys overseas, G League, great, great success this season.

Excited to get this season started. A great time of year. Baseball playoffs, NBA tipped off, college football, NFL is in full swing. We've had a couple of scrimmages under our belt, getting ready to tip off the new year.

Had a good summer. Great to get this team to Italy to get ahead of the curve a little bit with new pieces, returning guys moving into new roles.

Proud of (Tyrese) Haliburton, did a great job with Coach Weber with Team USA, winning gold in Greece. That was a great experience. Did a terrific job. Happy for Coach Weber.

Really excited to get (Rasir) Bolton eligible from Penn State. Gives us a chance to move Haliburton around, different positions, take him off the ball some.

The biggest thing, strength of our team, a little bit different than in years past, our most experience comes from our three big guys, Mike Jacobson, George (Condit IV) and Solomon Young, a couple of those guys that are here today. We have some new guys, Tre Jackson, Caleb Grill, young guys that can make shots, doing a good job.

We have a great schedule. We open up with Mississippi Valley State. We go right to Oregon State the next game. We go to The Bahamas. Got a terrific field there. Road game at Auburn. We've got home games with Seton Hall, Iowa, the 18-game league schedule.

Ready to get started. This is a team I think we're going to have to adjust a little bit early to see what's best for



this team as we move guys around, guys establish new roles. But excited and ready to get started.

Q. How is Haliburton handling the NBA buzz, all the hype?

STEVE PROHM: Yeah, I think he's handled it great. I think one thing I've done different than last year, I already met with him and his family, we've gone over that, the good, the bad, the ugly involved with that. I think we have a great game plan going forward to where we can leave him alone, he can be where his feet are, and that's in Ames, Iowa, right now, helping us focus on getting back to the NCAA tournament.

The biggest thing I've told him is what got him on this stage is his spirit, and that's what he has to continue to have every single day. If he does that, obviously he's moving into a new role, he was a 4-1 assist to turnover ratio last year, had some terrific games, he'll be a lot more on the ball primarily this year. Like I said, we can put him off the ball with Bolton.

I think he's handled it great. I think there's been a little bit of a learning curve, which is to be expected. But I think the last week he's kind of slowly starting to settle down, get back into his comfort level.

Q. You brought up Caleb Grill. What has impressed you most about him so far? How much importance do you place on guys when going out recruiting and seeing them play multiple sports?

STEVE PROHM: Everybody probably has a different thought process on that. I think the best thing for him now is that he can just focus on basketball. He was a state high-jump champion, jumped 6'8". He pitched, played quarterback. He was the guard for his high school team.

He's a guy that really competes. He's probably too hard on himself at times. But his character is off the charts. His work ethic is terrific. He competes every day. The thing that he brings to the table right away as a freshman, his ability to really space the floor and spread you out. Can really make shots.

The best thing about him going from playing four sports to one sport is now he can really get honed in on the skill level basketball-wise, film basketball-wise. But I think he understands competition. He understands

being a part of a team, different cultures. I think that's a benefit from playing multi-sports.

The best thing about fine-tuning to one sport now is some of his weaknesses we can make strengths now.

Q. How does the return of Solomon Young help you with your front-court rotation?

STEVE PROHM: I think it's big. There are times last year we probably missed his physicality, toughness. It's great to have him healthy.

The great thing about Solomon is he has great toughness. He's been a part of a couple NCAA teams, a couple of Big 12 championship teams here in Kansas City. But he really is probably our most experienced, elite defender that can really understand how to guard pick and roll and defend the basket when you're going against guys the size of abnormal but can he, guys in our conference, have to get them off their comfort spot.

He's had a great summer and great fall. I'm really pleased with where he's at now.