

Big 12 Conference Big 12 Men's Basketball Tipoff Media Day

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Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Kansas State Wildcats

Jerome Tang

Media Day Press Conference

JEROME TANG: First of all, it's a pleasure to be here. A little bit more comfortable than last year. Excited, happy with the roster that we've assembled, and excited about the opportunity to start playing games.

Q. How did you feel about being inside the Kingdom with the Chiefs banging a drum that a lot of Chiefs fans loved? It was a popular day for you that day.

JEROME TANG: You know, the Thursday night home game before that, that was my very first NFL game that I'd ever been to in my life. One of my assistants, Bailey, told me about the drum, the guy on the drum, and I had no clue.

Then a week later, I get a call to do it, and I thought it was a huge honor to do something to bring a fan base together.

I have since learned that there are some people that may not have been as excited about that, and sometimes we do things for one reason and it can be construed as something else. It was never meant to offend anyone but to bring a fan base together, and I considered it an honor for the reason why they asked me, and moving forward I think I'll educate myself a little bit more on everything before making certain decisions.

Q. You said you were more comfortable this year than you were a year ago at this event. Get into that a little bit; why are you more comfortable?

JEROME TANG: You know what to expect. Last year was my very first time, and I was the very first person up here and I had never, ever watched Big 12 media day. When Scott was up here, I was at the house working. It never was something that I paid attention to.

Now I kind of have an idea what to expect, the going



around to different groups, so just feel a little bit more comfortable.

Q. What were some of the smaller things that allowed you guys to be so successful in your first year that maybe other coaches could replicate and have their own success like that?

JEROME TANG: Man, if I could tell you how to replicate, and it would give you those results, then man, I'd be an incredibly rich man.

I'll tell you this: I believe that we've found winners. We had 10 state championships on our team last year, guys who had won. They'd won the last game in their career at some point in time. Then I have a staff that loves me, like really loves the guys, and they were willing to be honest with me when we weren't going in the right direction of something needed to be changed.

When you get people who are transparent with each other and operate out of a mode of love, you can accomplish anything.

Q. I wanted to ask about your recent Colorado trip, how that came about and what you got out of that.

JEROME TANG: Well, I've known Ray Forsett, who's Deion's chief of staff, for a very long time. I knew him as a high school coach. We recruited one of his players, Isaiah Austin, who played for us at Baylor. So I have a long relationship with him, his dad Pops, Justin, his brother, and Ray and Deion have worked together for years.

Then I learned about Constance, who runs SMAC, and I wanted to learn more. I wanted to expand what I was doing because there's a fine line between going from good to great, and I thought we were good, but I want to be great, and I want to be around great people.

Ray opened the opportunity for me to be able to meet with Deion and find out roster management, staff management, things like that from him, and then from Constance about how to take our brand, the K-State brand, and not just make it national, because it already is, but make it global,



because I believe that I'm in the best place in the world and we can win National Championships and compete for National Championships every year.

I want to do my part to put us in that position.

Q. Talking about branding, you guys have been one of the more open programs in terms of social media and putting things out there. I'm curious what inspired that when you took the job, and how comfortable have you gotten being so open with the entire world about your program?

JEROME TANG: Okay, well, Jareem Dowling on my staff, he is a unique individual. There might only be three other people in America that can do what he does. His ability to tell a story through social media and let people feel how real we are, that's really special.

I wanted him to be able to be himself.

The other thing is I just believe that when you share, right, you help other people get better, and you get blessed for the sharing.

I know sometimes there's certain -- people think they have secrets and they want to keep them, but there really aren't no secrets. We're just replicating what other people have done and putting our own personality on it.

Nobody can duplicate what they do because they don't have our personalities, nor our love, nor our care, nor our passion.

I think our recruits out there are seeing that, and they want to be a part of it.

Q. How do your conversations in the transfer portal change when you have the proof of concept you guys were able to show last year, and then parlaying that into the portal this cycle?

JEROME TANG: Yeah, last year we recruited 75 guys. We did 75 Zooms with video and everything to sign 11. So 61 guys told us no.

During the NCAA Tournament I got a lot of text messages from 61 guys saying, Coach, I messed up, or congratulations.

My message to the new guys is you can either sent me a congratulatory text or you can enjoy it with me. So thankful for the ones who have chosen to enjoy it with us.

Q. What's the biggest impact that Tylor Perry has

made since he got on campus?

JEROME TANG: He smiles every day, and people just love being around him.

He may be the best shooter in America. So that is the basketball side of things.

But just the personality and how he brings people together is really special.

Q. How good is this league going to be, and do you have any sense of what kind of league it's going to be with this new schedule and everything?

JEROME TANG: Well, we have been the best basketball league in the country for a while now, and we will continue to be the elite basketball league in America. What's exciting is that every kid out there wants to compete against the best, and so they're going to want to come play in the Big 12. We have the best coaches, the best environments, and you have the best players, and the results speak for themselves.

That is super exciting moving forward. Excited about the new teams that are coming in and the great venues we're going to get to play in.

I'm excited about being part of growth, and when you can walk around and know that you are the very best at what you do, it just gives you extra confidence.

Q. Keeping in mind the roster churn you guys have this year, the roster turnover, the new additions, what do you foresee Nae'Qwan Tomlin's role being, and what more are you hoping to see from him in year two at the program?

JEROME TANG: Well, last year when Qwan played 30 or more minutes in a game, we only lost one game, and that was the last one.

Him staying out of foul trouble is what I hope so that we can keep him on the floor for 30 minutes, and if he's out there and playing with energy, he's going to be super productive.

He had a great summer, and so his confidence level should be very high.

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