

**November 1, 2012**



An interview with:

## **COACH LISA BLUDER**

COACH BLUDER: We wanted to challenge ourselves with a good Division II school. Quincy did have a good team last year, but they lost a lot of players. We're looking at a team with nine freshmen. We know they're going to be young and inexperienced.

I think the exhibition games, you go in there, you want to set the tempo for your team and win every game you step on the floor, but hopefully you're going to learn against yourselves.

Going against each other in practice or against the guys, you stop learning about yourselves. I think when you play against somebody that doesn't know you as well, I think that helps you. It will be great for us in our preparation for the Northern Illinois game, just having this exhibition game, getting those jitters over, freshmen putting on their uniforms officially for the first time, playing in front of a crowd.

So I think that will be very beneficial to us on Sunday.

Starting lineup that we're going to go with, before practice today the starting lineup was going to be Sam Logic, Jaime Printy, Theairra Taylor, Bethany Doolittle and Morgan Johnson. Jaime did get hurt in practice and is doubtful for Sunday. It's an injury to her other leg, not a knee. It will not keep her out the year, but she did strain a hamstring and that can keep you out for a significant amount of time.

We don't know what's status is for Jaime. This just occurred in practice today. Again, she's doubtful for Sunday, and there's really no reason to risk anything. I would rather have her full force on Friday than having her on Sunday.

Other than that, we're very excited about getting the season started and underway.

**Q. What did you learn about on your scrimmage? You had Creighton come in?**

COACH BLUDER: We had Creighton last Saturday.

You know, I love playing them because they play so aggressively. They are a team that's always at the top of the Missouri Valley Conference. They are a good defensive team and they pose some things in the full court press we don't see all the time. It's good we play against a team that's really very different from us as far as the full-court pressure part.

They don't have a true post, so that makes it a little bit unusual for us to defend against them. I don't think there were any big surprises in that game. It reminded us we need a quick start. We had a slow start in the game. It reminded us we need to have a good start.

I thought we played average the first half; I thought we played very well the second half. It was a good reminder we've got to be ready to go right from the start. That's something that, again, is good to learn early.

As far as offensively or defensively, there were no big surprises out there really.

**Q. I take it Jaime had been in the starting lineup, progressing fine from the ACL.**

COACH BLUDER: She will be, absolutely. She still is. The ACL is fine. Now it's just the other leg we have to worry about, getting that hamstring strain taken care of.

**Q. Was it a compensating type of injury?**

COACH BLUDER: It may have been. It may have been that she was compensating for that other leg. But those are tough things to tell.

**Q. If this was a regular-season or post-season game...**

COACH BLUDER: I think she would be doubtful no matter who we're playing on Sunday.

**Q. On your list of things you want to accomplish in the exhibition, what are some of the things on the top of the list you'd like to see?**

COACH BLUDER: Now we've lost some depth. We have more depth this year than we've had before. In saying that, Jaime is gone. But we really need to figure out our best rotations, which group works best together.

We need to continue to work on some fundamental skills. I'm not going to point those out. I don't think that's a good thing to point out to you guys. I'll point them out to my team.

There are certain areas we need to shore up on. I think again this game against Quincy will help the players realize we need to work on those areas, too.

**Q. Without Jaime, does that muddle everything for you, finding that best rotation?**

COACH BLUDER: It does. It doesn't give us the opportunity to have some extra rotations in there with somebody that's going to be in there a lot with Jaime. It definitely takes away from that.

What I'm excited about, too, it gives Bethany her first opportunity to start at the power forward. Her entire life she's played center. This is the first time she's been a starter, and playing a whole new position. That will be a good test for her as well. Hopefully our experiment will work. That's what we're banking on.

But, yeah, it does take away a little bit from our rotations.

**Q. How has that been going, two bigs in the front court?**

COACH BLUDER: We have liked it. We're getting progressively better at playing a double low post. Bethany is capable of playing on the block, she's capable of playing face in the basket. I think she's strong in both areas. It gives us more versatility. If they have a short lineup, we can go with a double post offense. If they have a power forward, we can take Bethany out of rebounding action.

Just having that height there will give us great versatility.

**Q. What are the advantages of having that lineup?**

COACH BLUDER: Especially defensively some things we wanted to work on with a post we couldn't work on with Creighton. I don't know what Quincy is going to bring to the table as far as offenses and defenses. I haven't watched any of their film from last year. We don't conduct a normal scouting report for this game.

We are really focusing more on ourselves, getting ourselves better, than preparing for an opponent, which is very different than we do during the year.

**Q. Doubleheader with the men, how much fun are those, to have that type of crowd, that type of atmosphere?**

COACH BLUDER: We do have several men's and women's doubleheaders this year. I think it's good for our program because we have the opportunity to expose our program to some fans that may not have come to our game, some men's basketball fans that haven't seen women's basketball for a long time.

It gives them an opportunity to see us by sticking around later or coming early for their game. That's good for our program. It's a great environment to have the extra fans here. That's good for our players to get used to that.

**Q. With Jaime out, is Melissa the natural two or are you going to open it up?**

COACH BLUDER: Melissa will fill in now. I didn't mention that. She'll take over for Jaime as the starting off guard position just like last year.

**Q. Update on the freshmen health and performance-wise?**

COACH BLUDER: Health-wise everybody is good. Nicole Smith is a little bit slowed because of having that late ACL, later than Jaime's, then having some extra work done when she got here in the fall. She's a little bit slowed.

But we have some pretty good depth at that position with Morgan, Bethany backing up the five, then Kayla Timmerman as well. All the other freshmen are doing fine. Kali Peschel will probably see the most playing time of anybody. I've seen some really good growth in Kayla Timmerman this week. She's been better at focusing and getting better at that five position.

It's exciting for the freshmen to be able to put the uniform on for the first time and see how they do.

**Q. How about your sophomore point guard?**

COACH BLUDER: Kathy? She's plateaued a little bit right now. I need her to have more confidence bringing the ball up against the pressure. Again, I think this exhibition game will do a lot for her.

But Trisha Nesbitt has also been playing some point guard for us and been doing a very good job.

**Q. Talk about Theairra. I don't think she started since her freshman year.**

COACH BLUDER: That's correct.

**Q. What does that mean for her now to be out there with the starting five?**

COACH BLUDER: I'm sure she loves it. I know I do. I'm so excited that Theairra is back. She's healthy. She's in our starting lineup because she deserves to be there. She's earned it.

I know this team has tremendous confidence in her. This team loves to have her on the floor. I know I've said this before, but if there's ever a kid that deserves it, she does. I'm so excited to see her in a uniform, healthy, being able to contribute for us because she's been through so much.

**Q. Talent-wise maybe she could have started in other years, but maybe couldn't trust her on her knees for that number of minutes.**

COACH BLUDER: She was in the mix last season. She was our first sub off the bench, definitely getting that playing time.

I really don't know why last year, we just felt like that was the best lineup to go with, went with that. This year this is what we feel is the best lineup for us now.

**Q. How is it different going into this game where you're focused on yourself than maybe beating the opponent?**

COACH BLUDER: Scouts are different. The amount of film work we do to prepare the team. The scouting report length, the amount of plays we put in, personnel strengths are totally different.

We won't slow down. For example, if we're playing a regular game, we may back up the day before or even the two days before. This week we're going as hard as we can all the way through Saturday's practice.

We may be a little bit more fatigued on Sunday than normal, but I want to keep with getting as many quality practices as we can and not worry so much about the outcome of the game, albeit I want to win the game. But more concerned about continuing to grow our team instead of taking the time to go through a Quincy scout in practice.

**Q. How is Jaime mentally through this now? Pretty upbeat person. How is she taking all of this?**

COACH BLUDER: Jaime is a great kid. It's tough, though. Right now she's a little bit down. She wants to play. This is what she came here to do. She wants to play. It was so close, within her grasp, starting again on Sunday.

Again, my priority here has got to be to have her healthy for the season opener, not healthy for Sunday. So we're not going to do anything silly or push it in any way. But she's pretty disappointed right now.

**Q. What kind of luxury is it to have Melissa, who started 10 games last year come right in?**

COACH BLUDER: There's always a benefit when somebody gets injured. You hate to see it, but there is a benefit. The benefit of Jaime getting hurt last year was that Melissa became comfortable as a starter. She got a lot of extra minutes. So that was the by-product. Now it's going to pay off again for us. For her entire career that's going to help her.

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