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An interview with:

IOWA COACH TODD LICKLITER

THE MODERATOR: Up next is head coach Todd Lickliter. Lickliter enters his third season with the Hawkeyes and returns four starters from last year's team.

Coach, if you'd like to start with an opening statement, and then open up to questions.

COACH LICKLITER: Good morning. It's an exciting time. It's always exciting to start a new season fresh and have new opportunity.

Without even needing to be said, it's an incredible league. We have I think 22 out of the top 30 scorers back, we've got the All-Conference team, All-Members back from the First Team. The systems are incredible.

And the coaching is fantastic. It's a terrific challenge and one that really, if you love the game, you appreciate it. So we're excited about the opportunity. This year our veterans are still young, but it's fun.

At least we have individuals that have a good understanding and a true commitment that is necessary. I can see the results of their work in the off-season just by the strength they've gained, and we have terrific leadership.

And you have to have leadership. And those leaders have to have an understanding of what you want. And Jarryd Cole and Devan Bawinkel, Jarryd's a junior and Devan's a senior, I think will provide the leadership we need. And the sophomores we have returning that have a lot of game experience will actually be veterans, and we've added to that a good recruiting class.

So we're excited about the opportunities. We know that the expectations are low, but if predictions always came true, then there would be no need to play the games. And so that's the beauty of the sport. So we're looking forward to the season and to the opportunities ahead.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Tom Izzo has said that the best thing for basketball in the Big Ten is for football programs to do well, that's why he's been such a fan of Spartan football. How much does Kirk Ferentz' 8-0 start help getting kids excited about Iowa basketball?

COACH LICKLITER: I love it because Kirk Ferentz does things. He's a great coach, great program, and he makes you proud to be a Hawkeye. I think our players appreciate the way they play, and so there's definitely excitement and we just keep pulling for them. Keep playing. I just love their approach.

So I don't know that it helps as far as the way we're going to play or anything. Although, it gives you a vision of what needs to be done, there's no question about that.

If we could emulate their approach, I'd gladly do that.

Q. Last year IU (Indiana) got its only Big Ten win against you guys, and obviously you guys did a little bit better. What do you expect from that match-up this year?

COACH LICKLITER: I think every match-up is something that is so demanding, and I told time last year I was really impressed with the way that his kids just continued to fight and play. And you knew they were dangerous.

We were a team that had very little margin of error. We won a few close ones. But we had to play at a very -- at our highest level to be able to compete. And so I give Indiana a lot of credit for the way they played that night. They were a better team, without question.

I think there were other games that they were in that they were very dangerous. So I thought Tom did a great job with them. I think that that's a game that we see it as just another challenge, just like the rest of the opportunities in the Big Ten.

Q. I was wondering about Devon Archie. First, exactly how did he hurt his shoulder and how is his progress and how does this kind of prevent him from grasping your system?

COACH LICKLITER: Well, it's too bad, because you're always disappointed when somebody's injured. It's so frustrating for them. And you're thankful that it's not more serious, obviously.

It goes to show how fragile it was. Because it was really a non-contact drill and he just happened to lose his footing and fell back on his shoulder and had -- I always hesitate to go into medical terms or aspects because I don't fully understand everything that's happened, but the way I understand it is he dislocated or separated his clavicle, which is pretty unique.

They had to go back and set it. And now they've got to watch and make sure that it stays without having to pin it or anything. And right now that's the hope, and we don't have any reason to think it won't happen that way.

Obviously it sets him back. He's going to be out four to six, maybe seven weeks. But he's an eager learner, very bright, pays attention. And I know he'll catch up. And I also know it's frustrating, disappointing for him. And we miss him.

But it's something that you deal with, and we've dealt with a lot of injuries in the last couple of years, and that's something that I'm hoping this is the last one for the year. That's for sure.

Q. Is there any thought that you might have to redshirt him? I mean if this lingers on past seven weeks?

COACH LICKLITER: You can always -- that's not a decision we have to make right now. And as long as he doesn't play, it's a decision that we can make. And we'll just have to evaluate as we go.

He is a player that his best years are ahead of him. He just keeps improving every year. And so an extra year of college would not be detrimental to him, but we're just going to have to see how quickly he progresses. And obviously we'd have to talk with him about it and it's not something that we made a decision on at this point.

Q. With the way the Big Ten schedule falls off, some teams you play twice, some

once. Would you be in favor of just 20 games, play everyone twice?

COACH LICKLITER: It's not something that I've done a lot of -- given a lot of thought to, because it's not pressing. I've got bigger issues, to be honest with you.

But if we did that, then you've got to look at your non conference schedule and make sure that things fit accordingly. But I don't know that that's a problem. Although I do think with the Big Ten conference tournament, 18 games, it's a demanding schedule. Last year our schedule was ranked in one ranking 32nd in the nation. When you're playing the best league, it is demanding.

So it really almost doesn't matter what I think. If they decide to go to 20, they'll go to 20. Right now it's 18. And we just accept it and prepare the best we can. So it's not something I've given a lot of thought to.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

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