



# THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

## SPORTS INFORMATION

May 18, 2009

### IOWA BASKETBALL PREPARES FOR FOREIGN TOUR

IOWA CITY, Iowa - - The University of Iowa men's basketball team begins final preparations Saturday for its 2009 summer tour to Italy and Greece, where the Hawkeyes will play four exhibition games.

Iowa will practice for six days before departing Friday, May 22 for Rome. The Hawkeyes will play their first exhibition game Sunday, May 24 in Rome against Basket Ferentino. The game schedule also includes three games in Athens, May 27 vs. the Greek Senior Select team, May 29 vs. Dukas and May 31 against Greek Club Team II.

The Hawkeyes will stay in Rome for three days before spending the remainder of the trip in Athens. The Iowa travel party returns to the United States Monday, June 1.

"We're excited to have the opportunity to practice and prepare together as we travel to Italy and Greece," said Iowa Coach Todd Lickliter. "Our guys have worked hard in individual spring workouts and now we have nearly a week to practice following final exams in preparation for the exhibition games.

"A trip such as this provides some unique opportunities," added Lickliter. "It's an excellent educational and cultural opportunity for our players and coaches. It's also a great time to build comradery and togetherness. From the basketball standpoint, it allows us practice time and competition against strong, quality teams that are in their season of play."

The men's squad is visiting the same areas in Italy and Greece that the Hawkeye women's program toured in 2007. The Iowa women went on to share the 2008 Big Ten title and earned NCAA tournament bids in both 2008 and 2009.

"Our tour to Greece was spectacular," said Iowa Women's Coach Lisa Bluder. "We had a great mix of highly competitive basketball, tours of amazing historical sites and relaxing time to bond with our team. I know the experience helped us in terms of improving our play and the chemistry developed among the players and coaches."

The men's program is taking its first summer tour since visiting Australia in 2003, despite the fact that the NCAA allows teams to travel overseas once every four years. Iowa and Basketball Travelers, Inc. have had a contract for the tour since the trip was first planned in 2007. Basketball Travelers, Inc. schedules foreign tours for Division I, II and III programs and sponsors a number of college basketball exempt tournaments each season.



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““We have had a signed contract since 2007,” said Lickliter. “We are grateful that the staff at Basketball Travelers, Inc. allowed us to delay our trip until this spring. While the funding has been raised through basketball events over the years, we would have paid a substantial penalty for postponing this trip any longer.”

The Hawkeye roster includes seven returning players from the 2009 season. Players joining the program for next season are not eligible to participate. The Hawkeye roster includes senior Devan Bawinkel, junior Jarred Cole and freshmen Anthony Tucker, Matt Gatens, Andrew Brommer, Aaron Fuller and John Lickliter.



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