

# **Miami Men's Basketball Clips**

**2021-22**

## DJ Irving Named MBB Assistant Coach

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
April 22, 2021

University of Miami head men's basketball coach Jim Larrañaga announced Thursday the hiring of DJ Irving as the team's new assistant coach.

Irving, a former two-year captain at Boston University, comes to Coral Gables from Roman Catholic High School in Philadelphia.

"I am honored and incredibly excited to be an assistant coach at the University of Miami," Irving said. "I want to thank coach Larrañaga for this amazing opportunity to be a part of his program. He believed in my energy, my passion for the game and my will to help this team get better every day. I cannot wait to work with the players, as well as learn from such an experienced group in coach Larrañaga, coach Caputo, coach Courtney and the rest of the staff. This is something I have been working towards for a very long time and I am truly blessed to be able to live out my dream in Coral Gables. Go Canes!"

In October 2018, Irving joined the coaching staff at Roman Catholic, a storied program that has produced numerous NBA players, including Rasual Butler and Brad Wanamaker. For three seasons, Irving was the assistant varsity coach and head freshman coach.

Irving's duties at Roman Catholic included player development and scouting varsity opponents. He aided the Cahillites to the Philadelphia Catholic League championship game each year, including winning the crown in 2019.

In addition, Irving worked with Team Final—the AAU program former Miami standouts Ja'Quan Newton, Davon Reed and Lonnie Walker IV played for—over the past year. Most recently, this spring, he served as the assistant coach of the U15 team.

"DJ came highly recommended to me by coaches and friends I trust. I was immediately impressed with his passion and enthusiasm for working with young players," Larrañaga said. "As a former outstanding Division I point guard who has been coaching at both the high school and AAU levels, he brings a different point of view into our program and recruiting process. I believe DJ has an extremely bright future ahead of him. I am confident our players will enjoy the energy DJ brings to the court and the close personal relationship he'll develop with them off the court. DJ is a winner in every

sense of the word."

Prior to his time at Roman Catholic, Irving spent the 2017-18 season as a professional player in Cadiz, Spain, with Union Linense Baloncesto. He led the team in scoring, assists and steals, while holding captain status on a mostly Spanish-speaking roster and helped his team place second in the division.

The previous year, Irving served as the special assistant to the head coach at his alma mater. Irving held that role during the 2016-17 campaign for BU head coach Joe Jones, aiding the Terriers to an 18-14 mark and a second-place finish in the Patriot League.

Irving got his start in the collegiate ranks immediately following the conclusion of his collegiate career. He served as a graduate assistant at Penn State during the 2014-15 season, helping the Nittany Lions to an 18-16 record, good for their most wins in four years.

Irving excelled as a collegian at BU, where he started 120 games in his four-year career. The two-time All-America East honoree and one-time All-Patriot League designee averaged 11.4 points, 3.1 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 1.1 steals per game as a Terrier. He finished his tenure with 1,456 total points, one of his numerous top-10 marks in the school's all-time record books.

BU compiled a 78-54 record during Irving's career, including logging a stellar 50-16 mark in conference action and winning the 2014 Patriot League regular season title. Three times, Irving helped the Terriers reach the postseason, headlined by a berth in the 2011 NCAA Tournament.

A native of Chester, Pa., Irving was a two-time PIAA First Team All-State selection at Archbishop Carroll High School in Radnor, Pa. He graduated from Boston University in 2014 with a degree in sociology.

## Already Feeling at Home

By Christy Cabrera Chirinos  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
July 6, 2021

It was, of course, a significant part of his college basketball education.

During his three-year career at George Mason, Jordan Miller learned all about the Patriots' memorable run to the Final Four in 2006.

He knew the names of the players on the roster. The coaches, too. He gained an understanding of the history the Patriots made that season and how their Cinderella story captured the imaginations of college basketball fans across the nation.

So earlier this year, when Miller received a call from Jim Larrañaga, the high-scoring guard was intrigued.

"The first thing he said to me when I answered the phone was 'Do you know about my success at George Mason?' and I was like, 'Well, duh,'" Miller recalled with a laugh. "I know the fan base does. They live and die by that Final Four trip they took. It's impossible for me not to know about that success. Of course I knew. And we just got to talking from there."

It proved to be a memorable conversation for both Miller and Larrañaga, who led the Patriots on that historic run before taking over as the head men's basketball coach at Miami.

Not long after their talk, Miller – who had entered his name in the transfer portal earlier – made the decision to enroll at Miami and join the Hurricanes himself.

He did so without ever setting foot on Miami's campus or meeting with Larrañaga and the rest of his new coaches face-to-face.

Still, he was convinced his new home was the right place for him in so many ways.

"Compared to all my other Zoom visits, Coach Larrañaga and the staff put so much effort into making it a good presentation. They broke down my analytics and stats from my previous years and showed me how I could fit in at Miami," Miller said. "They sent me clips of full games they watched from my past season at George Mason and I really saw the effort. The amount of times they would reach out to me, throughout the day, just to see how I was doing...they cared about my wellbeing. That really stood out to me."

The Hurricanes' efforts to make Miller feel

welcome didn't end there.

The same day he moved into his new dorm this summer, a handful of his new teammates – including forward Deng Gak, center Rodney Miller and guards Kameron McGusty, Harlond Beverly and Isaiah Wong – came over to chat before the group went out to eat together.

"It meant more than I could ever express in words," Miller said. "Being a transfer, I didn't know what to expect. Having that warm welcome and not feeling isolated was great. That first day, we were all laughing, getting to know each other and I couldn't have asked for a better welcome."

Since, Miller has been focused on trying to build on-court chemistry with those new teammates.

He brings with him an impressive resume, that includes being selected as a third-team All-Atlantic 10 honoree last season after averaging 15.8 point, 6.1 rebounds, two assists and a steal per game.

During his three years at George Mason, Miller had 50 double-digit scoring performances, seven double-doubles and on three separate occasions, topped the 25-point mark.

In high school, the Virginia native set the scoring record at Loudoun Valley High School with more than 1,700 points in his career. Twice he earned Virginia High School League All-State honors and in 2017, he was named the VHSL 4A Player of the Year after leading his team to the state championship.

Now, Miller is hoping to make a quick adjustment to the ultra-competitive ACC. His new coach already believes the experienced, high-scoring guard will make an impact.

"The first thing is he can play multiple positions. He can play guard, he can guard a guard, he can guard a big. He can shoot the three, he can post up," Larrañaga said. "He's very good at rebounding, driving the ball to the basket. He's got a lot of versatility in his game and that's going to be very helpful to us right from the very beginning."

Miller also brings with him invaluable experience, something he's honed not only over the course of his collegiate career, but from growing up around the game and learning it from his three older brothers, Jeffery, Justyn and Jovon, a former player at Ferrum College.

Playing beside them, Miller said, helped him

develop into the player – and person – he is today.

"We were definitely very competitive. Sometimes the arguments would go from the court to the house and my mom had to shut them down real quick," Miller said. "But I think that shaped me into who I am today. I have a love for basketball and I'm a very competitive guy at heart and that's where it all stemmed from. I always looked up to my older brothers and playing with them was bonding time. It was more than just shooting hoops. It was bonding and getting to spend time with your family. And yeah, there were definitely a lot of fights that got taken from the court to the house, but it was always in good spirits. I could not have asked for [better] older brothers. They've been great and supportive throughout my whole basketball career."

Now, Miller is hoping that competitive spirit leads to success at Miami.

The Hurricanes have faith that it will and that, both Larrañaga and Miller said, will only be a positive for the Hurricanes.

"He's quickly made the adjustment to our basketball program and fits in extremely well. He'll have no problems competing at this level," Larrañaga said. "He'll be able to compete in multiple positions because he's now older, stronger and has enjoyed a lot of success previously."

Said Miller, "I know a lot of people don't get to experience this and I'm blessed with this opportunity, to do something I love and play basketball at Miami. I've been blown away and I'm just happy, really glad to be here...It can only go up from here."

## Ready to do His Part

By Christy Cabrera Chirinos  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
July 27, 2021

Charlie Moore admits it wasn't exactly the easiest way to do things.

When he made the decision to transfer from his hometown program, he knew that because of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a very good possibility he'd have to choose where he'd play next without actually seeing that place in person – or without physically meeting his new coaches.

Fortunately, he'd already been through the recruiting process once and already built a connection with Hurricanes head coach Jim Larrañaga.

That connection paid off.

"It was pretty tough, not being able to go on visits like a normal recruiting process. But with Miami recruiting me, I just felt at home with those guys. The conversations were genuine," said Moore, who was recruited by the Hurricanes coming out of Chicago's Morgan Park High School. "I could tell they really cared about me and wanted the best for me throughout the process. They felt I could really come in right away and help the team be the best it could be. That genuineness, I felt it, even through Zoom calls. My parents felt it as well. At the end of the day, I felt like it was the best decision for me."

As to whether he and his new coaches laughed about their first go-round together on the recruiting trail?

"Yeah, we definitely did," Moore chuckled. "We definitely did."

Added Larrañaga, "We had recruited Charlie out of high school. We knew him to be a terrific point guard, a terrific leader, and a terrific passer, so we felt like he would fit in immediately. And he has. He really knows how to distribute the ball, he knows how to run a team. He can score. He works hard defensively and he's going to really help us, right from the jump."

A redshirt senior who has experienced virtually all the highs and lows of college basketball game during his stops at Cal, Kansas and DePaul, Moore knows what will be expected of him when he suits up for the Hurricanes.

And the 5-foot-11 guard says he's more than ready to do his part to help Miami compete for

an ACC title and put together a deep NCAA Tournament run.

No doubt his resume will help.

Last year, Moore started 15 of DePaul's 19 games and led the Blue Demons in assists (4.2), steals (1.5) and minutes (32.3). He was the team's co-leader in scoring, averaging 14.4 points per game. A year earlier, he led DePaul in both scoring (15.5 ppg) and assists (6.1).

Now, the point guard is eager to see how he matches up against the best in one of the nation's top basketball conferences.

"The ACC is one of the top conferences in the country. Coming here with great teams like Miami, North Carolina, and Duke, getting to play against teams like that is a dream come true, to be honest," said Moore, who likes to draw on-court inspiration by studying the games of Stephen Curry, Damian Lillard and Chris Paul, among others. "I always watched these teams and how they competed and now I'm in the shoes to do so myself. Coming to the ACC, I just try not to take anything for granted. Continue to get better, help my team come out with wins. That's most important. That's my big goal, helping this team be the best we can be."

Moore is no stranger to competition.

He was introduced to the game as a toddler by his father, Curtis, and he was a fixture at his older brothers' high school games, often running onto the court during timeouts to put up shots before the games resumed.

Those older brothers – Michael and Paris – didn't always take it easy on Moore when the three would play together, even if he was younger.

That, he says, helped him become the player he is today.

"I was always with them. I grew up around basketball. My dad loved basketball. My brothers played and they used to work out a lot and I would be out there with them," Moore recalled. "I always wanted to be better than my brothers, I always had that competitive spirit and basketball came within my family. Growing up, seeing it all the time, being around it all the time...Even when I was losing to my brothers. I'd run back out there and do it again. It was always fun."

Basketball and family have always gone hand-in-hand for Moore, which is part of the reason he returned he returned to the Midwest, first

playing at Kansas and later DePaul.

In 2015, Curtis Moore suffered a serious stroke that left the entire family stunned – but, Charlie Moore notes, brought them closer than ever before.

Moore transferred to Kansas and later to DePaul in order to be closer to his father as he navigated a difficult recovery.

Being nearby, he said, was crucial.

"It was tough. One day, he was up and the next day, he was in the hospital...It's a tough feeling for someone to go down like that. You're so used to them walking and doing such-and-such with them, him taking you out, him shooting and working out with you and it was tough," Moore said. "But it made me and my family much closer. And it made me a better person."

"He's doing way better now. He's still recovering, but he's feeling better than he has in a long time and that's another thing that helped me make the right decision to come here to Miami and try to create something special...I feel like things are better back at home now, so I'm not as worried as much as I once was. I can come out and play freely and do what's best for the team."

Moore knows that while his father may be watching from a distance, he'll always have the unwavering support of the man who introduced him to the game.

And he's determined to continue making him proud – and make the most of the opportunity he's now got as a Hurricane.

"My dad has always been supportive, always wanted what was best for me, always put me in situations where I could succeed," Moore said. "I don't know another way to be. It's pretty cool. It's a great feeling. It means the world to me."

# MBB Signs Bensley Joseph

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Aug. 18, 2021

University of Miami head men's basketball coach Jim Larrañaga announced Wednesday the addition of Bensley Joseph to the Hurricanes' 2021 recruiting class.

A 6-foot-1, 165-pound guard from Arlington, Mass., Joseph is a graduate of Putnam Science Academy in Putnam, Conn.

"We are thrilled to welcome Bensley and his entire family into our Hurricane basketball program," Larrañaga said. "Bensley is an outstanding point guard, a great leader, an excellent defender and a terrific passer. He is a valuable addition to our team."

Joseph is considered the top recruit in the state of Connecticut by all three major recruiting websites—247Sports, ESPN and Rivals. The former two label him a four-star recruit, as does the 247Sports Composite.

ESPN pegs Joseph as the No. 80 overall player in the country, placing No. 14 among point guards. The 247Sports Composite rankings list Joseph at No. 101, including No. 16 at his position.

Joseph spent the 2019-20 academic year at Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Mass. There, he posted a dazzling stat line of 15.4 points, 7.2 rebounds and 6.8 assists per game, en route to earning Class AA All-NEPSAC distinction.

A highly-sought-after recruit throughout his high school tenure, Joseph played on the AAU circuit with Expressions Elite. He committed to the Hurricanes over offers from Boston College, Georgetown, Marquette, Providence and others.

Joseph is the third high school player to sign with Miami in the class of 2021, following fellow guards Nisine Poplar and Jakai Robinson, both of whom did so in November. The Hurricanes have also inked a pair of transfers in Jordan Miller from George Mason and Charlie Moore from DePaul.

## Miami adds walk-on PF Thomas Oosterbroek to top-25 class

By Christopher Stock  
InsidetheU  
Sept. 10, 2021

The Miami Hurricanes have added Los Angeles (Calif.) Brentwood power forward Thomas Oosterbroek as a walk-on ahead of the 2021-22 season.

Oosterbroek, who stands 6-foot-7 and weighs 235 pounds, had offers from Cal State Fullerton and Eastern Washington with interest from Loyola-Chicago and Montana State before joining the Hurricanes this week following tryouts.

He will wear No. 32.

Oosterbroek was named to the Gold Coast All-League First Team as a senior.

(Thomas) is one of the most skilled players I've had the pleasure of coaching," Brentwood coach Ryan Bailey posted on social media.

Oosterbroek is one of two walkons on the roster, joining guard Filippos Gkogkos who returns for his third season.

Oosterbroek also joins a freshman class that includes top-100 four-star guards Jakai Robinson and Bensley Joseph and three-star guard Wooga Poplar. Miami's recruiting class, which does not include Oosterbroek in the rankings, is considered the 24th-best class in the country, fourth-best in the ACC, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

Miami also added guards Charlie Moore (from DePaul) and Jordan Miller (from George Mason) in the offseason.

Miami opens its regular season on Nov. 9 against Canisius. The Hurricanes will have an exhibition game on Oct. 20 against Nova Southeastern.

## Dyer Promoted to Director of MBB Operations

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Oct. 4, 2021

University of Miami head men's basketball coach Jim Larrañaga announced Monday the promotion of Jeff Dyer to director of basketball operations.

In the fifth year of his second stint with the Hurricanes, Dyer served as Miami's associate director of basketball operations for the past four seasons.

"Jeff has worked his way up the ladder at Miami over the past several years through an impressive blend of hard work, intelligence, passion and dedication," Larrañaga said. "He has excelled in so many ways during his tenure at The U and I am excited to elevate him to this new position. Jeff is not only ready to take on this role, but poised to thrive in it."

In his new role, Dyer will aid Larrañaga in numerous capacities and his day-to-day responsibilities will feature a variety of different roles. Included are managing budgets, speaking engagements, community service and team travel, plus overseeing support staff and equipment.

Dyer, who is headed into his seventh year overall at Miami, will also assist with on-campus recruiting and serve as a staff liaison to numerous areas within the athletics department, including academics, communications, compliance, facilities, marketing and ticketing.

Over his four seasons as associate director of basketball operations, Dyer organized opponent film into scout edits, aided with the creation of scouting reports, managed film exchange, assisted with scheduling, helped run camps and hired graduate assistants. In 2018, his first year in that role, the Hurricanes earned a third-place finish in the ACC, posting a 22-10 (11-7 ACC) record and reaching the NCAA Tournament.

"I am incredibly grateful to Jim Larrañaga and the entire staff for their belief in me, not just now, but throughout my entire time at The U," Dyer said. "I have learned so much from Coach L and it has been a privilege to grow my career under his leadership. I am excited for the opportunity to move into this new role here at Miami, a place I truly love, and look forward to helping our team pursue its goals this season and beyond."

In 2016-17, Dyer served as the video coordinator at Bowling Green State University,

working under former Miami assistant coach Michael Huger. Prior to that, from 2014-16, Dyer worked as a graduate assistant at Miami.

During his first stop at The U, during which he earned a master's degree in sport administration, Dyer aided in film breakdown for opponent scouting facilitated the set-up and break-down of practice, worked on analytics spreadsheets and coordinated with the academic office to ensure that the players were on track academically. His efforts as a graduate assistant helped Miami reach the NIT title game in 2015 and the NCAA Tournament Sweet 16 in 2016, as the Hurricanes compiled a 52-21 ledger during that two-year stretch.

A 2014 graduate of the University of Delaware, where he earned a degree in health and physical education after serving as a four-year student manager, Dyer hails from Hillsborough, N.J., and now resides in Coconut Grove, Fla., with his fiancée, Nicole.

## UM men's basketball coach Jim Larrañaga encouraged by team's depth but knows it must

### stay healthy

By Khobi Price  
Sun Sentinel  
Oct. 5, 2021

After last year's disrupted and injury-ridden season, the Miami Hurricanes men's basketball team is entering the 2021-22 season with optimism that the program will have greater success than it's had in recent years. The Hurricanes finished the 2020-21 season with a 10-17 (4-15 ACC) record after being without several key players during the stretch run of the year due to injuries.

"Last year, there was no way to anticipate what we were going to be dealing with in terms of injuries," Hurricanes coach Jim Larrañaga said Tuesday.

"When Sam Waardenburg went down, I saw the foot injury. It looked like a mild sprain. It turned out to be a break and he's out for a year. Chris Lykes sprains his ankle. Then Rodney Miller goes down, Kam McGusty gets hurt. There's no way to anticipate who is going to get hurt, when they're going to get hurt [and] how long they're going to be out.

"When we're completely healthy, I think we've got a deep team. [Monday], we had a number of guys who didn't practice because we're dealing with injuries. I'm optimistic we can get healthy and have a good team this year. We have to be healthy in order to be good."

UM lost five players who were on last year's team at one point during the season to the transfer portal: Lykes (Arkansas), Elijah Olaniyi (back to Stony Brook, where he transferred to Miami from) and Nysier Brooks (Ole Miss), Earl Timberlake (Memphis) and Matt Cross (Louisville).

But the Hurricanes brought back Isaiah Wong and McGusty after both guards declared for the 2021 NBA draft before deciding to return to Coral Gables, helping give Larrañaga confidence in his team despite the roster turnover.

"I love the way both of them are practicing right now, the way they're giving it their all every single day," Larrañaga said. "The NBA scouts let them know there are parts of their game they have to work on, mainly on the defensive end of the floor."

Larrañaga identified improved rebounding from both Wong and McGusty as ways for Miami to improve its defense.

"We can't give up the shooting percentages, the offensive rebounds we have," Larrañaga

added. "We're not a very big team physically. We don't have a lot of bulk. So it's up to our guards to really help the big guys with rebounding. Kam and Isaiah are both very capable of averaging five, six, seven rebounds a game like Bruce Brown did."

The Hurricanes also added Jordan Miller (George Mason) and Charlie Moore (DePaul) solidifying UM's backcourt depth.

Moore, a sixth-year guard who's also played at Kansas and California, averaged 14.4 points and 4.2 assists with the Blue Demons last year while Miller, who's 6 foot 6, averaged 15.8 points and 6.1 rebounds with the Patriots.

"Both guys have made a very smooth adjustment to the University of Miami basketball program," Larrañaga said. "Charlie is clearly a point guard but he's also an excellent shooter. Miller, on the other hand, can stretch the [defense] and make some 3s, but he's perhaps our best offensive rebounder as well. He's very good in and around the basket.

"The two of them are certainly going to be in the rotation and I expect them both to make major contributions."

Among other additions to the team, Larrañaga said that he "loves" Miami's true freshman guard trio of Bensley Joseph, Jakai Robinson and Wooga Poplar.

"Very clearly Bensley is a point guard, he likes to distribute the ball [and] plays hard-nosed defense," Larrañaga added. "Poplar can really score, shoots from deep range. We had a 20-minute scrimmage, he had 20 points in 20 minutes. So he can really score, is about 6-4, 200 pounds. As a freshman he's got a lot to learn defensively.

"And Jakai Robinson is a real warrior, really hard-nosed guy, can defend, rebound, shares the ball very well. Those three freshmen are going to get a good look early in the season to see who is ready to help us right away."



## Gimbel Named Associate Director of MBB Operations

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Oct. 15, 2021

University of Miami head men's basketball coach Jim Larrañaga announced Friday the hiring of Joe Gimbel as associate director of basketball operations.

A former DIII assistant coach and DI graduate assistant with an extensive background in the sport, Gimbel fills the spot vacated by Jeff Dyer, who was promoted to director of basketball operations.

"I'm happy to welcome Joe into the Miami basketball program," Larrañaga said. "As soon as I met him, I knew he was the type of person we were looking for to fill this position. Joe is a hard worker with a strong basketball mind; he will benefit our program greatly."

Gimbel served as an assistant coach at Washington College in Chestertown, Md., for the first nine months of 2021. There, as the lone assistant on staff, Gimbel played a role in on-court coaching, recruiting and film breakdown. He also assisted with logistics and operations for the Shoremen.

From June 2018 through May 2020, Gimbel worked at his alma mater, Temple University, as a graduate assistant. His role within the program—first under the legendary Fran Dunphy and then under ex-NBA standout Aaron McKie—included, as permissible, assisting coaches with on-court instruction, as well as aiding with film review and overseeing student managers.

The preceding four years, Gimbel served as a student manager for the Owls, all under Dunphy. Gimbel aided the coaching staff with logistics, facility upkeep and, as permissible, on-court work.

"I am incredibly grateful to Jim Larrañaga for giving me this amazing opportunity to learn under his tutelage and join such a prominent program at the highest level of college basketball. It is truly an honor to be a Miami Hurricane," Gimbel said. "I'd also like to express my thanks to the coaches at Temple University and Washington College—especially Fran Dunphy, Aaron McKie and Aaron Goodman—for their support and guidance."

Gimbel has worked both the Fran Dunphy Basketball Camp and the University of Pennsylvania Day Camp, handling various roles such as fundamentals instruction, coordinating operations and officiating.

The Philadelphia native has also served as a runner for the Hoop Group at multiple camps, as well as for the Under Armour Association at its AAU Finals. His duties included filming games and maintaining facilities.

Gimbel graduated from Temple in 2018 with a degree in sports & recreation management. He added a master's degree in sports business from the school in 2020. Gimbel also earned a HarvardX Certificate in exercising leadership in July 2020.

## Hurricanes picked 12th in ACC, Isaiah Wong named Preseason All-ACC

By Christopher Stock  
InsidetheU  
Oct. 19, 2021

The Miami Hurricanes have been picked to finish 12th in the ACC according to media members at the 2021 ACC Tipoff event and guard Isaiah Wong was selected to the Preseason All-ACC First Team.

"I'm excited about this year's team," head coach Jim Larranaga said. "We have 14 players on the team, 12 scholarship players and two walk-ons. When we are completely healthy, I think we are a deep team. I'm optimistic we can get healthy and have a good team this year, but the big picture is we have to be healthy for us to be good."

The Hurricanes are coming off a 10-17 campaign in 2020-21 and 4-15 in the ACC, which placed 13th.

"Last year there was no way to anticipate what we had to deal with in terms of injuries," Larranaga said.

Wong was named to the All-ACC Third Team last year after leading the Hurricanes in scoring at 17.1 points a game. Wong also averaged 4.8 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.1 steals while shooting 43.1 percent from the field, 34.7 from 3 and 80.3 from the free-throw line. Wong was also one of 20 players named to the Jerry West Shooting Guard of the Year Award watch list.

Freshman guard Wooga Poplar received one vote in the Preseason Freshman of the Year poll.

The Hurricanes also return Kameron McGusty, Anthony Walker, Harlond Beverly, Deng Gak, Rodney Miller and Sam Waardenburg while welcoming in transfers Charlie Moore (DePaul) and Jordan Miller (George Mason) and freshmen Bensley Joseph and Jakai Robinson.

"I think our new guys are a group of athletic 3-point shooters," Larranaga said. "They can all handle the ball, they can all shoot the ball and they're good at finding their teammates who can shoot the three. We're likely to shoot a lot more threes than we did last year."

Miami hosts Nova Southeastern on Wednesday (7:00 p.m., ACCNX) for their lone exhibition game.

"I think our guys will be very excited about playing in the Watsco Center, hopefully with some fans in the stands. The Watsco Center

is a great home court," Larranaga said. "When our students come out, our fans come out and our season ticket holders come out, the energy in the building is really what creates the excitement. Our opponent on Wednesday is a team that loves to run and shoot the three. They're very, very fast and it should be an exciting, up-tempo game where the winning team is likely to score over 100 points."

The regular season begins on Nov. 9 with Miami hosting Canisius.

### ACC PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

The predicted order of finish was as follows:

1. Duke (47 first place votes), No. 9 in preseason AP Poll
2. Florida State (14), No. 20
3. North Carolina (5), No. 19
4. Virginia (9), No. 25
5. Virginia Tech (5)
6. Louisville (1)
7. Syracuse
8. Notre Dame
9. NC State
10. Georgia Tech
11. Clemson
12. Miami
13. Wake Forest
14. Pittsburgh
15. Boston College

### ACC PRESEASON TEAMS

Duke forward Paolo Banchemo was named the Preseason Player of the Year and Preseason Freshman of the Year.

Preseason All-ACC First Team: Buddy Boeheim, Syracuse, 68 votes; Keve Aluma, Virginia Tech, 52; Paolo Banchemo, Duke, 49; Armando Bacot, North Carolina, 46; Isaiah Wong, Miami, 37.

Preseason All-ACC Second Team: Michael Devoe, Georgia Tech, 25; Kihei Clark, Virginia,

23; Prentiss Hubb, Notre Dame, 17; Mark Williams, Duke, 12; Wendell Moore, Duke, 9; Caleb Love, North Carolina, 9; Malik Williams, Louisville, 9.

## Wong Scores 40 in Exhibition Win over Nova Southeastern

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Oct. 20, 2021

The University of Miami men's basketball team defeated Nova Southeastern, 106-95, Wednesday night at the Watsco Center in an exhibition affair to begin the 2021-22 campaign.

The Hurricanes' starting backcourt of third-year sophomore guard Isaiah Wong and sixth-year redshirt senior guard Kameron McGusty and Charlie Moore combined for 87 points in the win, paced by a game-high 40 from Wong.

"That was exactly the kind of game I anticipated. I used the expression that the first team to 100 would win," Miami head coach Jim Larranaga said. "Jim Crutchfield does a fantastic job and his kids did a really great job. I want to thank Nova Southeastern for the great competition that was out there. We have some guys who can score the ball, but we realize we have to defend and rebound a whole lot better."

Miami used an early 10-0 run—it featured eight straight points from Wong and an alley-oop from third-year sophomore guard Harlond Beverly to third-year sophomore forward Anthony Walker—to grab a 17-6 lead after just 4:55 of action.

From there, the Hurricanes continued their offensive onslaught to extend their lead as high as 22 in the first half. The Sharks, however, went on an 18-4 run to pull within eight during the final minute of the frame. After Miami answered with back-to-back buckets to close the session, it took a 45-33 edge into the locker room.

McGusty, who scored 14 points on 5-of-5 shooting in the first 12 minutes of the game, led all scorers with 18 points at the break, adding five rebounds and three assists. Moore totaled 13 first-half points for the Hurricanes, who shot 50.0 percent in the opening 20 minutes, while limiting Nova Southeastern to a 31.3 percent mark.

Miami upped its advantage back to 20, 74-54, with 10:48 remaining, but the Sharks continued to chip away and hit nine of their next 10 shots to make it a seven-point game, 83-76, with 7:04 on the clock.

Nova Southeastern sliced its deficit to four, 85-81, with 4:30 to play, but Wong countered with a personal 7-2 surge to give the Hurricanes a 92-83 edge just a minute later. After another two minutes, Miami had its lead up to 13, 100-

87, with the game solidly in hand, on its way to the 11-point victory.

Wong's 40 points set a would-be career high, as he finished with 10 more than he has in any regular season contest as a collegian. The Preseason First Team All-ACC honoree, who grabbed seven rebounds and a co-game-best three steals, shot 11-of-19 from the floor, 8-of-14 from 3-point range and 10-of-10 from the line. His eight made 3-pointers doubled his top mark in any regular season game.

"Isaiah Wong is a high-octane scorer. He can put the ball in the basket. He can make some incredible layups, [as well as hit] threes and free throws. And his teammates got him the ball. You've got to give a lot of credit to Charlie, Kam and his teammates for finding him in the open court and giving him a chance to go to the rim."

Moore, in his first action as a Hurricane, totaled 25 points, six rebounds and five assists. He went 4-of-6 from deep and 9-of-10 at the line.

McGusty finished with 22 points, shooting 7-of-14 overall, 2-of-4 beyond the mark and 6-of-7 at the line. The Katy, Texas, native added a team-best eight rebounds and a co-game-high eight assists, the latter mark setting a would-be career best.

Meanwhile, for the Sharks, Junior guard/forward Sekou Sylla registered 26 points and a game-best 14 rebounds. He had a double-double in the first half alone, recording 10 points and 11 rebounds before the intermission.

Senior guard Eddie Puisis posted 20 points for Nova Southeastern, while redshirt sophomore guard Mike Moore had 13 and freshman guard Dallas Graziani added 11. Three Sharks, including Sylla, fouled out on the night, as the team amassed 23 personal fouls.

The Hurricanes, who shot 16-of-32 in both halves, logged a 27-of-31 (87.1 percent) mark from the stripe. They also compiled 11 blocks on the night, including four from fourth-year junior guard Jordan Miller in his first game at Miami. Wong tallied three, as did sixth-year redshirt senior forward Sam Waardenburg, who made his return to the court after missing the 2020-21 season due to injury.

After nearly three weeks off, the Hurricanes will open the 2021-22 regular season Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m. with a home contest against Canisius.

## Miami Hurricanes basketball gives glimpse of team in exhibition. Takeaways from win

By Jordan McPherson  
Miami Herald  
Oct. 20, 2021

Isaiah Wong entered the Miami Hurricanes' lone exhibition game ahead of the 2021-2022 season with a slew of preseason hype. The third-year sophomore is a preseason first-team All-ACC member and landed on the watch list for the Jerry West Award, given annually to college basketball's top shooting guard.

Wong lived up to the early hype Wednesday in the Hurricanes' 106-95 win over Nova Southeastern University at the Watsco Center, scoring a game-high 40 points while adding seven rebounds, three blocks and three steals in 31 minutes of work.

"That boy's good," guard Charlie Moore said. "It was like he wasn't missing any shots tonight."

Well, Wong missed some shots Wednesday — he was 11 of 19 from the field, 8 of 14 from three-point range and sank all 10 of his free throw attempts — but not when they mattered the most.

Like when the Sharks cut Miami's lead to seven points, 55-48, early in the second half. The Hurricanes hit three consecutive three-point shots to bring their lead back to double digits.

Wong hit the final two of those three-pointers, the start of an individual 11-point flurry over a span of 3:15 that pushed Miami's lead to 69-52.

"It was a lot of open shots," Wong said. "I just felt comfortable."

The Hurricanes' expanded their to as many as 20 points, 74-54, with about 10 minutes left.

It was large enough to withstand another late Nova rally that cut Miami's lead to four points with 4:30 left before Wong added another seven points in a span of 48 seconds on a pair of free throws, a layup and another three-pointer.

"He is a scorer," Hurricanes coach Jim Larranaga said. "He can make 3s. He can make driving layups. He's a high octane offensive player, but he's also a terrific athlete."

But Wong's huge night didn't overshadow some of Miami's deficiencies that were shown on Wednesday.

Nova out-rebounded Miami 48-41, including a staggering 18-2 mark on the offensive end.

That led to the Sharks tallying 13 second-half points and taking 90 shots from the field (although the Hurricanes did hold them to 41-percent shooting).

"Defense and rebounding is key," Larranaga said. "That's half the game at least. We're not good at it. We're undersized ourselves. ... They were able to go to the basket and score. ... They flew off the offensive boards. We'll watch the video and learn from it."

The Hurricanes now have a little less than three weeks before the season truly begins. Miami opens the season on Nov. 9 against Canisius. Three of the Hurricanes' first four games will be played at the Watsco Center, along with a Nov. 13 game against UCF and Nov. 21 against Florida A&M. The only game in that stretch not played on UM's home court is a Nov. 16 contest against Florida Atlantic in Boca Raton.

More takeaways from the exhibition win:

- Charlie Moore makes an early impression. The sixth-year senior has played at California, Kansas and DePaul and has 117 career games at the collegiate level under his belt. His experience, the Hurricanes hope, will pay dividends during his lone season at Miami.

He showcased his skills Wednesday, scoring 25 points on 6-of-10 shooting (including 4 of 6 from three-point range) while hauling in six rebounds, tallying five assists and going 9 for 10 from the free throw line.

- Kameron McGusty's fast start. The sixth-year senior was heavily involved in Miami's offense early, scoring 18 of his 22 points in the first half. He stuffed the stat sheet elsewhere, too, with eight rebounds, eight assists, two steals and a block.

- Little seen from the freshmen. The Hurricanes have four freshmen on their roster: guards Bensley Joseph, Jakai Robinson, Thomas Oosterbroek and Wooga Poplar. Only one saw action on Wednesday.

Poplar came in off the bench and played 14 minutes. He scored 5 points and corralled five rebounds.

Larranaga said he would have liked to have gotten Joseph and Robinson into the game, but the priority for Wednesday was to get his starters extended playing time.

"60 percent of our starting unit didn't play for us last year," Larranaga said. "I needed to give

them all a lot of playing time together.

- The return of Sam Waardenburg. The 6-10 forward and sixth-year senior from Auckland, New Zealand played in his first game since March 11, 2020, after missing the entire 2020-2021 season with a left foot injury. He scored 4 points with four rebounds, five assists, three blocks and one steal.

## Five observations from Hurricanes preseason practice

By Christopher Stock  
InsidetheU  
Oct. 26, 2021

The Miami Hurricanes are 14 days away from their season opener against Canisius.

With their lone exhibition game under their belt, a 106-95 win over Nova Southeastern, they will be looking for a strong start to the season after a disappointing 10-17 campaign last year for their third straight losing season after three-year run with NCAA Tournament appearances.

Internally, the staff is "cautiously optimistic" for the season. It helps having a strong scorer in guard Isaiah Wong, a preseason All-ACC First Team pick, who should contend for the league's scoring title after finishing fifth last year at 17.1 points a game.

The Hurricanes held their preseason media day on Tuesday as well as an open practice with a 30-minute viewing period. Here's five observations from practice:

### UP-TEMPO WITH QUICK SHOTS

The Hurricanes went through multiple drills, including running plays without a defense, focusing on putting up quick shots. Ball movement was key with a number of players touching the ball before a shot was taken. This seems to be in line with how the Hurricanes want to play this year with a more modern lineup with versatile forwards on the court with a trio of guards.

While the shots were put up at a quick pace, they did not seem rushed. The players either worked the ball to the perimeter for an outside shot or fed the ball inside for a finish at the rim. Regardless of where the ball ended up, the emphasis was clear and something they worked on throughout the practice.

### BALANCED LINEUP

Even though the team has its shortcomings, notably with its interior force, there is a more balanced lineup with the first and second units. They have their point guards in Charlie Moore and Bensley Joseph; wings (many of whom rotate to the point) Isaiah Wong, Kameron McGusty, Harlond Beverly, Wooga Poplar and Jakai Robinson; forwards Jordan Miller and Anthony Walker with Sam Waardenburg, Deng Gak and Rodney Miller at the 5-spot.

This balance should help with a steady lineup on the floor even though there is a variety of

skill sets with Wong and McGusty as proven scorers at the ACC level with Moore and Jordan Miller as double-figure scorers at previous stops.

### MILLER AND WALKER ARE KEYS

George Mason transfer Jordan Miller earned the start in the exhibition game and the staff likes the all-around game from the lefty even though he was held scoreless on one shot attempt. Miller was active in practice, often finishing at the rim in drills while showing his shooting touch. He will be a key for the team moving forward because they will need his production on both ends of the floor.

Walker, his current back-up, is also a key and one who will look to be productive on both ends like he showed in a recent closed scrimmage scoring 30 points. Walker is in his third season and has improved in each of his first two years. Another jump in his game is much-needed.

### LACK OF STRONG POST AN ISSUE

Without a strong interior player the team is likely to run into issues on both ends of the floor. The need for a traditional big man would help with the team's rebounding issues, which was on display in the exhibition game, in addition to protecting the paint with a shot-blocking presence. Defending a scorer down low could provide issues as well as guards who can penetrate and finish in the lane. The coaching staff will try to find different ways to combat this issue as much as possible.

Offensively there should be plenty of spacing on the floor, which should benefit Wong, who excels at driving to the basket and drawing fouls. However, easy buckets close to the basket could be tough to find without a true post scorer. The key offensively, in addition to spacing, is being able to hit perimeter shots at a high rate.

### ENERGETIC AND A POSITIVE VIBE

Even with last year's struggles and disappointments, this team looked to be very energetic and there was a positive vibe at practice, which should not be understated. This has been a common theme for Jim Larranaga's teams at Miami and it appears this team enjoys being on the court together. The two transfers have seemed to make smooth transitions and have fit in well with their new teammates.

This is what you want to see from any team,

especially with the season just two weeks away. It will be interesting to see how it translates onto the court and certainly winning helps, which the Hurricanes should be able to be 4-0 heading into the competitive ESPN Events Invitational in Kissimmee featuring No. 3 Kansas and No. 14 Alabama.

## Guards Win Games

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Oct. 29, 2021

It might be cliché, but it's true.

And Jim Larrañaga, entering his 11th year at the helm of the Hurricanes and his 38th overall as a collegiate head coach, knows just that.

"I think, at the college level especially, guards win games," Larrañaga said. "They're the ones with the ball in their hands. They're the decision-makers. They're the 3-point shooters. They're the ones that put pressure on the ball defensively. So, to have the experience that we have in our backcourt gives our coaching staff a lot of confidence."

Led by Charlie Moore, Kameron McGusty and Isaiah Wong, the University of Miami men's basketball team possesses an elite backcourt trio capable of leading the team to victory on any given night.

In their first game action as a unit, the group combined for 87 points, 21 rebounds and 13 assists in an exhibition victory against Nova Southeastern. Their offensive prowess is indisputable and they have the career credentials to back up that claim.

The lone newcomer of the three is sixth-year redshirt senior Charlie Moore, a transfer from DePaul. Over his two years there, Moore averaged 15.1 points and 5.5 assists per game, notching four double-doubles.

A Chicago native, Moore paced the BIG EAST in assists (6.1) in 2019-20 and was a Preseason First Team All-BIG EAST honoree last year. He enters his final collegiate season, at Miami, as one of only 15 returning Division I players already with 1,200 points and 425 assists to his name.

The 5-foot-11, 180-pounder's abilities as a natural lead guard—one who can not only score, but also distribute—will enhance a Miami offense that struggled at times in 2020-21.

"Point guards in basketball are like quarterbacks in football. They have the ball in their hands probably more than any other player and they become the primary decision-maker," Larrañaga said. "If they're so focused on scoring, then it makes it difficult on your other players to really produce a lot of points because the point guard is the one shooting the ball. When you have a player like Charlie, who's very good at distributing and then, if need be, he can make the open shot or create the open shot for himself—that combination makes him a much more valuable quarterback."

"If you compare it to football, if Charlie was a quarterback, he could run with the ball himself, he could

hand it to his running backs, he could throw it to his wide receiver and he could throw it to his tight end," Larrañaga continued. "He has all the options and can get everybody involved. That's what Charlie does."

McGusty, like Moore, is a sixth-year redshirt senior. He, too, is taking advantage of the extra year granted by the NCAA due to COVID-19 impacting the 2020-21 season.

A native of Katy, Texas, McGusty flirted with moving on to the professional level during the offseason. He submitted his name for consideration in the NBA Draft and went through the pre-draft process.

Ultimately, the 6-foot-5, 190-pounder determined he wanted to return to The U for one last go as a collegian.

After doing so, McGusty, who has averaged 12.8 points per game in two seasons competing for Miami, approached the offseason with the exact mindset you'd expect from someone who made that decision.

"I think Kam has been very focused. He's gotten himself in fantastic shape," Larrañaga shared. "He has the ability to play the one, the two or the three. He's shooting the ball extremely well. He's working very hard defensively and the other day [against Nova Southeastern], he rebounded the ball. So, I think Kam is headed towards a very good senior year."

Just like McGusty, Wong also entered his name into the NBA Draft, received feedback and elected to return to college.

Although he is just a third-year sophomore, he already has one of the highest profiles of any guard in not only the ACC, but the country. That is what happens when you average 17.1 points, 4.8 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.1 steals per game while co-leading a Power Five conference in 20-point outings (11) like Wong did last year.

A 6-foot-3, 185-pounder, Wong is the second-leading returning scorer in the ACC. He earned Preseason First Team All-ACC accolades and made the Jerry West Award Watch List.

Big things are, assuredly, expected of Wong after his dynamic 2020-21 campaign. His head coach knows the Piscataway, N.J., native is ready to build off his success a year ago.

"Isaiah Wong has improved in a lot of categories. The first—and maybe the most important—is his team defense. He's working harder at the defensive end of the floor. He understands team defensive concepts better. That's very, very important,"

Larrañaga said. "Number two, he continues to get stronger. He's increased his vertical jump and he's increased his lateral quickness and straightaway speed through a lot of hard work and our strength and conditioning program."

"And then, lastly, he's worked very, very hard on his 3-point shot and his ability to find the open man," Larrañaga added. "He's always been a terrific scorer, but now he's got deep range on his 3-point shot and he's been very, very good in practice at getting in the lane and kicking it out to other 3-point shooters. I think Charlie Moore has had a very positive impact on Isaiah."

Not only has Moore aided Wong with his 3-point shooting, he has also helped the Hurricanes in that area as a whole.

After shooting under 30 percent from beyond the arc last season, Miami looks to have a chance to vastly increase that number in 2021-22. Part of that is, certainly, because of Moore.

However, Larrañaga's confidence in his team's improved 3-point shooting goes beyond just the man running the point.

"Well, there are [a few] things that will make a significant difference. Number one, Charlie Moore is very good at finding the open 3-point shooter. Two, Kam McGusty and Isaiah Wong have improved their 3-point shooting ability," the two-time ACC Coach of the Year said. "Third, we have Sam Waardenburg, who we missed last year because of an injury, and he gives us a big player who can stretch the floor. And then [in addition to all that], Wooga Poplar is an outstanding 3-point shooter and Jordan Miller is a solid 3-point shooter and Anthony Walker is an improved 3-point shooter. So, we have more opportunities to find a good 3-point shooter because there are more of them."

Unlike last season when attendance was prohibited due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Miami faithful will be able to come watch the Hurricanes in person this year.

With such a talented, high-octane backcourt ready to take on some of the top programs in the nation, it could not be a better time the Watsco Center doors to be open once again.

"The arena is now open to the public. We need to get our students and our community behind this team because it's going to be a very exciting team, led by our version of 'Lethal Weapon 3,'" Larrañaga remarked. "We have [starting guards] who are very exciting to watch and will play at a very high level. And with the experience we have returning, we should be a very, very competitive team in the ACC."

## Isaiah Wong preparing for 'likely' final season at Miami

By Christopher Stock  
InsidetheU  
Oct. 31, 2021

Isaiah Wong enjoyed a breakout sophomore season last year, finishing fourth in the ACC in scoring and being named to the All-ACC Third Team.

The 6-foot-3 guard from Piscataway, N.J. entered his named in the NBA Draft following the season and went through draft workouts, but was not invited to the NBA Draft Combine and eventually withdrew his name to return to Miami for a third season, which begins against Canisius on Nov. 9.

"We believe wholeheartedly in him and have tremendous confidence that this will likely be his last year at the University of Miami because he's an NBA-quality guard," head coach Jim Larranaga said. "We've already had a number of NBA scouts here at our practices watching him and they've all been very, very impressed and have shared with me and my staff that they also believe Isaiah is a first-round pick."

There are currently two former Miami guards in the NBA in San Antonio's Lonnie Walker and Brooklyn's Bruce Brown. NBADraft.net projects Wong as a second-round pick in 2023.

Wong was named to the preseason All-ACC First Team and roared out of the gate with 40 points in Miami's lone exhibition game against Nova Southeastern.

"Isaiah's one of those guys that you love coaching," Larranaga said. "He's kind of a quiet, young man who just works his tail off. He gives you a great effort every day in practice and every time he puts on his basketball shoes. He's an outstanding scorer, but he's improved dramatically in his defense and rebounding and he's really working to create opportunities for his teammates. He's worked on his game. We love the fact that he decided to return and pull his name out of the draft."

New point guard Charlie Moore has been impressed with Wong, who averaged 17.1 points a game last season.

"Oh man, that boy good," Moore said after the exhibition game. "It was like he wasn't missing any shots. He played hard, played the right way. He was on fire from the 3-point line. He played a great game."

The addition of Moore, who finished seventh in assists per game in the Big East last year

at DePaul after leading the conference the previous season, should help Wong find more opportunities.

"I love playing with Charlie," Wong said. "He just makes the game way easier for me. I was getting a lot of looks and a lot of open 3s. I thank Charlie for all of that because he's a pass-first guard and he proved it. I feel like that 40-ball was because of Charlie and Kam (McGusty)."

Wong will be looking to lead the Hurricanes back to having a winning season after three straight losing campaigns including going 10-17 last year, 4-15 in the ACC.

The Hurricanes open their season with games against Canisius, UCF, FAU and Florida A&M before participating in the ESPN Events Invitational in Kissimmee with an opening-round game against Dayton and No. 3 Kansas and No. 14 Alabama as potential foes.

## 2021-22 Miami men's basketball preview

By Ramona Naseri  
Duke Chronicle  
Nov. 4, 2021

2020-21 record: 10-17, 4-15 in the ACC

Head coach: Jim Larrañaga

Tenure at Miami: 11th season

Career coaching record: 670-464

Home court: Watsco Center

Starters: G Kameron McGusty, G Isaiah Wong,  
G Charlie Moore, G Jordan Miller, F Sam  
Waardenburg

Bench: G Harlond Beverly, G Wooga Poplar,  
F Deng Gak, F Anthony Walker, C Rodney  
Miller Jr.

Overview: Miami has had a rough string of losing seasons, but, after third-year sophomore Isaiah Wong and sixth-year redshirt senior Kameron McGusty withdrew their names from the NBA draft, the Hurricanes have a better chance this season. Wong led the team last season with 17.1 points per game while McGusty contributed with the second most points.

Freshman Bensley Joseph is a top-100 recruit, while Charlie Moore is a transfer from DePaul who had 14.4 points per game last season, and Jordan Miller is a transfer from George Mason with 15.8 points per game on his 2020-21 record.

There will also be some veteran players whose performances are up in the air, like junior Harlond Beverly who has been inconsistent but can be a great contributor if he rides off of the confidence of a hot streak. With Miami's new talent coming in, they have a more promising outlook than years past.

Team ceiling: The Hurricanes haven't made an NCAA tournament appearance since 2018, and the last time they made it to the second round was in 2016, so it's likely that the best outcome for this team is making it back to the second round.

Team floor: A worst-case scenario for this team is an even tougher losing season than last year with a lower-end seed in the ACC tournament.



# University of Miami basketball team gets big assist from transfer guard Charlie Moore

By Michelle Kaufman  
Miami Herald  
Nov. 6, 2021

Charlie Moore, the most highly touted of the new players on the University of Miami basketball team, is known as a pass-first point guard, a prolific scorer who gets just as much joy – maybe more – from driving the lane and dishing off to open teammates.

The 23-year-old former Illinois Mr. Basketball, who transferred to UM after stops at Cal, Kansas and DePaul, has 427 assists over his nomadic college career.

His most meaningful assist came away from the court and offers a glimpse into the kind of person running the floor for the Canes as the 2021-22 season gets underway Tuesday with a home game against Canisius

In April 2019, after his sophomore season at Kansas, he decided to transfer to DePaul so he could help take care of his father Curtis, who had been in a wheelchair since suffering a stroke in 2015. Moore was entering his senior season at Morgan Park High in Chicago when he and his mother were out shopping and got the call that his father had collapsed at home.

His father, a talented basketball player in his day, wound up in a coma and hospitalized for seven months. He couldn't walk and had trouble speaking. Moore helped his father as he recovered, while also shining on the basketball court and fielding 23 scholarship offers.

He had offers from Memphis, Xavier, St. John's, LSU, Iowa State, Iowa and Miami, among others. He initially chose Memphis but changed his mind after a coaching change and ended up at the University of California.

During his freshman season at Cal, Moore started all 34 games and averaged 12.2 points and 3.5 assists. A coaching change at Cal led him to transfer to Kansas. He sat out the 2017-18 season per transfer rules and struggled to fit in his sophomore season, averaging 2.9 points and 13 minutes per game.

Once he got to DePaul, he felt at home and thrived. He averaged 15.5 points and 6.1 assists as a junior, 14.4 points and 4.2 assists as a senior. He quickly became one of the top players in the Big East and was named to the All Big East Academic team.

When coach Dave Leitao was fired, he once again looked for a new home. His parents fully supported his decision to join the Hurricanes,

where he was reunited with former DePaul assistant coach Bill Courtney.

"I had relationships with BC and with Coach L (Jim Larranaga) because they recruited me," Moore said. "I saw the potential here. I want to win for my last year and play in the ACC. All of my moves made me a better player and person. I've been through a lot, so I want to bring my experience to this team.

"My decisions came from coaches leaving, and then the big one was going back home to help my family. I wanted to help my Mom and give my Dad some motivation. I feel like it helped them the two years I was there. Now I get to go on to a better situation for me."

Courtney remembers the first time he saw Moore play. He was coaching Cornell at the time.

"I was recruiting a kid at Morgan Park High School in Chicago, he was a senior and Charlie was a sophomore," Courtney recalled. "He was like a little kid. He always had a baby face but he was even smaller with a baby face. The coaches there kept telling me 'This guy's gonna be really good' and I said, 'That little guy?'"

Nine years later, when Courtney heard Moore put his name in the transfer portal, he called his contacts at DePaul. Miami point guard Chris Lykes transferred to Arkansas after an injury plagued senior season, and UM was desperate to find a replacement. They were hoping for a guard in the mold of Shane Larkin and Angel Rodriguez, who both led the Canes to Sweet 16s.

"I called up there that same day and said 'If Charlie's looking for a place, we need a point guard and this might be a great place for him,'" Courtney said.

So far, he seems like a great fit. Teammates gushed about his passing and leadership.

"He helps us get easier shots," said Isaiah Wong, who scored 40 points in the preseason win over Nova. "If you see me and Kam (McGusty) getting 25 points, you're definitely going to see Charlie with 10-11 assists."

Larranaga added: "We are very fortunate that Charlie decided this is where he wants to be. His teammates enjoy playing with him and the fans will enjoy watching him."

Moore, who is 5-11, is "a little bit more of a distributor" than Lykes, Larranaga said. "He

gets other people involved. Playing alongside Isaiah Wong and Kam McGusty he has two outstanding scorers on either side of him. That combination will create a lot of scoring chances."

Moore also brings positive energy, which was needed after last year with the rash of injuries and COVID restrictions.

"He's always got a smile on his face, he's upbeat every day, all the guys like him," Courtney said. "He's a big reason they're 100 percent rowing their oars in the same direction."

## Start of a Season

By Alex Schwartz  
MiamiHurricanes.com  
Nov. 7, 2021

The beginning of a new season is always exciting. This year, that is even more apt than usual.

During the 2020-21 season, fans across the country were largely prohibited from attending college basketball games. No tickets were sold at the Watsco Center.

Tuesday, for the first time since March 2020, a Hurricane fan can enter the arena with a ticket to watch the University of Miami men's basketball team in action. That night, at 7:30 p.m., the Hurricanes open the 2021-22 slate against Canisius.

"There is a lot of excitement entering this year because fans will now be allowed back in the building. Last year, we played in front of empty arenas all season long," Miami head coach Jim Larrañaga said. "It's been a long time since we were able to experience that electricity that you get when you're playing at home and your fans get into it and are cheering wildly for the home team. We want to have great crowds in the Watsco Center. We believe this will be an exciting team to follow."

The Hurricanes got a small taste for what the return to fan attendance will be like just a few weeks ago when they hosted Nova Southeastern in an exhibition game. Supporters took spots in the stands, while cheerleaders returned courtside and the pep band, much to Larrañaga's delight because of the excitement it brings, took its rightful spot behind the basket again.

All of those in the building saw quite the show from Miami's talented backcourt trio in the 106-95 victory.

Third-year sophomore guard Isaiah Wong dropped 40 points on 11-of-19 shooting, adding seven assists. Charlie Moore notched 25 points, six rebounds and five assists, while fellow sixth-year redshirt senior guard Kameron McGusty tallied 22 points, eight boards and eight assists.

"I think Charlie Moore, Isaiah Wong and Kam McGusty all have very good ball-handling and shooting skills, and are good at playing with each other," Larrañaga shared. "They like the chemistry that they have with each other. And so, they can bring out the best in one another."

The Hurricanes, however, got just 15 points

from their bench in the win against the Sharks, eight of which came from third-year sophomore guard Harlond Beverly.

Larrañaga knows that production from those outside the starting five—the backcourt trio, fourth-year junior guard Jordan Miller and sixth-year redshirt senior forward Sam Waardenburg—will be particularly important this season. Tuesday will be the first time those players have the opportunity to make an impact in an actual game.

"We have a group that will start the game that [includes five] experienced veterans who can play very well together," Larrañaga said. "But then, a lot of our players off of the bench are inexperienced and there is great concern about us needing some quality depth to really play at the highest level. The guys off the bench that are a little bit older—like Harlond Beverly, Anthony Walker, Deng Gak and Rodney Miller—those are the guys we're really counting on to give us some quality depth."

One of those players in particular, Walker, a third-year sophomore forward, is coming off a tremendous end to the 2020-21 season.

The Baltimore native averaged 12.1 points, 6.0 rebounds, 1.4 assists and 1.1 steals per game over his final 14 outings last year. All of those were marked improvements from his first 12 appearances of the season.

"Anthony Walker really has the most potential [of our reserves] and is coming off of a really solid season last year," the two-time ACC Coach of the Year said. "So, hopefully he'd be the one to step up and give us a nice lift."

Regardless of the players on his roster—starters or backups, old or young—Larrañaga always has a consistent message for his team as it enters a new season.

What he tells them is not as much about X's and O's as it is about how he expects them to act. If they do that, the results should follow.

"We want our guys to always have a very, very positive attitude, make a total commitment to being the best that they can be and always behave in a first-class manner. We feel our players should be role models on the court, in the classroom and in the community," Larrañaga shared. "The message to them is that they represent more than just themselves. They represent their families, our basketball program, our athletic department, our university. They really owe it to themselves to give their best every single day in practice and in

games so that our fans can fully appreciate their dedication."

The Hurricanes will get to put their practice efforts to the test against a Division I opponent for the first time when they take on the Golden Griffins Tuesday night.

Canisius played only 13 games during the abbreviated 2020-21 season and posted a 7-6 (7-5 MAAC) record on the year. That ledger includes a five-game winning streak in league that, due to a lengthy layoff without games, went from Jan. 1 to Feb. 19.

Senior forward Malek Green is the leading returnee for the Golden Griffins, as he paced the team in scoring at 13.2 points per game last year. The Cincinnati native, who earned Preseason Third Team All-MAAC distinction this year, is part of a versatile offensive attack for the visitors from Buffalo, N.Y., who were picked No. 11 in their league this season.

"Canisius is likely to start three seniors and a junior—all guys who played last year—and maybe one freshman. So, they're a veteran team and their guys off the bench are also veterans," Larrañaga said. "...Probably seven or eight of their guys are veteran players who have played a lot of college basketball and are very, very comfortable with each other. They love to execute their half-court offense and shoot a bunch of threes, but also post up. They've got a very good balance of perimeter shooting and inside players." This will not only be the first time Miami and Canisius face off on the hardwood, but the first time the two schools meet in any team sport currently sponsored by either institution.

Larrañaga, though, has coached against the Golden Griffins twice before, splitting a pair of non-conference matchups during the 1986-87 season, his first year at Bowling Green. While those games certainly do not factor in for Tuesday night, the 2013 AP National Coach of the Year does know what his team must do to come away with a victory.

"We're going to need our starters to play very well and then hopefully get a very nice contribution from the guys off the bench. We're going to have to defend," Larrañaga said. "We are not a big team and so we're going to have to keep Canisius off of the backboards and do a good job of contesting their threes. And then, hopefully, get into the open court. The faster paced the game is, the better I think that will be for us."

# Hoops season tips off tonight, eyes first winning ACC season since 2017-18

By Staff  
CaneSport  
Nov. 9, 2021

The Miami Hurricanes men's basketball season tips off tonight against Canisius.

It'll be the start of what UM hopes will be its first winning ACC campaign since 2017-18. And the pieces are in place to do that, despite UM's predicted ACC finish by the media: 12th.

"We all feel disrespected by that," center/forward Sam Waardenburg said. "It is what it is. That's all over our locker room right now. It's a chip on our shoulder we have. We have high desires and high hopes for this team this year."

A year ago, with an injury-marred team, Miami finished 10-17 and 4-15 in league play.

Since then this team has been reshaped.

The players that transferred out: Chris Lykes (Arkansas), Elijah Onaniyi (returned to Stony Brook after finishing third on UM's team with 10.5 PPG last year), Nysier Brooks (Mississippi, averaged 7.4 PPG, 5.8 RPG) and Earl Timberlake (Memphis, averaged 9.3 PPG, 5.0 RPG, 2.0 APG in 7 games).

That's three starters and a part-time starter who was a top recruit a year earlier. So it's a different-looking roster this year.

And it'll be a different feel at the Watsco Center.

"There is a lot of excitement entering this year because fans will now be allowed back in the building. Last year, we played in front of empty arenas all season long," Miami head coach Jim Larrañaga said. "It's been a long time since we were able to experience that electricity that you get when you're playing at home and your fans get into it and are cheering wildly for the home team. We want to have great crowds in the Watsco Center. We believe this will be an exciting team to follow."

This year's team?

Well Larrañaga lured transfer guard Charlie Moore from DePaul along with Miller, and Isaiah Wong and Kam McGusty decided to return after weighing their pro options.

Moore led DePaul in scoring last year with 14.4 points and averaged 4.2 assists and 1.5 steals.

Miller? As a junior last season he led George Mason with 15.8 points per game and also averaged 6.1 rebounds and 2.0 assists. He plays the 3/4 and is a physical presence at 6-7 and 200 pounds.

As for returners, Isaiah Wong and Kam McGusty coming back is huge for the program.

Wong enjoyed a breakout season with 17.1 points and 2.4 assists per game, and McGusty battled injury for much of last year - he played in 20 games and averaged 13.3 points and 2.8 assists.

Then there are the other returning veterans: guard Harlond Beverly (6.7 PPG, 3.3 APG) and the 4/5 Waardenburg, who is back off a broken foot and is likely the starting center despite being undersized.

Waardenburg started 24 games two years ago and averaged 5.9 PPG, 6.0 RPG and 1.1 blocks.

Also back is 3/4 Anthony Walker, who has flashed at times and could be an athletic guy in the front court. He averaged 9.6 points and 4.7 rebounds last year.

Center Deng Gak, who struggled with injury last year, is now healthy, and big man Rodney Miller also returns off a torn MCL last year. Neither have made much of an impact thus far in their careers, but they can help on the defensive end and on the boards.

For his part, Miller has dropped 15 pounds from last year, down to 235 (and he weighed 285 when he first arrived at Miami).

The team also benefits from three highly regarded freshmen being added to the roster - guards Bensley Joseph, Jakai Robinson and Wooga Poplar.

Poplar is a guy who can provide scoring punch, and Robinson has already made a name for himself as a physical defender.

"We have a group that will start the game that [includes five] experienced veterans who can play very well together," Larrañaga said. "But then, a lot of our players off of the bench are inexperienced and there is great concern about us needing some quality depth to really play at the highest level. The guys off the bench that are a little bit older—like Harlond Beverly, Anthony Walker, Deng Gak and Rodney Miller—those are the guys we're really counting on to give us some quality depth."

Regardless of the players on his roster—starters or backups, old or young—Larrañaga always has a consistent message for his team as it enters a new season.

What he tells them is not as much about X's and O's as it is about how he expects them to act. If they do that, the results should follow.

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appreciate their dedication."

And yes, hopes are high.

"We're looking forward to our first game," Larrañaga said. "Every year come in with a lot of optimism, confidence because the guys are working so hard. The key is can we keep everybody healthy and playing well. (Do that and) we can compete with all the teams on our schedule."

\* Game 1 opponent Canisius played only 13 games during the abbreviated 2020-21 season and posted a 7-6 (7-5 MAAC) record on the year. That ledger includes a five-game winning streak in league that, due to a lengthy layoff without games, went from Jan. 1 to Feb. 19.

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The game will be telecast on the ACC Network.

Following its meeting with Canisius, the Hurricanes return to the hardwood Saturday at 2 p.m. for a in-state showdown with UCF, live on ACC Network Extra from the Watsco Center.