Davis featured on Collegehoopsnet.com

Highlighted as part of summer series

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Kermit Davis has been a consistent winner in his tenure at Middle Tennessee State. But after his fourth season ended with a disappointing first round loss in the Sun Belt Conference tournament, the entire Blue Raider nation was left wanting more. With one of the hardest non-conference schedules in the country, it should be a fun and exciting year for the program.

Shawn Siegel (CHN) : You lose impressive senior Fats Cuyler. Who will need to step instead this season?

Kermit Davis (KD): It will be very hard to replace Fats Cuyler because of his character, leadership and his ability.

We need (sophomore point guard) Kevin Kansaskie to start taking our team over more. He did that down the stretch and we won eight of nine games. I think his role will really improve. Adam Vogelsberg is coming off shoulder surgery and I think that will help him. It's going to be great to see what Adam can do with a fully healthy shoulder because he played hurt all of last season. Theryn Hudson's body looks great and he had a great spring. He really improved throughout last year and I think he's ready to make a significant jump.

CHN: Which of your guys stands out as deserving more credit than the media or fans give them?

KD: Kyle Young is a fifth-year senior who has already graduated and is working on his Master's. He came to Middle Tennessee at about 180 pounds and now he is about 220 pounds. He is bench pressing about 290 and he has made a ton of improvement. I think he has all-league consideration.

CHN: What do you expect the strengths and weaknesses of this year's team to be?

KD: I think a big strength of our team this year is that we do have 11 guys coming back into our program this year. Four of those were red-shirted last year (two because of injuries), but I think we have 11 guys with experience that are use to the day-to-day routine of our program, which will be a strength. I also believe strength will be a key. The strength of our team has increased significantly. We went from the average bench press of our team being about 210 pounds with all of the new guys last year to it being about 260 pounds right now. I thought we were the weakest team in our league last year and this year I think we can be one of the most physical teams in our league.

CHN: What should we expect out of the incoming players. Who will make the biggest impact?

KD: Nigel Johnson (transfer from Tallahassee Community College who has three years of eligibility remaining) will make a big impact on our team because of his athleticism. He can shoot the ball and play three different spots. Dino Hair (6-9, 200) is real athletic and would have played a lot last year but he suffered a knee injury. Darren Avery may be our most improved player since the spring and Desmond Yates (6-7, 200) may be our best talent.

CHN: What coaches helped you reach the level of success you're at today? Do you still keep in touch with them?

KD: My college coach (at Mississippi State), Bob Boyd, was real instrumental in my development as a young coach. I was a graduate assistant under him for two years. Tim Floyd gave me my first opportunity in Division I and I learned so much from Tim as far as work ethic and how to run a program. John Brady (LSU) is one of the most underrated coaches there is and he and I had a great relationship at LSU for five years. I have had a number of different guys who have affected my career.

CHN: Realistically, what should we expect out of MTSU this season?

KD: Our goal is to get into the postseason; there is no question about that. I still think we are a young team with eight or nine guys who will be in the freshmen or sophomore classes. I love that about our team because I think we have a nice base. The preseason schedule will no question be ranked among the Top 20 or 25 most difficult schedules in college basketball. I think it is going to help us a bunch but the schedule we are playing obviously is to try to get into postseason play and be really competitive in the league race down the stretch.

CHN: Good luck this season coach

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