

Sports

Beck pleased with team's enthusiasm

By Bob Asmussen
Night News Editor

At the Nebraska women's basketball team's media day Tuesday, the players wore shirts with the initials ITHWTBAC. That acronym might best describe new coach Angela Beck's basketball philosophy.

ITHWTBAC is an acronym for It Takes Hard Work To Be A Champion. Hard work is what Beck said it will take for the team to be successful.

"If we can work hard, we can be in the ball game," Beck said.

Beck said she has been "pleasantly surprised" by the team's practices so far this season.

"I'm pretty pleased at this point," Beck said. "The chemistry has been very good. There's enthusiasm. There's pride.

"After the first six days, if this is any indication of how things are going to be, I'm going to unpack my bags."

Beck said she is realistic about her first year as Nebraska's coach.

"This is the third program I've built," Beck said. "I would like to see this team move up a few notches in the Big Eight standings."

Attitude is one thing Beck said will determine how well the team plays this season.

"The basics of it all they're grasping," Beck said.

Beck said she won't determine a starting lineup until a week before the season begins.

"Even my best players still have to abide by the discipline of the team," Beck said. "The discipline is the foundation of what we work by."

Beck said the team's strength will be its quickness. She said she is concerned about the team's lack of height and the

team's shooting.
"I don't think we have great shooting form," Beck said. "Shot selection is bad. Our conditioning level is not really where it ought to be, either."

Before coming to Nebraska, Beck was the coach at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill. Beck said she worked closely at Bradley with former men's coach Dick Versace. Versace resigned recently to take an assistant coaching job with the NBA's Detroit Pistons.

"I went to the Pistons' camp for a couple of days," Beck said. "Dick and Tony (Creighton coach Tony Barone) were good friends of mine. I would sit in their meetings and learn from them."

Besides Versace and Barone, Beck said she had several other influences from men's basketball.

"I got my enthusiasm from Jim Valvano," Beck said. "I get my philosophy on discipline from Dean Smith. I buy every book and read all those books."

Beck said she also is picking up some coaching ideas from new Nebraska men's coach Danny Nee. She said because Nee is also new, it's difficult to spend much time looking at the other programs.

"I look at the men and I try and learn from them," Beck said. "We teach a lot the same way already. I think we've learned from the same people in a lot of instances."

Beck said she hasn't been able to spend much time learning about Lincoln but said she's happy with her new home.

"I like my job, so I like my city," Beck said. "Lincoln's a nice city. It's very recruitable."

Recruiting is something that Beck said she thinks she does well. She said she expects to sign a couple of players during the early signing period in November. Nebraska will have seven spots open on the roster next season.

"Unfortunately, none of the big kids will sign early," Beck said. "We need a good point guard. My point guards have always been the strength of my attack."

Nebraska returns leading scorer Maurice Ivy for her junior season.

"I think she's got great talent," Beck said.

Beck said the team won't focus on getting the ball to Ivy. She said she doesn't believe in having one player

carry the scoring burden.

"I've never coached any superstars," Beck said. "We like to produce four kids in double figures. We're going to set Ivy up a lot, but she won't be the top scorer in the country."

Beck said the team will try to fast-break when the opportunity is there. On defense, she said the team will use pressure man-to-man defense after missing a shot and use combination defenses after making a basket.

"We're running a guard-executed attack, and it looks pretty good," Beck said.

Like Nee, Beck won't make a prediction on the number of wins the team will have this season.

"You don't win just by taking over a program," Beck said.

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