

BU players look forward to team's change of pace

Broadus to bring roots of Princeton's offense to Bearcats

By Brian Moritz - Press & Sun-Bulletin - March 28, 2007

VESTAL -- Kevin Broadus is still learning his way around the Binghamton University men's basketball team. But Broadus is sure of one thing --BU's cupboard isn't bare.

"You have pieces of a puzzle that you can work with and you can start with," Broadus said. "Looking around the room, there are some bodies in there I think we can work with. Some of these guys, on paper, are pretty good. I haven't seen them play, but on paper they're pretty good."

Now that Broadus has been named as Al Walker's replacement, it's time for the Bearcats to start looking toward next season.

"Everybody's excited because it's a new beginning," freshman forward Lazar Trifunovic said. "We're trying to focus on the new season, because last season was obviously not so good. We're looking forward to a new coach and a new beginning."

Basketball wise, Broadus already has his style in mind. The primary focus of Broadus' teams will be discipline, defense and rebounding.

"You'll see this team defend better," Broadus said. "Something apparently they didn't do a lot of this past year."

The Bearcats were eighth in the nine-team America East Conference this past season, allowing an average of 66.1 points per game.

"We have to improve a lot defensively," junior guard Mike Gordon said. "That was one of Coach Walker's pet peeves, and that's the first thing Coach Kev talked about."

Offensively, Broadus will look to fine tune an offense that was the third-best in the conference and averaged 65.7 points per game

His style will have its roots in the Princeton-style offense, mastered by Pete Carril. Carril mentored current Georgetown coach John Thompson III, whom Broadus has worked for as an assistant coach over the last three seasons.

Broadus said that, like Georgetown's current system, BU will play a style reminiscent of the NBA's Sacramento Kings -- where Carril coached for several seasons after leaving season -- which is a faster-paced version of the Princeton style, which emphasizes passing, constant motion and back-door cuts.

"We will play a type of style that's very disciplined," Broadus said. "We will play up-tempo, but it will be very disciplined. It'll be hard to defend us."

On paper, it's a style that seems tailor made for Gordon. Gordon emerged as one of the America East's best point guards last season and was a second-team all-conference selection. In his first three seasons at BU, Gordon has shown a knack for knowing when to push the ball up the court and when to pull it back.

"It's going to be a more up-tempo style," Gordon said. "Maybe some more pressing and getting out in transition, but within the line still having discipline. I can see us scoring about 70 points a game."

Broadus takes over a team that went a disappointing 13-16

this past season, losing in the America East quarterfinals. Nine players are scheduled to return, all of whom who were recruited by Walker.

Broadus met with the returning players for about a half hour before Monday's news conference.

"I told the guys in the locker room, whether you liked Coach Walker and his staff or not, you're the reason why Coach Walker and his staff are not here," Broadus said. "It's not just Coach Walker. You're the reason I'm here because you didn't do your part along the way. It's a two-way street. We all have to work to together, and I emphasized that. Whether they liked him or didn't like him, there were a part of it."

The Bearcats return three of their top four scorers from last season -- Gordon, Trifunovic and junior Richard Forbes.

"Coach Walker did a great job of bringing this program to where it's at over seven or eight years," Broadus added. "Now, we have to take it to the next level."