

Mentors laud Broadus' potential

New BU coach more than just a good recruiter

By Brian Moritz - Press & Sun-Bulletin - March 27, 2007

VESTAL -- Kevin Broadus was working on about an hour of sleep Monday.

After helping guide Georgetown to a come-from-behind overtime victory over North Carolina to earn a spot in the Final Four, Broadus and his family drove from New Jersey to their home in Maryland. This morning, he and his wife, Belinda, were back in the car, heading north.

But fatigue couldn't dampen Broadus' excitement on the day he was named Binghamton University men's basketball coach.

He repeatedly thanked his family, his coaching mentors and the BU administration and fans who were on hand for his introduction at the Tau Bearcat Clubroom in the Events Center.

Broadus, 43, laid out the foundations of his program. He also set the standard he wants the Bearcats want to reach.

"My goal is to play in the postseason," Broadus said. "I want these guys, you guys, and everyone else to experience postseason play. We want to be sitting right in this room with you guys next March, looking on a screen and seeing where we are going. It's the most exciting feeling. Cutting down the nets -- I want that experience here.

"We can be America East champs. But we can't talk about it. We've got to work at it."

Broadus, BU's second coach at the Division I level, signed a five-year contract worth \$205,000 per year. He has been at Georgetown for three seasons and will remain with the Hoyas through the Final Four.

"He has a great understanding of the game and of the young men who play the game," Georgetown coach John Thompson III said in a phone interview. "I think he's going to do a great job up there."

Broadus inherits a team that went 13-16 this past season under Al Walker and lost in the quarterfinals of the America East Conference tournament.

"It's a quality choice," BU junior guard Mike Gordon said. "He comes from quality. He's in the Final Four, and that gives guys confidence that we can win the America East championship."

'OUR FIRST CHOICE'

Monday afternoon's announcement came exactly three weeks after the school reassigned Walker after seven seasons as BU's coach.

Joel Thirer, BU's Director of Athletics, said he received more than 100 résumés and applications for the coaching job. Of those, about 15 were from what Thirer called serious candidates.

Broadus, who has four children between the ages of 11 and 23, was the last of five candidates to interview on campus. Thirer refused to say who the other four candidates were.

"There were some character issues with Kevin that we felt really separated him from the group," Thirer said. "His personal integrity, how warmly and with a great deal of respect others spoke about him and his family. After all was said and done, Kevin emerged as our first choice."

Along with integrity and a commitment to the school's academic mission, Thirer was looking for a coach who could make the Bearcats a perennial contender for the America East title.

"I think realistically Kevin can and will bring us to postseason play

beyond the America East tournament," Thirer said.

Broadus, who also worked as an assistant coach at George Washington, American, the University of the District of Columbia and Bowie State, said his style is going to feature a disciplined, up-tempo offense and also stress defense and rebounding.

"Once we get it going, oh you're going to love the product," Broadus said. "We're going to play very disciplined. We're going to play a style of basketball that you can appreciate."

Thirer added, "The next five years have a potential to be very exciting for us."

TOP-NOTCH RECRUITER

Broadus comes to BU with the reputation as one of the top recruiters in college basketball. Hoop Scoop, an online basketball magazine, ranked Broadus as the sixth-best assistant coach in the college game on his strength as a recruiter.

"He's a great coach and a good basketball man," said Stony Brook coach Steve Pikiell, who worked with Broadus at George Washington. "You don't get many Final Four coaches who come to coach in this league."

At Georgetown, Broadus helped recruit many of the players who will be playing for a national championship this weekend.

He also recruited a core of the George Washington team that, last season, went 27-3 and went undefeated in the Atlantic 10.

"He's definitely one of the best assistant coaches in the country," GW coach Karl Hobbs said. "He's the best of the best. Binghamton is going to be involved with (recruiting) players that people will be scratching their heads wondering 'Wow, how did they get involved with that guy?' That's how impressive he is."

But coaches who have worked with and mentored Broadus stressed that he is more than just a recruiter.

"It's comical, it's funny to me when people call him a great recruiter," Thompson said. "Now don't get me wrong, he is great at that. But there is so much more to him. Kevin has great in-game instincts. He knows how and when to make adjustments."

Hobbs added, "He was really good at developing players. He did a great job of developing our big guys."

The Bearcats return nine players from this past season, including Gordon, a second-team all-conference selection and America East all-rookie selection Lazar Trifunovic.

Broadus stressed that his BU program would be built with an emphasis on discipline and personal responsibility.

"I can't have an excuse for my actions from yesterday because today is a new day," Broadus said. "Whether I slept or not, that's no excuse. I've got to be here and do the best I can. That's like I told the guys in the locker room. You've got to will yourself to do the harder things."