



Eadier Sports Wrap

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Feature: Jim Eadie interviews former Syracuse Orangemen basketball star and current St. Francis College Terriers assistant coach, Allen Griffin, regarding his time at Syracuse, his current position, his future and much more.

Bio: Coach Allen Griffin, will be entering his first season on the bench for the St. Francis College Terriers' as an assistant for head coach Brian Nash. Griffin's responsibilities for the Terriers include recruiting, on-court coaching, travel planning and assisting in monitoring academics.

Griffin, a Brooklyn native, attended Robeson High School under coach Larry Majors. After Robeson, Griffin went up to play for Jim Boeheim at Syracuse University and was a four-year letter winner. Griffin played 133 games for the Orangemen and is one of five SU performers who accumulated 400 career assists and 200 season assists. In his senior year, he had a career average 10.8 points per game. After graduating from Syracuse, Griffin played professional basketball in Europe (Slovenia) and in the NBDL (Ashville Altitude). In 2003, he went back home to the Cuse' and was an administrative assistant. Griffin has a son, Allen Jr.



Question – Jim Eadie: What was your biggest highlight at Syracuse University?

Answer – Allen Griffin:

There are so many highlights. A couple of them stand out though:

1. A Triple Double against Pittsburgh at the Carrier Dome February 27, 2001. I scored 14 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and dished out 11 assists. The best part is we won the game 80-67.
2. Playing against Duke in the Sweet 16 my freshmen year in 1998. Duke was a dominant team that year and even though Syracuse was on the losing end you always want to play against the best and it gave me a good taste of March Madness.

Q JE: What are your career aspirations over the next five to ten years?

A. AG: Just to become a better coach, and one day coach my own team. I would like to coach anything, Division 1, Division 2 basketball; any level. I just want to coach. The trait I possess that would make me a successful coach is my patience and being open to everything.

Q. JE: Who was your best friend on the Syracuse University team?

A. AG:

Damone Brown, we came as freshmen together in 1998. I have a son who lives in Niagara Falls, it was 15 minutes from Damone's place and we used to spend holidays with his family.

Q. JE: Tell me about your current job with St Francis College?

A. AG:

I am coaching now with the Terriers, it's my first year on the staff. I am enjoying the challenge working with the young guy's; it taught me that it doesn't matter where you are, Division 1 basketball or the Pros, no matter what level you play at, the passion and excitement from the kids is the same.

Q. JE: What made you choose Syracuse University for your scholarship?

A. AG:

The main deciding factor was to play at the Carrier Dome. When I was being recruited in the mid 1990's, I went to see Syracuse play the rival Georgetown Hoyas and their starring guard leader Allen Iverson. The atmosphere in the Carrier Come was electric, with over 30,00 fans in attendance at the game. I was 'wowed' and knew I wanted to be a Syracuse Orangemen.

Q. JE: Do you feel Syracuse Orangemen coach, Jim Boeheim, would make a good NBA coach?

A. AG:

Honestly, yes. He would be a great coach for "scorers" (guys who like to score) and players that know what they can do to best utilize talent. With him you know what you need to do to be successful early on. He would implement the 2/3 Zone somehow as well. It would be neat to see.

Q. JE: Do you have any regrets from Syracuse University?

A. AG:

No regrets, however I dreamed to win a National Championship, it's the ultimate for any player. I wish we could have one once when I was there.

Q. JE: How did you feel when SU won the championship in 2003? Was it Bittersweet?

A. AG:

I felt great for the people and players that were at Syracuse; especially coach Boeheim and his staff. Also it was great for the fans that have been supporting the team year after year, the same fans that were cheering when I was there and all the years previous. It wasn't bittersweet at all I was ecstatic.

Q. JE: What's something people would be surprised to know about you?

A. AG:

I love Video Games! Mainly just sports games, especially baseball. Also I majored in Sociology while playing Basketball at Syracuse

Q. JE: Did you ever talk about the 1996 Championship game defeat with any teammates that you played with that were around during that time?

A. AG:

In 1998 Todd Burgan told me about the Final 4 experience he and his teammates had in 1996, he said they had a lot of fun. He told me because he wanted to prepare me if we ever made it to the Final 4 when I was playing. I did watch it at the Championship Game in the Continental Airlines arena 1996 when Syracuse played Kentucky, since Syracuse and three other schools were recruiting me at the time.

Q. JE: Tell me about your journey overseas and in the NBDL?

A. AG:

I played in Slovenia for a team called Union Olympia.

I just wanted to play, have fun, make some money, and try to further my career. I was hoping to get noticed by some NBA teams. I thought I had a chance to play in the NBA as a back up point guard.

Q. JE: What are your favorite sports teams?

A. AG

Major League Baseball: New York Yankees

National Basketball Association: New York Knicks

National Football League: New York Giants



180 Remsen Street, Brooklyn Heights, New York, 11201. 718.522.2300

<http://www.stfranciscollege.edu/>

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