



Gene Keady: The Truth and Nothing But the Truth

By Gene Keady

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Respected for getting the most from his hard-working players, Gene Keady possesses a fiercely competitive drive which he learned from his father, Lloyd, while growing up in Larned, Kan. For the past 25 seasons, Keady's Purdue Boilermakers were among the Big Ten Conference's most difficult opponents, winning 512 of 772 games, including six Big Ten championships and a pair of trips to the NCAA tournament's Elite Eight. While many know Keady for his fiery sideline demeanor and classic fist pump in a moment of athletic passion, this former national coach of the year has a softer side, which includes an honest respect for the media and a terrific sense of humor. Within the pages of *The Truth and Nothing But the Truth*, the recently retired Purdue coach talks about everything from his relationship with Texas Tech coach Bob Knight, who was Keady's rival for 20 seasons at Indiana, to how the Boilermakers were able to successfully recruit 1994 National Player of the Year Glenn Robinson out of Gary Roosevelt High School in Lake County, Ind. Keady, 68, explains details how his father—a boxer turned wholesale florist—instilled a deep-seeded love for athletics, which Keady parlayed into a successful playing career at Larned High School, Garden City (Kan.) Junior College and then Kansas State University. Keady was signed by the National Football League's Pittsburgh Steelers in the summer of 1958, but a knee injury cut his pro football career short. He returned to Kansas, accepting a teaching/coaching position at Beloit High School, where basketball—not football—was the only coaching post available. The rest is history. In April, 1980, Keady accepted then-Purdue athletic director George King's offer to replace Lee Rose, who left West Lafayette for a South Florida job. Keady rolled up his sleeves and put Purdue on the college basketball map in a state where Bob Knight and the Indiana Hoosiers were the high-profile targets. It took Keady only four seasons to win his first Big Ten title. From there, he became one of college basketball's icons, while never losing the common touch he learned from his hardworking father in western Kansas.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Jeff Washburn's roots are planted deeply in Hoosier basketball. The Lafayette native and 1976 Purdue graduate covered Indiana high school basketball for the Lafayette Journal & Courier from 1973 through 1994, reporting on every Indiana state finals from 1976 through 1994. He is now the Purdue men's basketball beat writer for the Journal & Courier. He has won multiple sportswriting awards, including "Best Deadline Sports Reporting" for his coverage of the 1990 Indiana state championship game, in which Bedford North-Lawrence's Damon Bailey led his team to the title in front of 41,000 fans in the RCA Dome in Indianapolis. He was also voted Indiana's Sports Writer of the Year in 1991. He is a frequent columnist and has covered more than 800 Indiana high school boys' basketball games at more than 100 different venues throughout the state.

Bruce Weber is the head basketball coach at the University of Illinois. He led the Fighting Illini to the 2004-05 NCAA Division I National Championship game. He was named the Naismith National Coach of the Year.

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