



# UMD basketball: out with the old in with the young

Austin Rush

The 2016-2017 campaign is around the corner for the University of Minnesota Duluth Men's Basketball team as they begin their journey with a new team image.

UMD head coach Matt Bowen said that new team image is youth. With 13 of the 17 players on roster being freshmen and sophomores, this season may be a little different than last year's five senior led Bulldogs.

"It's a fun group, they're going to work hard but we're obviously going to have some bumps in the road because we don't have a lot of experience," Bowen said. "We will see what we develop into."

Charles Benson, forward out of Tuscon, Arizona, is the lone senior on the team and will almost certainly be accepting the proverbial torch of leadership Bowen believes. Benson is the only remaining player from the crew of five Bulldogs last year hailing from Arizona.

Bowen expects junior's Jake Wilson and Kyle Schalow to provide voices of leadership as well.

"It's a collective leadership. We have so many youngs guys," Bowen said. "As a group I hope that we can become a collective group of a leaders that hold each other accountable."

Given the youth of the Bulldogs right now, Benson plans to bring a lot to the table to show his young team how things are done.

"The main thing I'm trying to bring is the intensity and lead the guys on the right path," Benson said. "I want to show them the mindset that you can't take plays off and that the time off the court is just as important as the time on the court."

Ready to lead the charge, Benson doesn't have any major expectations for the season just yet.

"We're going to take it one game at a time," Benson said. "We're definitely looking to make a run in the playoffs. This is our territory, we're going to protect it so any team that's coming here to play us, they have to be ready to play us here at home."

Jake Wilson, one of three juniors on the team, is now in his fourth year with the Bulldogs after redshirting his freshman year.

"I want to bring experience, this is my fourth year here so I definitely want to bring experience and leadership," Wilson said.

The Bulldogs will play their first official game on Nov. 11 against Central Missouri in Wisconsin Dells. Before heading to Wisconsin, UMD will play a home exhibition game against Wisconsin-River Falls on Nov. 5.

Photos by Dave Harwig



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