

Uthoff visits Creighton; mulls Iowa, ISU

Written by Jim Ecker
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Jarrold Uthoff got to be teammates with Creighton All-American Doug McDermott in pickup basketball games in Omaha this week during his official visit to the Missouri Valley Conference school.

"It was fun. I really enjoyed it," Uthoff said Wednesday night in a telephone interview. "I was on his team a couple of times. He's a great guy."

But Uthoff is not ready to decide if he'll join McDermott on a full-time basis at Creighton next season as he continues to search for a new school. He plans to visit Iowa State on May 3-4 and also is giving serious consideration to the Iowa Hawkeyes, even though he'd probably have to pay his own way at Iowa for one year.

"It's certainly a possibility," he said about joining the Hawkeyes. "It's not out of the question that I'd go there."

Uthoff, a 6-foot-8 forward, is leaving the University of Wisconsin after one redshirt campaign to find another school and a better "fit," as he describes it. Wisconsin Coach Bo Ryan originally banned 26 schools from contacting Uthoff, but Uthoff appealed and Wisconsin removed most of those restrictions last week. The restrictions on Big Ten schools remain in effect, however.

All of Wisconsin's rivals in the Big Ten, including Iowa, are prohibited by NCAA rules from contacting Uthoff. The restrictions also mean Uthoff would be ineligible for a scholarship at a Big Ten school during the 2012-13 season, but he would be eligible for a scholarship during the 2013-14 campaign and thereafter.

Iowa Coach Fran McCaffery, communicating through intermediaries, has made it clear to Uthoff that he'd be welcome in Iowa City, but McCaffery cannot speak directly with Uthoff at this point. "He can't talk to me or my family," Uthoff said. "I can't have any contact with him."

Uthoff said he's still not sure if he'll appeal the restrictions on the Big Ten schools, but it sounds

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like he will not. He said he realizes the Big Ten restrictions are routine when a Big Ten player decides to transfer.

Uthoff flew to Omaha for his visit with Coach Greg McDermott and the Creighton Bluejays, and he was joined there by his parents. They had an opportunity to visit with Coach McDermott, tour the campus and ask questions. And Uthoff enjoyed those pickup games with the Bluejays and Doug McDermott, the coach's son who was a first team All-American this past season as a sophomore.

Uthoff likes Creighton, but he will not make a decision about his next school until after he visits Iowa State on May 3-4, at the earliest. "I'm not really sure I'm going there," he said about the Bluejays.

Uthoff said he plans to visit additional schools as well, but has not arranged any other visits.

Uthoff was named Iowa's "Mr. Basketball" as a senior at Cedar Rapids Jefferson in 2011 and also was named the state's Gatorade Player of the Year.