

## McDermott gives Petersen strong endorsement

Written by Jim Ecker

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Bryan Petersen is only 25 years old, just a few years older than the players he'll be leading next season as the interim head coach of the Kirkwood men's basketball team, but Creighton Coach Greg McDermott is confident he'll do a good job.

Petersen played and worked for McDermott at Iowa State, where he was a two-year starter at point guard during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 campaigns. He spent a season on McDermott's staff as a graduate assistant before spending two more years on the ISU staff when Fred Hoiberg succeeded McDermott as head coach.

"When we recruited him and he played for us, it was obvious that he was a coach on the floor," said McDermott. "His basketball I.Q. was off the chart.

"That was evident as a player. He was able to carry that over to his coaching career."

Petersen was a junior college All-American at Kirkwood during the 2006-07 campaign before moving to Iowa State. He returned to Kirkwood this past season as an assistant coach, then was named interim head coach for the 2013-14 season when Doug Wagemester decided he wanted to step aside and take a year away from coaching.

Wagemester, who is also Kirkwood's athletic director, will decide a year from now if he wants to return as the head coach. Until then, Petersen gets to call the shots and run the program.

McDermott encouraged Petersen to get into coaching and was happy to get him started with the Cyclones.

"As he moved through his playing career and got older, it was obvious to me that's what he wanted to do," said McDermott. "He's got a great feel for the game and he's passionate about helping young people.

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"He's got all the attributes that will make a great coach."

Petersen averaged 6.6 points, 3.7 rebounds and 2.7 assists as a senior at Iowa State and has a master's degree in education from ISU.

McDermott said Petersen had the knack of communicating with the players once he became a member of the coaching staff.

"What I remember the most, the guys on the team gravitated toward Petey with questions," he said. "Having been through it before as a player, Petey had a way of explaining to them what the coaches were trying to get out of them and what the expectations are from more of a player's point of view.

"All of the guys had tremendous respect for Petey."

Petersen played for Wagemester and McDermott, and has worked for Wagemester, McDermott and Hoiberg.

"He can take the best of all three of those and develop a philosophy that works for him," said McDermott. "I know he'll have the trust of the players. He's a wonderful young man."

Hoiberg could not be reached for comment the past two weeks for this story.