

SIUE Men's Basketball Adds Size to Roster

by Joe Pott

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EDWARDSVILLE – SIUE men's basketball Head Coach Brian Barone has announced the addition of Philip Pepple Jr. (Shoreline, Washington) to his roster.

Pepple is a 6-foot, 10-inch, 230-pound forward/center who comes to SIUE from Casper College in Casper, Wyoming. He will have two years of eligibility remaining.

"What stood out about Philip right away was his level energy on the court," Barone said. "His ability to play end to end and his desire to rebound the ball which going to be vital for us moving forward. His size and mobility are unique coupled with his athleticism."

"I am excited to become part of the SIUE men's basketball family," Pepple said. "I believe in the vision that Coach Barone has for the program and know that winning is something that will be done and not just talked about. The love and support they showed me was a big reason why I chose SIUE."

While at Casper, Pepple was a part of 57 wins in two seasons with the Thunderbirds. As a sophomore, he averaged 12.1 points, 8.4 rebounds and 2.9 blocks per game, which ranked sixth in National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I basketball.

"Philip has an ability to score with his back to the basket but also can step out and hit mid-range jump shots," Barone added. "He changes the game defensively, by blocking shots, and offensively by running the floor."

"Philip is a rare and special talent because of his size, athleticism and ability to score," Casper College Head Coach Shaun Gutting said. "His best basketball is ahead of him."

His 90 total blocks ranked seventh in the NJCAA and he ranked 28th with 101 total offensive rebounds and 66th in rebounds per game.

"He has a positive attitude that will be embraced by the SIUE community," Barone said. "Philip's team-first mentality will fit perfectly within our Find A Way family."

"SIUE is getting a fantastic person, who is very coachable and has a really high ceiling in basketball and in life," Gutting continued. "Philip is a great fit for SIUE because of his caring and kind personality. The coaching staff will push him daily to improve on and off the floor, which is something Philip desires."

"Going somewhere where I had a strong relationship and it felt like family with the coaches and staff was big for me," Pepple continued. "Going to a place where I felt wanted and needed was important. I wanted to play for a coach that is just as passionate and determined as I am. I truly believe this is the right move for me going forward and I am ready to be a part of SIUE basketball."