Loyola introduces Porter Moser
By Scott Powers
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CHICAGO -- Porter Moser believed he was destined for another chance in his coaching career after he was fired by Illinois State in 2007.

After spending the past four years on Rick Majerus' staff at Saint Louis, Moser believes he finally found the position he was meant for. On Wednesday, Moser was introduced as Loyola's new coach at a press conference on the school's campus.

"I had a stumbling block at Illinois State, and I won't shy away from that," said Moser, who was given a five-year contract for an undisclosed salary. "I've said the last four years, 'God's got a plan.' And you look at that, and now this has happened in the game, and I say, 'No doubt about it, no doubt about it.'

"This is the perfect fit for Porter Moser and his family. I'm so looking forward to the tradition at Loyola, the Jesuit tradition, the Horizon League. I love that Butler is doing what it's doing. I don't like that in the last the 24 hours, 10 people have said we'll be Butler next year. But I like expectations; I like passion."

Moser displayed the type of energy throughout the press conference that impressed Loyola athletic director Grace Calhoun during their interviews for the position.

On Wednesday, Moser removed the microphone from its stand, held it in his left hand, gestured with his right hand as he spoke, never standing in one place and answered questions with long, enthusiastic responses.

"I can start with our first phone conversation, and about three minutes into the conversation, I found myself saying, 'I just love this guy,'" Calhoun said. "His energy, his ability to articulate a vision for the program, his values, I just immediately felt a sense of connection, and I found myself saying, 'I could work with this guy. This is the type of leader that we need for the Rambler program.'

"I can understand why he's a great recruiter. He was that effective with me. He's got an infectious personality, very sincere, very believable, very likeable. You just want to be around him."

Moser's recruiting history in the Chicago area can give Ramblers' fans hope for the future. Moser recruited Chicago Public League stars Osiris Eldridge to Illinois State and Mike McCall to Saint Louis and former Neuqua Valley all-state forward Dwayne Evans to Saint Louis.

Former Loyola coach Jim Whitesell had two Chicago-area players on last year's team and often relied on players from other Midwest states.
"It's about relations," said Moser, who said he prefers an up-tempo offense and man-to-man defense. "It's about them getting to know you, them getting to know what this program is all about. This is a sleeping giant here at Loyola. These kids in the Chicago area, the surrounding suburbs they're going to learn, 'Hey, Loyola is a great option.'

"Recruiting in Chicago has been a strength of mine. I'm excited to do it. There have been a lot of great student-athletes that have gotten away and need to be here at Loyola and soon will be."

Moser didn't promise results overnight. At Illinois State, he was fired after four seasons, and he felt he needed one more season to turn the program around. He also believed Saint Louis is about to excel in what will be Majerus' fifth season.

"It just takes time," said Moser, whose team will open at Illinois next season. "You might sign three kids and then they're freshman. That year, they're freshman, and you have to develop them. It just takes time every year until you get your roster the way you want it.

"Think about, I was there four years at Illinois State and still didn't have a roster from top to bottom of kids I recruited. Mike Krzyzewski says it all the time that if the climate of college basketball was the way it is now when he took over, it wouldn't be the same. It just takes time. I know everyone wants it now, wants it now."

Calhoun also acknowledged the program's growth would be a process, but expected it to happen in less than five years.

"Now, we know we're not going to go from four straight years of eighth place to the top of the Horizon League in one year, but I think you can expect to see teams that play hard and that get a little bit better with each passing game," Calhoun said. "We also understand attention spans are short, and this can't be a five- or six-year rebuild. We want to see Loyola steadily moving up in the rankings as the years progress."