ASU All Access: Randy Bennett returns home to lead Sun Devil Basketball

By Lisa Robbins, ASU News
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After 45 years in California, Randy Bennett is back home in Arizona, and he's bringing decades of coaching experience and a new vision for Sun Devil Men's Basketball.

In this episode of ASU All Access, FOX 10 sports reporter Blake Niemann sat down with Bennett to discuss his first six months in Tempe, building a new roster and preparing for his first season leading the Sun Devils.

Bennett was named head coach in March 2026 after spending 25 seasons at Saint Mary's College of California, where he led the Gaels to 12 NCAA Tournament appearances and 18 consecutive postseason appearances.

"It's been a blur. It's going so fast," Bennett said. "We had so many challenges already just as far as getting our program organized, getting a team, getting my staff."

For Bennett, the move to ASU was more than a career opportunity. Born and raised in Arizona, he grew up in Mesa and had always envisioned returning to his home state.

"I grew up here, born and raised here. I always thought I'd be back here," Bennett said. "My family and friends are here."

Even after decades at Saint Mary's, Bennett said Arizona State was the one program that could have drawn him away.

"I said Arizona State would be the one. That's the only one," Bennett said.

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Now tasked with rebuilding the Sun Devil program, Bennett emphasized the importance of recruiting players with strong character. Bennett and his coaching

staff faced the challenge of recruiting 12 new players in approximately one month while building the program.

“I think we went 100% on getting really good people. And that’s hard to do,” Bennett said. “These guys are great kids, great people.”

Bennett also highlighted the experience of Associate Head Coaches David Patrick and Rick Croy, both former Division 1 head coaches, as an important part of developing the program.

“I lean on them a lot,” Bennett said. “I set it up where the assistants have a lot of responsibility.”

As the Sun Devils prepare for the 2026–27 season, Bennett said building a competitive program will require support from the community.

“My number one message would be we need you, and we need people in the seats. We need people following us,” Bennett said.

Bennett acknowledged that earning that support starts with the team's performance.

“Win or lose, we have to just keep getting better every day,” Bennett said. “We do that, I think we have a chance to be a good team this year.”

(Video: {https://youtu.be/cg-o66XFa0E?si=Ni6yQI84U0HYY5Ll})

This story originally appeared on ASU News.

Main image



After 25 years coaching St. Mary’s College of California, Randy Bennett has returned home to his beloved Sun Devils. Photo courtesy of Sun Devil Athletics