The Corbin-Furman connection

Furman University
[former CSU coach, now at Nebraska] was the face of CSU’s building project and Larry Eustachy is keeping it going, but behind the scenes has been Medved, bringing the talent to Fort Collins. He’s one of the most underrated recruiters in college basketball and has thrived from actually having integrity and treating folks around him with respect."

What can Furman fans expect to see this fall when Medved’s first team takes the floor? A more upbeat tempo, for one thing. Medved was in charge of the Colorado State offense, which led the Mountain West Conference in scoring on its way to a school-record 26 wins in 2012-13 and a third-round appearance in the NCAA tournament, where the Rams lost to eventual champion Louisville. He’s bringing that offense philosophy with him to Furman.

“People can expect to see a lot of ball movement, a lot of player movement,” he says. “We’ll be aggressive and we’ll be an attacking team. When we get a good shot, we’ll take it.”

Medved says he could count on one hand the number of set plays the Rams ran in 2012-13. “I don’t think people come out to watch a system,” he says. “They come to see you play with passion and energy. And that’s the way we’ll play. We’ll be a fun team to watch.”

— VINCE MOORE

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FRANK SELVY ’54 (above, left) is the most storied name in Furman basketball history. Jerry Smith ’63 is not far behind.

But other than their accomplishments on the hardwood, their memberships in the Furman Athletic Hall of Fame and their retired jerseys that hang in the rafters of Timmons Arena, what do they have in common? At least two more things: Both are from Corbin, Ky. And both are featured in a new book, The Boys from Corbin: America’s Greatest Little Sports Town (Acclaim Press), which recounts the stories of a host of athletic stars who came from the little town in the Kentucky hills. “It’s not just a sports book,” author Gary West has said. “It’s about a community and how families banded together.”

The Corbin-Furman connection plays a prominent role in the book. The story of the Selvy clan starts with Frank, the only player to score 100 points in an NCAA Division I basketball game and, in West’s view, “the man who put Corbin on the map.” The university’s all-time leading scorer with an average of 23.5 points per game, Selvy went on to play in the National Basketball Association for nine years, then returned to Furman to succeed Lyles Alley as basketball coach. Several of his brothers would follow him to Furman, either as players (David ’55 and Curly ’71) or as a coach (Marvin).

Smith arrived at Furman almost a decade after Selvy and made his mark as a three-time all-Southern Conference player who averaged 23.3 points per game for his career. He is the school’s fifth all-time leading scorer and was drafted by the Detroit Pistons of the NBA.

Smith and the Selvy boys are featured in photographs on the book’s back cover. West, a freelance writer and former newspaper reporter, lives in Bowling Green, Ky., and has written seven books about various aspects of life in his home state.

The book was released April 13 with a well-attended signing and other events in Corbin. Smith and much of the Selvy family were on hand for the unveiling.