

## Washpun gets scholarship offer from Tennessee

Written by Jim Ecker

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Cedar Rapids Washington senior Wes Washpun has been offered a scholarship to play basketball at Tennessee, and according to his high school coach it's now a two-team race between Iowa and Tennessee for the flashy 6-foot-1 point guard.

"Flip a coin," Washington Coach Brad Metzger said Saturday.

New Tennessee Coach Cuonzo Martin told Metzger Friday afternoon that he's decided to offer Washpun a scholarship, and Metzger quickly relayed the news to his star player.

Washpun's reaction? "The same as always," said Metzger, chuckling. "He said 'OK.' That's all he says to anything."

Iowa Coach Fran McCaffery offered Washpun a scholarship earlier this week, and they met for more than an hour at Carver-Hawkeye Arena Thursday night without Washpun giving an answer.

Metzger said Washpun and his family are weighing the offers from Tennessee and Iowa. Washpun has said he plans to decide by Monday or Tuesday, prior to the national signing day on Wednesday. "He's kind of thinking it through," Metzger said.

Meanwhile, Virginia Coach Tony Bennett called Metzger and said he wanted to fly to Iowa this weekend, watch Washpun work out and offer a scholarship. "Wes said no," Metzger said.

Washpun said Thursday that Missouri State was still in the picture, but Metzger said it's a two-team race between the Volunteers and Hawkeyes. "I think Wes has made it pretty clear that it's Tennessee and Iowa," he remarked.

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Martin offered Washpun a scholarship on Feb. 21 when he was still the coach at Missouri State, before he succeeded Bruce Pearl at Tennessee. Paul Lusk, the new coach at Missouri State, has honored the offer as well.

Washpun said Thursday night he's intrigued by the possibility of playing at Iowa because it's only 30 minutes away, he's a lifelong Hawkeye fan, Washington teammate Josh Oglesby will be joining the Hawkeyes and playing time is available.

He likes Tennessee because it's played in six straight NCAA tournaments and because Martin was the first major college coach to offer a scholarship, believing in Washpun before many others did.

McCaffery offered a scholarship after Cully Payne announced he was leaving Iowa, leaving a void at point guard. "I know that Coach McCaffery is working hard and doing what he has to do (to get Washpun)," Metzger said.