

July 26, 2011



An Interview With:

IOWA STATE COACH PAUL RHOADS

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Iowa State coach Paul Rhoads. Coach, your thoughts about the upcoming season.

COACH RHOADS: Thank you very much. It's been a busy and exciting summer in Ames, Iowa, with continued stadium upgrades taking place. We have a brand-new massive video scoreboard that has been installed in our north end zone.

Additionally, the Board of Regents approved construction of a brand-new state-of-the-art football facility that will be built adjacent to Bergstrom Indoor Facility. Construction will be started in August and be completed in July of 2012. So recruiting class of 2012 will move into a brand-new facility.

Our administration has always supported us and understands what it takes to be competitive in the best conference in the country and continues to move ahead with the support of our program.

We're anxious to get started on August 3rd as our kids report and start practice on August 5th. One of the biggest questions that we have to address immediately is who is going to be our starting quarterback.

We've got three guys that are vying for that position, and after a number of practices and three major scrimmages, I'm confident that one will surface to lead us.

They're going to get a chance to lead us behind a veteran offensive line in a group of play-makers at wide receiver and running back, I think are the best we've had in our three years.

Defensively we'll put an improved defensive line on the field and they'll be backed up by a group of linebackers and corners that I'm really excited to see play.

All these positives will collide with one of, if not, the toughest schedules in college football, and we're just going to see where that takes us by the time December rolls around.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. You mentioned obviously the tough schedule. How different does it make it when you're trying to revive a program when now that you're going to play everybody, all these South teams every year, year in, year out?

COACH RHOADS: It's very challenging, certainly. When I took the job and I looked ahead to 2011, I knew the schedule was going to be rough anyway.

And we had Utah previously on it as well as Connecticut and Iowa. So the fact that we've added a Big 12 game and replaced Utah on that doesn't certainly make it any simpler, and it won't be that way as we move forward with the new nine-game league schedule.

It's a challenge that our kids embrace. We've had success quickly in years one and two, and we're going to have to meet that challenge if we're going to have success moving forward.

Q. You mentioned the stadium upgrades. Were those things that you had in mind when you did take the job, or where did those things kind of start, the new facility and the new scoreboard?

COACH RHOADS: The video scoreboard wasn't something I had in mind, but very quickly got thinking that way after the opening game of 2009. The sound system was well beyond it's time.

And the environment of Jack Trice Stadium is really going to be enhanced by this new video board as well as the audio component of it, which I think is maybe just as important.

Having moved into our current facility back in 1996, when we moved from the Big Eight to the Big 12, and knowing what was in place there, yeah, I knew sooner rather than later we were going to need a brand-new football facility. And I'm

very appreciative that Jamie Pollard and the administration saw that way as well.

Q. Obviously a lot of chatter at Big 12 Media Days about the Longhorn Network, but up in your neck of the woods you had to deal with Big Ten Network coming in there and the Iowa presence there for a couple of years. Could you talk about that related to what some of the schools in Texas may be facing when you have that kind of media presence going on?

COACH RHOADS: I don't know if I've felt or noticed the effect of the Big Ten Network on our market and with our recruiting and with our program. We certainly play Iowa every year, and it's a great rivalry game and provides great competition.

But as the Big Ten goes their direction, we go our direction. I don't know if we've directly been impacted by that.

Q. You've got UConn and Iowa. Is that something you want to continue to do, is out of your three non-conference games have two of them from BCS-level schools, or would you like to scale that back? Most teams don't try something like that.

COACH RHOADS: My wife likes our job, and I sort of do, too, so, no, that's not a direction I'd like to move playing 11 BCS opponents every year. And a change is in place in 2012 and beyond to get away from that challenging of a schedule.

Q. There's an -- NCAA is looking at maybe expanding the definition of an agent to include family members, people that would benefit as well from the player. What is your opinion on that? Is that something that needs to be done?

COACH RHOADS: I wasn't aware of that, and I would want to know more specifically what they said and how they're associating it with it. I know this: They are aggressively looking a lot of things to -- I don't want to say to clean up the game -- but to keep the game clean. And I think it's the right thing to do.

Q. Paul, there's been a lot of discussion about adding the cost of a full scholarship, and curious what your stance is on that.

COACH RHOADS: There are other people on campus that can receive more than

student-athletes do from a cost of attendance standpoint.

So that alone is reason to look into it, to give our kids an equitable stance. I don't know how you do it, though. I mean, there's so many student-athletes. I don't believe you can shortchange one to take care of another. You can't separate revenue and nonrevenue in my opinion.

Would I like to see it take place? Would I like to see kids right now back in Ames be able to travel back home instead of staying in Ames because they can't afford a plane ticket? Absolutely I'd like to see that take place. How you do it, I've got no idea.

Q. One of my favorite plays of all of last season is when you faked the extra point against Nebraska and didn't work out for you, but can you talk about how your thought process after the play and how you dealt with fallout of coming so close and should have won the game, could have won the game, and your general philosophy on sort of rolling the dice and those kinds of things?

COACH RHOADS: Right. It's a call that I relive and a play I relive every week. There's not a week that goes by that I don't think about the play and what it could have created for our football team and our football program. But it was a play that there was a lot of thought that went into certainly in our week's preparation. And as the game went along, it was a play I studied and certainly was there.

For those of you that haven't seen the play, it was a fake extra point and intended receiver was wide open from me to you, Barry, wide open, and we failed to execute. That's the name of the game, when it's a play like that, the final game of a game or the first play of the game, you have to execute to be successful.

The fallout was positive, if anything, from players to fans to most people I talked to they thought it was a right call, gutsy call, but the right call, and would have given us an opportunity to really springboard our program, I feel.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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P. Rhoads - 7.26.11