

July 20, 2015



An Interview With:

KANSAS STATE COACH BILL SNYDER

COACH SNYDER: Not a whole lot to share with you. We can go ahead and get started. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to be here. Been here longer than most of you, I think. I don't know whether that's a good thing or a bad thing, but it is what it is.

My respect to our conference and those of you that cover our conference. We greatly appreciate that. I didn't get to hear Commissioner Bowlsby, but I have a great appreciation for him and what he has meant to our conference. He has stepped into the commissioner's role.

I would ask that each and every one of you keep in mind and keep in your prayers and your thoughts a member of the Big 12 Conference who has meant a great deal to the conference and a great deal to me personally, Donnie Duncan. I think all of you recognize the name. He's going through some very difficult times in his life right now. As a stout supporter and member of the Big 12 Conference, he has been very special to our conference.

We've got four young guys here. You're supposed to -- I think you'll have an opportunity to hear from them. All of them are tremendous young people, good teammates, good students, care about each other, care about doing things right, and I think you'll find that. I hope that each and every one of you get an opportunity to be in front of them, and I think you'll be impressed by the quality of character of those young guys. Good football players as well.

Q. I saw where you have seven quarterbacks listed on your roster, and I don't recall seeing seven quarterbacks on a Bill Snyder roster before. Upon going through the entirety of spring, I was wondering if you could assess the quarterback spot right now. Then,

also, the summer transfer, Jonathan Banks, what he possesses and how he might fit into the mix.

COACH SNYDER: Yes, we do have seven quarterbacks. I think probably four of them at this particular point in time -- in my eyes, anyway -- should be competitive for the position. We will go into our proverbial two-a-day practices with that in mind.

It's hard to get all the repetitions you would like with four guys sharing the opportunities, so it will be significant for us to be able to pare that down as quickly as we possibly can. I don't know how fast that will be. Right now they're all on equal footing.

Three of them went through spring practice. The young guy that you mentioned, Jonathan Banks, just recently joined us, a very athletic young guy. We haven't seen him in a practice environment yet. So that remains to be seen. But he will be one of the four probably that will be certainly in competition for the position.

I think they're all good young guys. They all care. They're all good teammates. They all do things the right way. They all want us to see. So I think that will be very competitive. We just want to sort it out as quickly as we can.

Q. Regarding the Big 12's new rule restricting live contact, what do you think of the rule? Has the amount of contact in your practices changed over the years? How much do players need to have contact to get acclimated to games?

COACH SNYDER: I would think that you have to have some. It will not affect us because the rule defined as it is in place right now, and we've had discussions of it in our conference meetings, is identical to what our needs are. So it doesn't alter anything that we have done. We don't have to make any changes in that respect.

I like the way we do our practices. We've been doing them the same way for a long time. So it plays out to favor what we do, I think.

ASAPsports
...when all is said, we're done.®

visit our archives at asapsports.com

B. Snyder - 7.20.15

Q. A lot of talk about expansion the last few weeks has risen up again. You have long advocated for a championship game, no matter what the conference format is. How do you stand on expansion? Do you feel like the league needs to get back to 12, or is 10 okay as long as you have a championship game?

COACH SNYDER: Let me try to answer it this way. I've long been an advocate of a certain way, and only because of its value to Kansas State. I mean, everybody has different opinions about it, and I understand that. We all have to think about collectively the conference and certainly our own programs and our own universities.

I have always favored the way it was at one time. I favor a 12-team conference, I favor two divisions, and I favor a championship game. You might remember that, when we had that format, we were one of only two teams that played a game in December, and that was one of only two conferences. That was the Big 12 Conference and the SEC. Now we're the only conference that does not do that and have that particular format.

I know it's hard to come by with being a ten-team conference. And as I said, I understand everybody doesn't want to do it that way. They all have very adequate reasons why they would not want to do it that way because of what it means to their particular program. That's just my opinion.

Q. Clearly, you are very passionate about your fan base, and your fan base is extremely passionate about Kansas State football. In light of all these awesome new renovations that you all have going on right now, can you talk about how important that fan base is to make Kansas State special.

COACH SNYDER: It goes back to the history, I think as much as anything. When we went to Kansas State University in '89, Kansas State University was a step away from being eliminated from what we define as Division I football at the time. And we had an attendance, average attendance of 13,000, give or take. There was an NCAA rule in place at the time that indicated that to be a Division I team, you had to have an average attendance of 19,000.

So there was discussion on the board of regents what to do, move to a lower level or drop football altogether. Both were on the table. And our fans stepped up, and we went above the necessary numbers for the first season. And every

year there on out, we've grown. And we've learned to play in front of sellout crowds for quite some time now.

The fans have been -- they're wonderful. They care about the young people in our program. I have a great appreciation for that. They care about them as young people, not just win or lose guys. They're not nameless. They're young guys that I believe they're good young guys. Our fans believe they're good young guys. And they appreciate very much the kind of young people that we have in our program.

That's what's important to me. We haven't always been -- we've had some years that have been what some would consider to be down years, and the fans have been there for all of these young guys. In this day and age, that's somewhat rare, and I appreciate it a great deal.

You might remember several years ago when Pete Carroll was at USC and Kansas State played -- we played out in the Coliseum one year and then the following year they came back and played us in Manhattan. Pete Carroll went on one of the national TV shows after the ball game and said "The most intimidating crowd we have ever played in front of" in his history at USC. I thought that was saying something.

So I'm just so proud of them. They are -- it says Family on that stadium. My personal family, certainly, that's for them, but it's also for the Kansas State family because I consider them family as well. Wonderful people.

Q. Dante Barnett has been getting a lot of preseason attention. He's on a number of awards watch lists. How has he been handling that? What is it about him that you think will allow him to handle the top billing as the leader on your defense?

COACH SNYDER: I appreciate you saying it that way because that's exactly the way it has to take place. As I said, each one of those young guys I've alluded to, it's wonderful. Congratulations on being selected on this watch list, that watch list, et cetera, et cetera, but that's not the significant thing. The important thing is will you work hard enough, will you make it important enough to you to earn it in the light that is expected of you, which is to be a great teammate and make it about the team and not about yourself.

He is a young guy like the rest of them who I think will do exactly that. I think he cares

more about the accomplishments of his collective team and his teammates than he does about his own. I have great appreciation for that. There's a humility there. Dante is a very confident young guy, and I appreciate that a great deal. But by the same token, humility is part of his makeup, and I appreciate that a great deal as well. But I also believe that it's deserved because he has been -- aside from the other things, he's been a fine player as well.

Q. I was going to ask about Dante as well. When he showed up at campus, was he a natural leader, or is that something you've seen progress in his time there?

COACH SNYDER: I think he's progressed into it. It's not something that he -- not that he -- I'm not a big believer that people are natural this and natural that. I think you develop the capacity to lead for the most part. And I think over a period of time he has done that.

We try to promote leadership with young guys as soon as they step foot on our campus. I hear too often we've got X number of seniors and that's where your leadership lies. I think you have to help develop young guys from the very beginning, from the outset, because leadership's going to be important for them with their family, with their career field, in so many other aspects of their life, as well as it is for football.

So that's part of our responsibility, to help encourage and help create a foundation for the development of leadership with all the young guys we have.

Q. Coach Snyder, you say that you're in favor of conference expansion. Which teams do you see as viable options for the conference if they in the future choose to do so?

COACH SNYDER: Well, I haven't gotten into that. I do the easy part of it. I can identify issues. Solution is another story. I'm not going to -- I'm not going to be part of answering the question or providing solutions. If I could, probably -- if asked, I certainly would try to help. I don't have enough background information because I don't venture in that direction. I don't want to get sidetracked in what we do. So I really couldn't tell you.

I hear the schools that are mentioned from time to time, and I think all of them are mentioned for a reason. Obviously, they have fine programs, good universities. But I don't have a favorite or two favorites, and I don't know where all that would go.

...when all is said, we're done.®

ASAPsports

visit our archives at asapsports.com

I would say this. I think there is probably some universities out there that haven't necessarily been mentioned for maybe some obvious reasons that might have an interest in being a part of our conference. But I don't know that for a fact.

I don't really have a response or great answer to that.

Q. Bill, I don't know how much longer you're going to coach, but do you think in the next 10 or 20 years -- have you thought about a second career in anything?

COACH SNYDER: I get asked some type of question like that quite frequently. When I retired, I missed football probably for about six months, and after that, I didn't. I truly didn't. I mean, I was enamored by it, but I didn't miss it.

I had the opportunity to do a lot of things I really enjoyed doing. We initiated Kansas Mentors, which is a statewide mentoring initiative that was significant for me and what was important to me. We initiated the Kansas Leadership Center, which was significant to our state, which is important to me. And I was heavily invested in the Kansas State University Leadership Studies program, which I helped initiate, and it's very important to me as well. I was invested in those things as well as more family time, and I enjoyed that.

When I was asked to come back, that was not an easy decision to make. Most people think "You missed it so much, you had to be back," and that was not the case at all. It took me, as I've indicated, probably around six months to make the decision to come back.

And the reason I came back was because of what I perceived, anyway, to be the capacity to help guide and direct young people to become successful in life and to help create a value system or implement a foundation for the rest of their lives. That has always been my highest priority in coaching, and that had more to do with me coming back than anything else.

Q. I'm sure that the Bill Snyder family is really, really interested in what's going to happen at this quarterback position. You've told us as many as four could be involved in the competition. My question to you, Coach, is could you envision a scenario where maybe you platoon quarterbacks or play two?

COACH SNYDER: You know, it's

B. Snyder - 7.20.15

possible. We've done it. When you have two, it's not my favorite thing to do. I don't exclude anything, most people wouldn't, but that's not our intent at this particular point in time. Our intent is just exactly as I had indicated, is try to sort through what we have and work our way into positions where we have a quarterback.

But if you followed our program, you've seen us play two quarterbacks on the field at the same time. So we have a lot of things that we can do in that respect.

But at the end of the day, the bottom line is I concur with what most people would say, you're better served to have one than two. You can define that a lot of different ways. I'm pleased that we have four, but we do have to have a number one out of those four, and that's the direction we're trying to go.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports