

Big 12 Conference Football Media Days

Monday, July 18, 2016

David Beaty

Kansas

THE MODERATOR: Now joining us at the dais is Kansas Head Coach, David Beaty. Welcome and your thoughts about the upcoming season?

DAVID BEATY: Excited to be back here with you at Big 12 Conference Football Media Days, excited to be back home in my hometown of Dallas, Texas. As many of you know, I am from the Dallas area and my father is a police officer here. My heart hurts for the Dallas communities and for communities across the country that are suffering and in pain right now. I pray that we will begin to listen to one another, love one another and get to the hard work of healing our nation, to the issues that we're facing right now, I believe that college football can be an example in the midst of our struggles in America. Young men from all walks of life, different backgrounds coming together, listening to one another, working hard together, learning from one another, fighting together for a common goal. I think society can learn a lot from these young and I'm excited about working with some of them at KU.

We're excited about our season up coming, just like everyone else in the country. We were not satisfied obviously with our production last year, but we are extremely encouraged by the work that we have put in the production that we have put in in the off-season. We are building a foundation of Jayhawk football and we know here we are going to be successful. This is the best off-seasons I've had, our strength coach, Je'Ney Jackson.

We are bigger, stronger, faster, more focused than we were a year ago and I love the new faces on this team. They're going to make us better and help us make Jayhawk Nation proud.

Q. Your recruiting strategy in the state of Texas, broadly speak on the emphasis that you put on kind of recruiting in this area to revitalize your program and what sort of main key points you are hitting on with your program that is going to attract a higher level of talent there.

DAVID BEATY: Our recruiting strategy here and everywhere, but particularly here because I hail from this area and I was a high school coach here for a number of years, is to utilize the relationships that we have created with these guys. As I said before, these



guys that are around this area and in this state I was with about 19,000 of them in San Antonio which is impressive. 19,000 coaches coming together at one place is a pretty slick deal. But those guys are my heroes and Texas high school football coaches have always been coaches I have idolized and I feel like a lot of them do could my job which is what gets me up every morning because those guys are on my heels. But also to represent those guys. We call on relationships. We've got some tremendous coaches right here in the. We're trying to do the same thing there at Kansas and try to create a Kansas identity as well.

Q. Your opening words talking about the climate of the country right now, it's kind of, I would assume, interesting intersection for you with your background, but then a lot of your guys sort of that time in their life when they're going through a lot of different things. What have you talked to your team about, if anything, just in regards to the climate on campus and sort of among their peer groups right now?

DAVID BEATY: Well, the great thing about our program is we create an environment from the day that we got there that is based on caring for your teammate more than you care for yourself. Being a selfless, committed person to our program and when we have kids that do that and we really are fortunate right now we have a team full of guys that are interested in the man to their right and lefts interests more than their own. I think that's where our kids can teach a lot of people a lot of things about that. We've worked really hard to try to create a cohesive unit there and the way we do that ask we listen to one another when we communicate.

I think one of the biggest things we urge our guys to do is communicate. We don't know if we don't talk. It's no different than if I'm visiting with my girls at home or my wife. We seem to be doing really well when we communicate well and we seem to be doing better when I listen well. I need to listen better. She's told me that a lot, but I think that's an art that's lost out there. We teach our guys to listen, be good listeners and try to understand where each side is coming from and really from that standpoint. I think opening lines of communication is really big and really understanding that, you know, you can do a lot with listening and communicating. I certainly would never ever want us to

believe that violence is an answer.

Q. Coach, could you talk about -- when you're rebuilding a program, obviously recruiting is a big part of it. Also you lost Calvin Thibodeaux, one of your D-line coaches who was a good coach for you. Talk about losing him and how that goes into building a program and keeping those guys around.

DAVID BEATY: You know, I think the thing for me, and I've always been this way, is I want to hire guys that are valuable, guys that other people want. I want to hire talented guys and when we hire them we talk to them all the time I talk to our staff all the time about, listen, if you'll think about it like I did when I put my head on the pillow at night I will help you and your family could anything that you feel like is in the best interest for you, and Calvin did that for us. So did Reggie Mitchell. All of the departures we had this year, every one of those opportunities were better opportunities for those guys at their stage of their career they all made good sense.

We're not afraid of losing good people because we know there are good people out there to come in and fill those gaps for us. Every single guy that we hired, I knew 'em. Most of them I offers the job the first time around. I am really excited about our staff. Todd Bradford, our like linebacker coach, I think that guy is one of the finest coaches I have ever been around. Joe DeForest, a wealth of knowledge and special teams that he brings to the table. We hired Tony Hull, high school coach out of New Orleans who was literally a rocket scientist. He literally worked for NASA and worked on the space shuttle and gave up that job to go back into public schools in New Orleans after the hurricane because he wanted better for his city. He gave up a lucrative salary to go back and help the youth of his hometown and he's been successful because of those concepts that he's followed in his lifetime. We're fortunate that we have great guys like that. Mike Slater, defensive line coach who I have know be for a long time that came to us from Rice, he's going to slide right in there. Calvin is going to do a great job at Oklahoma, but Mike Slater has been waiting for this opportunity and I am excited to have him on our staff. And our guys have been pretty good along the years. I've learned most of it from Jason Phillips. I'm so excited to have him on our staff. We're just really fired up about our staff and I still love every one of those guys that left us. We all left on good terms. They did exactly what I asked them to do which is give me everything they had, and as a result everything works out in the end.

Q. So Ryan started the last eight games last year. How did he look in the spring? Is it an open competition going into the summer with Montell or

anybody else that you have there? Tell us about the quarterback?

DAVID BEATY: Brian, like I said before, I still need a few plays out of you. I would love to sign you and get a few --

Q. I got nothing!

DAVID BEATY: Ryan missed spring because of a wrist injury. As a result, that gave all the rest of our guys a lot of rep opportunities which was really good. Montell got a lot of reps. Montell had a phenomenal spring, terrific spring, developed really well for us. Carter Stanley had a terrific spring, kid out of Florida has done a nice job for us. Ryan Willis, although he couldn't throw the ball he was involved every day with a nerve and he operated the offense. The competition, Brian, is going to go into fall camp and as soon as I decide what I need to see to know the clear divider, and there will be, it will be a clear divider, once that happens we'll make that decision. We would like for it to be quick, but we don't always get what we want. We will take it as long as we have to take it. Our guys know quarterback position is no different for us than it is to play defensive tackle. You get what you earn. You're only as good as your next day.

So I'm not saying that we will pull 'em quick because I do believe that quarterbacks have to work their way through things, but they know if they exemplify characteristic that are not common to what we expect there the next guy is going to get a shot.

Q. Can you talk about your decision to take over the offense and, you know, obviously you're trying to replenish the talent and adding that to your plate?

DAVID BEATY: I'm excited to be basically back in it. Last year at this time the plan was for me to be as heavily involved as I am now. Unfortunately I had to be unselfish and step back because as you know, as a head football coach there's a lot of things that go along with building a program that it's hard to manage all of it. We were able to get those things in place, we've got the foundation laid now and that was the plan, the whole way through. As soon as I felt like we got it to where I needed it to be from an organizational standpoint and all of the peripherals taken care of, I was going to jump back into it. I was involved quite a bit anyway, but I'm excited to be back into it and I'm excited about working with our guys and I can see the light coming on with them. They're excited about being in an offense that's been -- it's proven to be productive, you know, just about every team that runs it has been very productive. If you track their statistics in one category or another they're up near the top of the country.

It is it is a unique system. I learned a lot from Kliff Kingsbury who is one of our rivals here, I owe that guy a ton because he's a smart dude and I learned a bunch from him and I know he's learned a lot from Coach Leach and other coaches around the country, but we're excited to be running what we're running.

Q. Obviously the last year 0-12, things can only go up. What is a realistic expectation and goal for this team this year and moving forward?

DAVID BEATY: You know, I think from our standpoint, last year, my biggest ache was for our fans, our coaches and our players because they deserve more, they really do. The Jayhawk Nation deserves better than what we were able to give 'em and what they've gotten in the recent past but it pains me for that but we were doing foundation work and it's hard, but it's necessary. We could have probably cut some corners and maybe taken a few guys that might have got us one or two. But at the end of the day it wouldn't have been worth it because our foundation is so important and we wanted to make sure it was something that was going to be long-lasting. As a result, our deal now is we gotta win games. That's why we're here so we have to win football games and we are completely and totally focused on the most important game in the history of our program, which is the next one, Rhode Island. I don't know who we play next, I don't care, we are focused on Rhode Island and that's the most important game that we have every played in our lives. We are focused on that and after that it will go to the next one.

Q. You've had the job now for a year and everybody talks about how difficult this job is. Is the job as challenging and as hard as you thought it might be?

DAVID BEATY: You know what? It is a difficult job but all these jobs are difficult. But I tell you what, it's a great opportunity. We know where we are headed and our players do as well. I can't wait for you guys to hear from those guys because I think you will hear in their voices, they know where we're headed. For us to go through a season that we went through, if you would have come to that last practice before that last game you would have never thought we hadn't won a game. That was probably what I was most proud of. Our guys worked and enjoyed everything they did with regard to development. They know where we are heading and they can see the future.

Is it difficult? Yes, but every job is difficult, doesn't really matter where you're coaching, everything has their own unique set of characteristics that make it difficult, but there is a lot of great things about 'em, too, and there is a lot of tremendous support at KU. They want to win. They give us what we need. We're

finishing up a \$2 million renovation and our fans want it and they know it's coming and our guys know it's coming, too.

Q. You've had a year now to kinda get some of our own recruits in and though that's not a ton of time what can we expect in terms of playing time from the new guys?

DAVID BEATY: Well, you know, one of the things is we were done so far in scholarships that a lot of these young guys because they're in the two-deep as soon as they step on campus, as a result they're playing anyway. I think we were one of the youngest teams in the country. I wanted to say we started 38 or 39 first-time players. We had several freshmen play last year, and that's not ideal. You would love to have guys develop and redshirt and most of them don't know how to do laundry when they come to us. So there are challenges that come along with that.

So you would love to get to a point where you can redshirt those guys and obviously a lot of young guys will be playing for us. Obviously there is a downside to that because a lot of them are not prepared for the rigors of a college football season and all the things that come along with that. But, you know what? We're not living in that perfect world, so we're going to make it perfect. And like we say all the time it's near perfect, so it's all in the way we look at it, and we're going to play a lot of young guys. But good news is they're going to get those bloody noses out of the way and they will have a lot of time left to play which means they will use the experience they have gained as a young player.

Q. There has been a lot of talk about the championship game coming in in another year and obviously you guys have work to do before you get into that conversation. At that point, what would be your preference for seeing how the participants of that game are determined, whether it's through divisions or straight record or whatever it be?

DAVID BEATY: Well, I don't know that there's a lot of different options to it. I do know that our leadership in our conference is second to none, Commissioner Bowlsby does a phenomenal job of leading this conference. I know him and our staff along with the decision makers in our conference will do a great job of picking the means by which is best for our conference, so I have no doubt in that. I have enough to say grace, so I focus on that most of the time.

But I'm excited that we're headed towards that. I think it really cool to settle it on the field with a championship game, so I'm excited about that. We've got a bunch of great teams in this conference. I'm really excited to watch these pairings go off this year because, you

know, I heard so much about other conferences being so strong in the NFL draft, and what's wrong with the Big 12? They're all back! Everybody is back! I mean, this conference is completely loaded with ridiculous freaks! There are some great players! You could have a great year and maybe not have the best year you thought you were going to have. This conference is loaded. There are so many great players, Oklahoma and what Coach Stoops has done there, that offensive line, the running backs, quarterback. Texas Tech's offense, that quarterback there. Those guys are talented and they're all over the place. Oklahoma State, I just saw those freaks walking around. Those are some big dudes!

Q. You hired Joe DeForest, he's been at two other Big 12 schools. What do you like about Joe and what he brings to you?

DAVID BEATY: Obviously his experience and his production. It's not -- you can have 28 years and not have much behind this. He's got a ton of years and proven production over the years. I've said a long time ago I think the way you get better, faster is you've got to be the smartest team in the country, don't give anything and don't go back wards. Just don't go backwards and don't give anybody anything. Be smart. Don't penalize, don't create a bunch of penalties. Number two, take care of the football, value possession, offensively and defensively. And finally, be in the top three in all four statistical categories in special teams. If you can do that, most of those teams are in about the top 25 in the country.

You do those things and you'll be surprised how quickly your program can improve. Those are great measuring sticks for us and Joe is going to bring some stability to us because he's done it and for a long period of time and he's been successful doing it. I'm thrilled to have him on our staff. I wasn't sure if we could get him. I offered him a job a year ago and it just worked out this time to get him here. I'm so excited to have him and his wife on our staff.

Q. As a young coach and rebuilding a program, you want to be good on both sides of the football, offense and defense, but realistically, what do you try to build first in the Big 12, an offense to keep up with or a defense to slow 'em down and keep you in games?

DAVID BEATY: I think the premium in this league is on defense. I really do. We've got some great defensive minds here. Coach Stoops over at Oklahoma, man has done a great job of coordinating that defense for his brother, Mike, and I think he is the standard in the conference. There are some great defense active minds. Coach Gary Patterson year-in and year-out has been phenomenal. I hired one of his coaches, Kenny

Perry. They really do a great job, and I love our defensive staff and I love Clint Bowen. I think he's one of the finest minds in college football and I know we struggled statistically last year, and I think our production is coming there.

But I do believe that you have got to find a way to slow these offenses down and we are putting a lot of work and time into evaluation, making sure we get the right guys. Oklahoma State what they do defensively. Glenn Spencer is phenomenal. That guy is hard to play against. We've got some great defensive minds here, but it's very difficult to slow people down in this conference. It really is.

So from our standpoint, we really feel like we've got to make strides defensively, fast, to me us to be able to slow the pace down in which we would have to score points to win games.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you very much for your comments. Good luck for the season.

DAVID BEATY: Thanks a lot, Rock Chalk!