

# Louisiana State University Football Media Conference

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Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

## President William F. Tate IV Scott Woodward Coach Brian Kelly Head Coach Introductory Press Conference

MICHAEL BONNETTE: Welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining us today for this special day. Just a couple of quick press conference format reminders. President Tate is going to come up and make a few remarks. He will then introduce director of athletics Scott Woodward who will come up and make a few remarks. There will be a presentation over here to the side of the podium with Scott and Coach Kelly. Once that presentation is done, Coach Kelly will come to the podium and make a few remarks. He will then take question-and-answer session with you guys.

President Tate?

WILLIAM F. TATE IV: Good afternoon, and thank you all for being here. This is an historic moment for Louisiana State University. I want to first offer a perspective. Some of you know I'm from the Midwest, Chicago actually, and I thought very deeply about our coach and where he was coming from.

I searched my mind and the annals of history thinking about the prior coach at that institution. I remember one unfortunately tragically died, others retired, and still others didn't meet the standard of the institution and were relieved of their duties.

You have to go back 114 years to a man named Thomas Barry who took a coaching job at the University of Wisconsin before you find one who actually left on their own accord and decided to be at another institution. Mr. Barry was very accomplished, a talented baseball player and had a knack for stealing home, and after a brief career in the minors he found his way into the coaching ranks of college. He actually spent some time here in Louisiana at Tulane where he coached for a season.

All of this is relevant today because right now we have the



first coach in history since Thomas Barry to actually decide that they were going to leave that fine institution and come join us here at LSU.

I'm eternally grateful, I really am, for your decision, sir. A lot of folks don't know what happened in the process with Scott and I in terms of this particular opportunity.

I said to Scott, the LSU Tigers need a claw. He just kind of looked at me. What do you mean by a claw? Someone with character that translates, a leadership background that inspires, an attitude about academics that ignites our student-athletes and a winning tradition that solidifies our investment in the future of this program.

I would like to commend you, Scott, and your team for delivering us a claw. Every tiger has to have one. I'm really appreciative.

The coach that is going to take over the helm here has been doing this for 31 years. He's won over 284 games. Sir, I followed your career at Grand Valley and saw the championships you won there and subsequently at Cincinnati, the way you turned that institution around in a football tradition and the great work you've done at Notre Dame.

You have 85 more victories than any of the previous coaches we've had here at LSU when they were hired combined, 85 more. Those 14 coaches include four national champion coaches, three college football Hall-of-Famers and another Hall of Famer. Simply put, Brian Kelly is the most accomplished football coach this university has ever hired.

That's our mission here at LSU, to recruit and retain world-class students, professors, coaches and researchers who represent the very best in what I describe as scholarship versed.

In talking to Coach, I saw his commitment to the classroom and a competitive environment, and it's unrivaled. Our pursuit of victory is not just in football. Yes, football, but also in coastal sciences and engineering and many other pursuits, and I know he understands and gets that.

He will elevate this program and our student-athletes in ways that I think are going to be very, very much aligned



with the aspirations of the people of Louisiana. This is our mission, and that is why I wanted Brian Kelly to come here to be our football coach.

Now, I don't know a whole lot of Tigers with one claw. Most Tigers you want to have more than one claw. You want claws. And what I learned over this process is not only do we bring here a coach with character, leadership, an attitude about academics that's inspirational, and a winning tradition, he has an S - a spouse - and she is amazing.

It could not be more fortuitous for us that one of the pillars of my administration is actually focused on research related to cancer, and you are absolutely one of the most special and gifted individuals, supporting the development of research in this country.

I'm very excited that you're going to be part of our community and family. This is a tremendous alignment in my opinion of our leadership team, the coaching staff, the athletic administration. I just want to welcome you all here to Baton Rouge and understand that we're excited and proud that you're going to be wearing the purple and gold.

I want to really express my gratitude to Scott and your senior team, the analytical work that you did in thinking about this process was second to none, and you know I'm a big data guy. I just thought in my opinion you were shooting for the 99th percentile from the beginning and you hit the absolute top of this deal.

I'm not going to say any more because I'm going to let Scott give a little more background, but I really want to thank you all and really welcome to Louisiana and LSU.

(Applause).

SCOTT WOODWARD: I want to welcome everyone here today as we introduce our new head football coach, Brian Kelly. Before we get started, I want to thank President Tate for his leadership and his support through this process.

I've said since my first day in this job that I believe in the power of LSU to do great things, and I meant it for this entire state, that if we row all in the same direction, there's nothing we can't do. There's no question, President Tate, as you heard, has us all rowing in that same direction. I'm thrilled about where we're headed as a university under his leadership and honored to play my small part in this wonderful institution.

I'd also like to thank Rémy Starns, the chairman of the board of supervisors and the supervisors who have

provided us with incredible support, feedback every step of the way. We also couldn't do it without the work and support of TAF and Matt Borman. Matt, you're doing a great job and you're getting us there and you're representing us row in that right direction.

Finally and most important to me personally, I'd like to thank Verge Ausberry and Stephanie Rempe from my administration for their tireless work in helping us land the most accomplished and successful football coach this program has ever hired.

In the decades I've known and loved this university, from the time I grew up in Baton Rouge selling peanuts in Tiger Stadium until the day I returned as athletic director in 2019 and every day since, many things have changed. But through all these years, from my first memories of this place until the second I stepped up to this microphone today, there's one constant that I know has never changed, never has and never will. LSU fans love a winner.

That's why I know LSU fans will love Brian Kelly. Success follows him everywhere he goes. All he does is win. As President Tate mentioned, at Grand Valley State, he won. He forgot to mention also that he won at Central Michigan. He won in Cincinnati. He won in South Bend. He's won 284 games in his collegiate career, more than any coach in the country. He's a three-time national Coach of the Year winner, more than any football coach in the country.

He's coached two teams to undefeated regular seasons, reached two College Football Playoffs in the last three seasons and won 10 games or more each of his last five seasons. Frankly put, his resume is unrivaled.

He's a winner through and through, which makes Coach Kelly so successful, and that he knows success is a habit, and he shows up in everything he does, from the smallest acts to the biggest transformations. He knows that success in football requires success in the classroom and in the community. He knows that high standards don't confine themselves to the football field, that elite performances on Saturdays is the product of elite preparation in every walk of life, and he knows what winning can do, how it can uplift a university, elevate a state and transform the lives of millions.

Simply put, he checks every box.

There was a lot of interest in this job from coaches with incredible pedigrees, but none of them held a candle to Brian Kelly.

While his credentials made that abundantly clear, our conversations convinced me beyond a shadow of a doubt



that his winning days are just getting started. His plan to take this program to the next level is the same as ours. He's not here to taste success, he's here to sustain it.

His vision for what LSU football can become is the same as ours. He's not here to simply fit into our culture, he's here to transform it. Most importantly, his expectations for LSU football are the same as ours. He's not just here to win; he's here to win championships.

Please join me in welcoming the head coach of your LSU Fighting Tigers, Brian Kelly.

(Applause).

**BRIAN KELLY:** Good afternoon, everyone. First and foremost, I too want to thank President Tate for those kind remarks and a walk through the history book there.

I will say this, that when we talk about making decisions, it's really about people and getting a chance to meet President Tate, certainly Scott and the athletic administration. This is so much about alignment.

For me, alignment relative to this university, the goals, what is in store for LSU athletics as a university. That is what the draw is for me. To meet obviously President Tate and to spend the time that I did with Scott, that cohesion, that collaboration, that kind of communication, that's what for me led me here to Baton Rouge.

I also want to thank chairman Rémy Starns and the LSU board of supervisors. I got a chance to meet them last night. The support that you can see from them is incredible. They are too part of that groundswell of support that we'll have here at LSU. Matt Borman and the Tiger Athletic Foundation, incredible.

I can't say enough about my 12 years at Notre Dame, the incredible people that I worked with and certainly the incredible players that I had the honor to coach there. But that alignment also has to be with my family, because this has been a family journey for me along the way, and my wife Paqui, Gracie, Patrick, Kenzel, thank you for being along the ride for me, and I wouldn't be here without you guys, too, so thank you.

On both sides of the aisle, LSU, that alignment, my family's alignment, and certainly the opportunity to be here amongst the finest players, staff, coaches, being part of the SEC, an incredible challenge and opportunity in my life that I was excited to take on once I was able to get an opportunity to meet Scott, spend time with Scott, hear his vision for the university and see how it connected so much with mine.

I think it just comes down to for me an alignment about excellence. That's what I'm about. Excellence in academics, excellence in academics and athletics here at LSU and seeing that, feeling that, and now knowing that we can go off together and fulfill that goal.

An exciting day for me, an incredible opportunity for everybody associated with LSU, the LSU family. We will have high standards here, and we will fulfill those standards.

With that, I'll certainly be able to answer more of your questions, but I know we have some other things that we need to do, more picture taking I'm sure, but it's just an honor and an exciting privilege for me to be here. Thank you.

(Applause).

**Q. You've mentioned over the last couple days that also maybe due to alignment you were also ready for a new opportunity. What was it about this point in your life and your career that you were ready to take that next step, and what was about LSU that really drew you to this place for that new opportunity?**

**BRIAN KELLY:** Yeah, again, I think there was no plan in place as I entered the 2021 season that I was looking for another opportunity. I had a great football team that we were developing, but when you get an opportunity to talk to Scott Woodward, and he presents a clear vision of the plan here and the opportunity, it was an exciting vision for me to look at.

As I got a chance to speak to more people about this opportunity, I just felt it was something that I had to take on.

When I talked to the boss who's sitting in the front row there, and she was part of that decision making process, there was no turning back.

**Q. A lot of people are going to wonder why, right? You could have been very comfortable in South Bend. You have a team that has a chance to -- had a team that had a chance to make the playoffs. I think that was the big question. What drew you so passionately to walk away from that opportunity to come here?**

**BRIAN KELLY:** Yeah, it's never easy, right? These decisions are -- it's my choice. I own it. It's a hundred percent my decision.

Those young men I love dearly, and it made for a difficult



decision. But when I was able to look at it and the opportunity here was one as I got a chance to really, as I mentioned earlier, talk to Scott about the resources and the opportunity here to really make a significant change.

I believe that I can make a significant difference here. You want to be able to make a difference. I along with the support of our president, President Tate, the administration, collaboratively can make a big difference.

**Q. As far as the departure, how do you feel that impacts your legacy back at Notre Dame, and then which assistants, if any, are you interested in bringing with you?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, leaving is never easy. It could never be done in a fashion that you could say that, hey, it's always the right way to do it. It was just brought up. This team at Notre Dame is an outstanding football team, and they deserve to be in the playoffs, and you're not going to be coaching them. So it's never easy when you leave.

We did our best. I wanted to get in front of them. I was fortunate that I had that opportunity to get in front of them and tell them that I was coming to LSU face-to-face because that's everything that we've done in my life, and I'll do the same thing here at LSU. We will look you in the eye and we will tell you what we're doing. We will be transparent.

Legacies are not part of what I spend time thinking about. People will evaluate me based upon my life's work and how I've treated people and make their own decisions.

As far as coaches, the coaches that are on staff there at Notre Dame are still employed there. Are there coaches there that I would like to join me here? Certainly. But that's a process that we'll have to work through. There are teams to coach on both sides. This team is going to be preparing for a bowl game. Hopefully Notre Dame gets a chance to play in the playoffs. They have to be prepared.

This has to be done with great communication and understanding that the players are part of this, as well.

**Q. I'm sure you're aware of all the expectations here and the scrutiny. What's your plan to hit the ground running and to get to work and really start working on your goals?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, I mean, there's not enough hours in the day right now. If you can give me a couple more hours, we'd be fine with that.

You know, I really think it's that we know the things that

need to be done here, but we'll be measured, we'll be thoughtful. We'll be intentional in checking each one of those off as we go. Investment in people is important and making sure that we are doing that the right way. Lives are involved here as we make transitions, so we want to take care of that.

We certainly want to take care of the recruiting and make sure that all the young men that have made their commitments here, that they know where they stand. There are important matters that we need to get to, and I think everybody understands that we've been on a whirlwind here the past 24 hours, but we've got to get to work, and we will do that in short order and get to the very important matters.

**Q. There's been some talk that Corey Raymond and Kevin Faulk will be on your staff. Can you share if that's true, and can you share anything about who will be on your staff at this point?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, I have not made any decisions based upon who will stay and who may go. I haven't had any individual conversations with any of them, so any narrative out there is not coming from any conversations that I've had with them. They are well-respected and I will get an opportunity to vet out all of those coaches. They've done a great job.

I know the business, they know the business. There are realities in this business. But we'll get to all of those coaches because as I mentioned earlier, they have families, they have lives, and we have to get moving in that direction.

**Q. Obviously you are entering kind of a new world down in the South, down in the SEC. Do you see that as a challenge, and what are the keys to adapting to that?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, look, I came down here because I wanted to be with the best. The resources here are outstanding. It starts with the alignment, excellence, the standard of expectation. Listen, you're looked at in terms of championships here. I want that. I want to be under the bright lights. I want to be on the Broadway stage. That's what my passion is.

Yeah, that's part of the draw; there's no doubt about that. I'm going to learn about Louisiana. My first day on Notre Dame's campus is when I took the job. This is my first day in Louisiana. I didn't know what this (making L-shape with thumb and forefinger) meant until today. I know what it means today. I'm going to learn a lot more as we go.

But our family, we're going to immerse ourselves into the culture of Louisiana. We're not here to change anything. We're here to get changed by it. That's going to be fun. That's exciting.

We're going to have a standard within our program that will be one that we build every single day. For us it will be an experience that we're looking forward to.

**Q. Much has been made of other coaches not wanting to come to the SEC; can you talk about why you wanted to come to the SEC and specifically this division? And secondly, if you could potentially maybe pull the curtain back a little bit on the process and shed some light on did this come together quickly for you or was this a long process when dealing with LSU to accept this position?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, so look, the SEC, we know about its prowess in terms of success and the players and the teams and the coaches. But I will say this: If LSU did not have the alignment and the leadership and the people and the desire for excellence, the SEC doesn't really matter to me. It's this university that happens to be in the SEC that matters to me the most.

When you get this university, LSU, with the leadership that it has and the cohesiveness of leadership across the board, and it's in the SEC, ding, ding, ding. Right?

So for me, you add that, it made it an incredible opportunity for me.

Your second question was --

**Q. The genesis of your decision to come here. Was it quick? Was it a drawn-out process?**

BRIAN KELLY: No, it wasn't my search, so I really didn't have any say on how that all went. I can tell you this: When you talk to Scott Woodward, he has a clear way of communicating. It was 45 minutes, and I had an understanding of where LSU was from a commitment and how this was going to look.

I'd say that's pretty quick.

**Q. You sort of implied this, but you believe you have a better chance to win National Championships here than at any of your previous stops?**

BRIAN KELLY: I wouldn't imply that. I would only say that this opportunity for me was one that I was ready for and excited to take on. It had to do with everything that I've talked about.

I think each opportunity you measure differently. This opportunity is clearly different than any other opportunity I've had. But I would not imply that this one weighed better than maybe the others. It just was for me at the time, this opportunity with talking to Scott and getting a great feel for the alignment to excellence is what I want, both in academics and athletics, this was the right one for me. That's really the most important piece for me.

**Q. I know you've had a tremendous amount of success, but did the recent defeats in the CFP playoffs tell you maybe that you had to move? And two, the SEC has won a preponderance of championships. Why do you think that is, other than the fact that they have great players? What do you think it is you have to bring to this school?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, losing spurs me towards building, so no, that never knocked my confidence that we couldn't continue to build towards winning a National Championship.

If you remember maybe my comments after we lost to Alabama as, we're back. We're going to come back. Even though we lost 10 players to the draft, we were back again. Losing is not something that I look at as, well, I'm going to throw the towel in. Losing just forces me to roll my sleeves up and look at reasons why we need to get better.

The SEC has obviously an ability to continuously turn out great football teams based upon a commitment from the university, great recruiting, great coaches to play at the highest level, and they've consistently done that and they've earned it by what they've done on the field.

Everything that they've gotten they've deserved. As I said, if LSU was in another conference, I would be interested in LSU in another conference, too, because of the leadership, the commitment and the alignment that I've talked about so much.

**Q. Will you be looking to target any of the Notre Dame commits that are currently committed to that program for here? Also, a larger question about your approach to recruiting in the SEC in general now.**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, I mean, look, the most important thing in recruiting is to take care of your base first. My focus will be on those that have made a decision to come to LSU. So we'll be reaching out to those young men first and foremost. That's the most important thing.

You can be assured that our focus and direction relative to recruiting will be on the young men that have already

decided to come to LSU. That will be our direction.

The second question? Or did that cover both?

**Q. Will you be looking to target some of the Notre Dame commits who are currently committed to that program and looking to bring them here?**

BRIAN KELLY: No, I think what my comments would be relative to recruiting is first and foremost let's take care of our base. Let's recruit those young men that have already pledged themselves to Louisiana State University.

**Q. Speaking to players in recent weeks, and we asked them what they expect out of a new head coach, the term players' coach comes up constantly. What does that term mean to you, and do you consider yourself a players' coach?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, I've been called a players' coach, a CEO, demanding, whatever narrative you want to come up with. I think I've hit all of those.

Look, I think the most important thing is you'd better have relationships with your players and you'd better know your players. You'd better know their strengths and weaknesses. You'd better be able to have the ability to reach your players and communicate with them and be demanding but never demeaning.

I think you need to be all those things. But it starts with relationships with your players.

However that's characterized, however you want to put that soundbyte out there, that's me. But it's going to start with I'm going to love my players. That's the centerpiece of who I've been for 31 years as a head coach.

**Q. You've had a lot of success in developing offensive linemen, which is a position group that LSU has struggled with, especially this year. I'm wondering what do you look for in those offensive linemen, and how do you go about developing them, and how can you bring that to LSU?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, so demeanor, right? You're looking at what their demeanor is. Playing that offensive line position requires a profile that I like to stick with. I'm not going to get into the specifics right now, but there's a demeanor, there's a profile. There's a brotherhood on that offensive line that we build, and that brotherhood is real. Those guys are selfless, and they are the backbone of any great offense that I've ever coached.

If you have that kind of resume, sign up. We're looking for

you. That's the starting point.

When it comes to development, it's hard work. We're ready to take on those kind of young men that have those special qualities and are ready to really dig in and put in the time.

**Q. I know Scott came at you early in this process. At that point were you interested, or did you kind of put it on the back burner? When did he come back and put the full-court press on you? Secondly, you had a rare losing season five or six years ago; what did you do to -- the self-study that showed you what you needed to change to get on the current streak you're on?**

BRIAN KELLY: There was no back and forth. We had a very substantive conversation, and that was it. There was no back burner. Maybe I was the back burner for him, I don't know. It wasn't my search.

But conversation led to a family conversation that led to a decision to come to LSU. That's the honest truth. I can't give you any more than what I know and how it went. There might be some other backstory narratives, but you've asked me the question and I'm giving you the honest answer. That's kind of how it played out from my perspective.

2015, I'll back you up. 2015 we went to the Fiesta Bowl. We lost a number of players from that team that went to the NFL. A number of them went early. 2016 we lost seven games in the last possession. We had one of only two losing seasons in 31 years. I had to do a deep dive and a long look at why it was that even with a young team we weren't able to pull out a lot of close victories.

It was soul searching; it was looking at the head coach; it was looking at how we were doing things internally about relationships, building leadership, accountability. I made some substantial changes within the program to address those things. Since that time, as you know, the history is five consecutive winning seasons of 10 wins or more.

**Q. I was curious what the next couple weeks will look like in terms of this current roster. Obviously this is a unique situation where you're coming in and welcoming a new team, a new staff. What are you hoping to accomplish with the current roster with them preparing for a bowl game?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, so I got a chance to meet with the guys yesterday. As I told them, look, this is the first meeting. I'm not here to win the first meeting. I'm here to just let you know I am so excited to be your head football coach. This is just the first meeting of many opportunities

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

where we'll build trust. It's not going to happen today, but we're going to trust each other, and that trust will take time, and you'll do it and you'll see it with my deeds, my actions, how we interact on a day-to-day basis, and we'll get to that point where these meetings will be very, very productive and we'll get a lot accomplished.

Today this is a meet-and-greet, and that's what it ended up being. Now, having said that, there will have to be a lot more meetings that are substantive because we've got work to do. I've got to make some decisions relative to staff, preparing this football team for a bowl game, recruiting, and all of those things.

Meet-and-greet yesterday, giving them kind of the lay of the land relative to what the expectations are relative to what has already been laid out here in terms of excellence in academics and athletics, and now we've got a lot of work to do.

**Q. How familiar are you with this roster presently? Have you had a chance to see them? As an aside, you've had a lot of recruiting wins in Louisiana; how familiar are you with the talent in the state, the coaches, and maybe how would you classify that relationship with a lot of those people in the state?**

BRIAN KELLY: Look, I would be disingenuous to tell you that I know this roster inside and out, I know the players, I know what the makeup is. I know some of the areas of concern that we have to address. That's why I'm standing here, and we've got some work to do.

But we have time. We have time to address those things. We don't have forever, but we have to address those things in short order.

I know that when we talk about priorities of decision making, holding on and recruiting the guys that have made decisions, we've got to go re-recruit them because this class is important. Then we'll have time to sit down with current members that have been here that have great knowledge of the players, become more educated, and we'll make that happen over the next couple of weeks.

As it relates to recruiting in the state, the talent is outstanding. That's why I've been in the state before. But I will say this: There's a commitment to academics, as well, and that's why I came down here. The second piece is you've got to go fight for them. They're hard to get out of Louisiana, which is a great thing, because when we're recruiting from another school, you have to work really hard to get somebody to leave the state of Louisiana, so that bodes really well for us moving forward.

**Q. Signing day is in 15 days; how much does that expedite what you have to do, whether it's recruiting or building or staff or whatever it might be?**

BRIAN KELLY: Again, we don't have forever. I mean, we have to work with a sense of urgency, but we'll be able to put the things together necessary for us to have a class that is going to build this team. We're not going to take a step back.

There's work to be done. There's a sense of urgency. I know the pieces that we need in place. We're working on them. In between the press conferences and the photo shoots and the meet-and-greets, the phone is working overtime putting those pieces together.

Yeah, they're real questions, but this is the fifth time I've done this, so I'm quite aware of the complexities and the important pieces necessary to get through this transition, especially at a university like this that requires a championship football team every year.

**Q. Mr. Woodward touched on this earlier. You come to LSU being the most accomplished hire in LSU history. What type of culture are you looking to instill in not only the players but also the fans?**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, I want the fans here early, tailgating and having a great time and filling the stadium and being enthusiastic. But you've got to put a great product on the field, too, so my job is to put an exciting, winning football team on the field and come early and stay late if you'd like.

Culture for me is standards, right? Everybody throws culture around like it's this SAT word, but to me it's hard work. It's standards. It's habits. It's a way of life. You know, we're going to build that every single day. It's going to be a grind.

But we're going to embrace it because it's going to be who we are on a day-to-day basis. That's going to be LSU football.

As far as the fans go, you know, I'm just so excited to see that stadium filled. I think we've got Garth Brooks coming before the first game. I'm pretty excited about that. That should be really cool. I got a chance to see him at the other place I was at, and he's really, really good. You guys like Garth Brooks? He's pretty good.

So it'll be nice to see that stadium, and then we'll build the culture along the way.

**Q. With you here now, the resources, the players you have on this current roster and maybe even the ones**

**that are going to come in, is it crazy for us to believe that success won't be immediate?**

BRIAN KELLY: Look, here's what I'm going to tell you. We didn't come here not to be successful. Success for us is going to be the process, and we'll worry -- the outcomes, I've never worried about outcomes. I've always been focused on process, process, process, and the outcomes kind of take care of themselves.

When you've done it as long as I have done it and your process is good, I've never worried about what the outcomes look like.

**Q. Discipline is often the backbone of a successful football team. Successful players like to be coached hard, disciplined. Fans like to see that from their coach. Some people say it's getting harder and harder with five-star rankings and transfer portals and all that. What is your opinion on that, and what approach will you take to the LSU athlete on the field?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, our discipline will be self-discipline. Our players will be self-disciplined, and that will be the backbone of this program. They'll be accountable. The players will hold each other to a high standard, and that will be pervasive within the program.

If I've got to lead them around by the hand every day, we'll have good days and we'll have bad days, and that might be a little bit of it as we get going here. This football team will have self-discipline and they'll have accountability, they'll have trust in each other, and that will be what you'll see from this football team as we continue to build.

**Q. When you took over at the University of Cincinnati at almost exactly the same place on the calendar, you coached in the bowl game. Did you ask for a similar opportunity here, and what do you draw on that experience as far as talent evaluation and roster evaluation in the preparation for the bowl?**

BRIAN KELLY: I don't want to break history. I want to be the only guy that's done it one time. That would be historic.

You know, Scott and I have not discussed that, to be quite frank with you. It's one of those dynamics relative to time and place. I think Scott has already set it up here for this program to continue to practice and move on without me being in that position.

But it is an open discussion that we can have certainly, but that has not been part of our discussions at this point relative to the team.

Yeah, I know what we did prior to, but that's not something that we've had a chance really to get down and talk about yet.

**Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding is that Notre Dame's leadership was willing to sign off on a college playoff format that might have precluded them from ever getting a bye. I've got two questions. One is when the leadership of a school does that, would that signal to a coach like you that maybe they're not as committed to winning a national title as you are, and the second is how comfortable that if you wanted to finish your career there, you could have?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, signing off on the provision of Notre Dame not being part of one of the top seeds was not an issue with me because it would have most likely meant that you would have had to play in South Bend in December on a snowy field. I would have been fine with that. So that would have been fine.

The second one would have been relative whether I could have finished out my career there. I don't think there would have been any hindrances there.

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