

Big Ten Football Media Days

Thursday, July 22, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Maryland Terrapins

Mike Locksley

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: I would like to welcome head coach from Maryland, Mike Locksley.

MIKE LOCKSLEY: What a great opportunity to be here. I'm excited. I did think, hopefully, since this is my third year, I'm no longer a rookie member of this conference. I feel like I'm getting hazed every time I have to come behind PJ fleck, which this is the second time I have had to do this. So I apologize to my wife right now that if I don't thank her, so I'm going to make sure I thank Kia.

No, in all seriousness, I really want to thank a bunch of people here real quick because to have the opportunity to be here in person couldn't have been done without the help of a lot of people and it starts with, number one, our medical staff, the medical staff there at the University of Maryland, Dr. Rooks and Brian Simerville, both did a tremendous job helping us navigate COVID as best we possibly could.

I want to thank the DMV community, a community that I know really well, for the support they gave us and all the things they did to help us get back to being able to play the game that our players love and that we love to coach.

I want to thank our administration, our president, Darryll Pines, for his support, my boss Damon Evans, as well as my day-to-day boss, Colleen Sorem, for all the help, the support, the advice that they have helped me navigate a tough year.

But to be here, it's great to be here in person and see all of you guys' faces. We talk a lot about how difficult it was for our players and coaching staff to navigate it and I know for you guys as media it was just as difficult to be able to do the job that you guys do and navigate unusual times. I hope the days of only seeing you guys on Zoom are over completely and we can continue to get back to some normalcy.

Also, when you think about our team, as we move into the 2021 season, it's exciting times for us, both on and off the field. Off the field, I've had the privilege to be able to move

into what I think is a state of the art facility, the Jones-Hill House, which is named after two trailblazers there in the DMV community, Billy Jones, the first African American player to play in the ACC and play at Maryland on the basketball court, and then Darryl Hill, the first football player to integrate the South in football, both Maryland alums. And to be able to walk into the Jones-Hill House every day and see this beautiful facility that our supporters, our administration, all have given us and these players an opportunity to have the best facility to develop themselves both on and off the field. And so very excited with moving into this state of the art facility.

On the field for us, it's a simple thing for us in year three. It's to take the next step. We got a little mantra with our team this year and it's basically no BCE, no bitching, complaining, or excuses. That's what it's got to be for us. It's taking the next step. As we go into year three, I feel really good about the team. I feel good about our culture. When you come in and you take over a program, it's really right around year three where you start to see the habits and behaviors that create championship-type football, and I can tell you, great teams have great habits, and I'm starting to see that from our team as we continue to develop and prepare for our 2021 season.

Going into year three, I think, like I said, the culture is exactly where we need it to be and now for us to take the next step it's about going on the field and playing with the right kind of discipline each and every day. And that's for me why the mantra no BCEs is really important. Everybody's got a job to do, me being the leader of this program, our players going out playing the game the way they're taught to play it, as well as our coaching staff going out and continuing to give our players the best opportunity on Saturdays to have success.

With our coaching staff, we have been able to bring in a couple of new coaches. One is a guy that I am reunited with, a guy that I got a lot of respect for as a playcaller, as a quarterback developer. He and I worked together at my previous place and we did some really nice things together. And one of the things I learned when you come in and, you're going to lose coaches, there are going to be change, but that the systems don't change. What we're doing on



offense and who we are is who we will be and then when you bring in people they add to the system. And it's the same thing, Dan Enos coming in, and I got a lot of respect for the job Dan does developing quarterbacks. Brian, we got Brian Stewart coming here, coming back to Maryland. Brian and I worked together from 2012 to 2014 at Maryland where he did a great job developing our defense. And Brian, and with the defensive staff that we have, I really expect us to be able to make really big strides.

And then bringing Ron Zook on as a full-time coach. Coach Zook is a mentor for me, a guy that I leaned on the last couple of years as he served an off-the-field role as an analyst, and now he'll take over running our special teams and coaching our outside linebackers. And so to have those three veteran guys come in in year three to continue to help grow the systems that we have in place, really excited about that. The three guys I have in attendance with us today, Dontay Demus, a wide receiver who's been one of our leading offensive threats since I've gotten to Maryland, continues to be a guy that gets better with each and every year, and I'm excited for the year for Dontay.

Taulia Tagovailoa, a quarterback, a guy that I've got a long history with. I had an opportunity to recruit him out of high school, and then to have him come last year during the pandemic, and he showed some signs of being a guy that could be a great playmaker for us, and then all we have got to do is be able to get the consistency out of him, which I expect us to be able to do.

And last but not least, Nick Cross. Nick, a valuable member of our secondary. A guy that's the last line of defense, big-time recruit my first year in, had an opportunity to be a three-year starter for us and now become one of our leaders as a third-year player in our program.

As I said before, it's time for us to take the next step as a program, and I expect us to do just that. It's time for us to stop talking about potential and actually go out and do it. The key to the drill is for us to prove ourselves right and not worry about proving others wrong, and I feel like we have the team to do that.

I'm excited to see what the 2021 season has in store for the Terps and, again, just really happy to see you guys. And with that, I'll open it up to any questions.

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