

Big Ten Football Media Days

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Purdue Boilermakers

Jeff Brohm

Press Conference



JEFF BROHM: Well, good afternoon. We're excited to get things under way at Purdue University and we're excited to get this season kicked off. I know at this time of the year everyone's looking forward for football and I know our coaches and players are. I think this is a great opportunity for our team to go out and prove their worth. We have got a tremendous schedule, a lot of great opponents that we're going to be able to play this year, definitely in conference and out of conference as well. I know our players have worked hard to get to this point. I really feel like that we're close. We have been in a lot of close games without question. We got to learn how to compete and finish and do a lot of small things a little bit better. But that's part of growing and part of learning and part of coaching is improving and figuring out how to find a way to win. But we're excited about it. We're eager to kick things off. We got Oregon State at home and then at UConn, Notre Dame at their place, and then we start our conference schedule, which is going to be a lot of fun.

So a lot of really good players on the offensive side of the ball that will be back that we're looking forward to watching. David Bell being one of them who's been an outstanding player from us from day one right here from Indianapolis, continues to improve and get better. He's got great character. His teammates love him. He's a leader by example. He does a tremendous job. I feel like he's really going to do some great things this year. On the defensive side of the ball, George Karlaftis is back, healthy. He's ready to go out there and compete. He's done great things for us from day one and I think he can go out there this year and really prove just how great he can be. He's one of our hardest workers on the team. He takes everything extremely seriously and puts in the effort each and every day well beyond most guys do.

Also we brought Jackson Anthrop with us who's been a utility player for us, really has done everything we have asked. He's played receiver. He can play running back. He's returned kick. He's blocked kicks. He's been at Purdue a long time and he's looking forward to coming back and doing whatever we ask. We have had other good players at his position so he's been a great teammate

by doing some great things at times, and other times he had to play behind Rondale Moore, didn't get as many reps as he would like in a game, but he's continued to work hard and he's somebody that we can count on. He represents our program at Purdue exactly the way you want and he takes a lot of pride in doing the very best he can and helping his team win. So I'll open it up now to questions.

Q. How do you plan to up in-state recruiting this year?

JEFF BROHM: Well, in-state recruiting is extremely important to us at Purdue. We feel like we have done a very good job at developing prospects from in state that want to go somewhere and make a difference. We have had Rondale Moore who is from southern Indiana. We have had David Bell who is from Indianapolis. We have had George Karlaftis West Lafayette right across the street, and those three guys could have went anywhere in the country they wanted, but they chose to trust myself and our coaches and come to Purdue and make a difference for an in-state program and I think we have provided that opportunity for them to do that. I think all three guys in year one of their true freshman year did tremendous things, put their name on the map, and now they all three have a bright future to do great things in college and beyond, and we want to continue to build that brand. And without question we feel like at Purdue with our tremendous school and education that we can provide for our guys a path to success beyond the game of football and ability to compete against great opponents on the big stage each and every week and go somewhere and make a difference. I think that's what we sell to our guys. You can go anywhere in the country you want, but if you come to Purdue, we'll make sure that we do everything we can to help you make a difference, achieve all your goals, and do some special things. And when you do that at a place like Purdue it can be special. It can be a lot of fun. And when your family can share in it with you, it can be even more fun.

Q. The addition of Brad Lambert on the defensive side of the ball as a new coordinator, what kind of stamp as he put on the defense so far and what are your expectations and goals for him and the defense this season?



JEFF BROHM: We're extremely happy to have Coach Lambert. He brings a ton of experience. He's a former head coach, a former defensive coordinator. He's been at a lot of great schools across a lot of conferences. Even beyond that, he's a great person who cares about his players. He understands we want to have a collaborative approach this year on the defensive side of the ball. We want to put the best package we can together, but be aggressive in our approach, really play offensive offense on the defensive side this year, as much as we can allow our guys to take change chances and make plays and have fun doing it. But he's got a great demeanor about him. Players love being around him. Our coaches love working with him. And he provides a lot of leadership and I think he'll do a great job.

Q. What has it been about David Bell that has impressed you since day one until now?

JEFF BROHM: David Bell has been tremendous for us from day one. He trusted us to help him achieve his goals. He came in and worked extremely hard. The first year we had Rondale Moore coming off a record-breaking year. We led the country in receiving, so maybe he wasn't going to be featured as much. Extremely unselfish. He did his part early on in the year. Maybe didn't get as many balls. Rondale Moore got hurt maybe around Game 4 and David had to kind of take over then, and even with that late start, I think he led the Big Ten in receiving. And he just makes plays. He's a guy that has tremendous ball skills. He competes for the football. Normally on a 50/50 ball he's going to come down with it. In a clutch situation where you need to make a play he's going to get it done. He works extremely hard on his weaknesses and the things that he feels like he needs to get better at and he's done a good job of that this off-season. I think he's healthy. He didn't go through spring ball. We had to get some things healed up for him. I think now he feels as good as he's ever felt and he's looking forward to going out there competing and proving his worth and we couldn't ask for anything more from him. He leads by example. His teammates respect him and he's a great person as well with a great family.

Q. For you personally, what does the rivalry with Indiana mean to you and how are you, how much are you looking forward to being able to play that game this season?

JEFF BROHM: Playing the Bucket Game, it means a great deal to our team, to our fan base, to our program. It's something that has a lot of history and tradition. And normally for us and even Indiana there's a lot of riding on the game beyond that. First couple years bowl implications were on the line. It's something that your players who are

going to know each other, whether they played middle school together, high school, your fans who may live across the street from each other are going to know it, and you want to get bragging rights when the season is over. You know when the game's played. It's the last game of the season. And it's just a lot of fun. It's something that you work hard in the off-season to prepare for, and then you got to get to your regular opponents. But you normally have a pre-season plan going into it when you get to that week because there's normally a lot riding on the game beyond bragging rights and we look forward to that tradition every year.

Q. You went with the approach of naming a couple guys on your staff defensive coordinator. What went into that decision and how do you like the way that group works together?

JEFF BROHM: I feel great about our defensive room. I think this year I wanted to get on the defensive side of the ball myself quite a bit more and I wanted to surround myself with a lot of guys that had experience that wanted to work together, that wanted to put a plan together where, yes, there needs to be one playcaller, but we want a lot of voices in the room giving their opinion and giving their input and putting the best plan together for our guys to go out there and make plays.

I think when you look at Brad Lambert and his history, we brought in Ron English who was at Florida who had been at a lot of places, a former head coach, a former defensive coordinator, a lot of places, including Michigan. Mark Hagen, a lot of history in this state. He worked for Coach Tiller back in the Purdue days, a tremendous amount of success. Worked at Indiana, Texas, Texas A & M. Great recruiter, really takes pride in representing this state. All three guys have valuable experience and I really feel like we wanted to build a room where we had as much experience and know how that we could possibly put together, where they were willing to work together, they were willing to have a little fun with it, try different things, and be able to work as a team to get that done. So I like our room, they're great people, they work extremely hard, now we got to go out and prove ourselves.

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