

# University of Pittsburgh Football Media Conference

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## Pat Narduzzi

### Press Conference

PAT NARDUZZI: I appreciate you coming back. So many guys I just saw yesterday. Welcome back. There's no news on any other front. Today is signing day 2022 class, so we're excited there. Got 12 signees, as you have probably seen on Twitter earlier this morning. Apologize for backing this up until about 3:30. I wanted to announce them all together. I didn't want to come have another press conference for one individual, so I appreciate you being here today and being able to wait on it.

Super quality class. Obviously, not a gigantic class, which is a good thing. That means we have a lot of guys coming back, to our knowledge. We'll have more information on that as we can go. Again, there could be some guys added to the class, but, again, very balanced on both sides of the ball. We have five guys on offense: Two receivers, two O-linemen and a running back. On defense total of six: Three D-linemen, two linebackers, and a DB. Then one signee on special teams. Overall just we have five big guys, five power guys. We have four skill guys and four big skills type personnel.

Six of them were midyear, and I'll kind of get into it as we talk, but we're excited to have half of the class coming in midyear, which seems like the last couple of years we've had a lot of successive guys coming in midyear. We have a couple that could have come in midyear that at some point during recruiting talked about it about, hey, I'm coming and then kind of said, I think I'm going to wait and finish my senior year out, which we're good with. We do not squeeze and press guys to come in midyear. There's advantages and disadvantages, as we know.

We got 12 signees from ten different places. Nine states and one other country, Australia. Ten different places. We got one from PA, two from New York, two from Texas, one from New Jersey, one from Virginia, one from Ohio, one from Florida, one from Georgia, one from Massachusetts, and, obviously, Sam from Australia. A great variety.

Ten of our signees were captains in high school, which says something we're always looking for. Those leaders. When you have asked all year about leaders and who is



leading and leadership council, when you got 10 of 12, which is 83% of your guys that are leaders already, I think that bodes well. I think that's probably the highest percentage of captains we've had since I've been here in one class. Again, just looking at pure percentages.

Five of the 12 have won championships. We still got one playing this weekend. Marquan Pope has a championship game this weekend. Our very first commit of the class was Sean FitzSimmons. He actually was the first guy to send his papers in this morning, too, I think at 7:03. Although there's one other guy who had his stuff in 16 hours early because Australia is on -- they could sign a little bit earlier, I guess, so he had the advantage as far as actually the first one. I woke up this morning and had that on my phone. The last one you guys know, Sammy, came in last.

Again, we had one week on the road. There's advantages and disadvantages of being in a championship game. Everybody else in the country that didn't play in a championship game had ten days on the road and really two weekends in December to bring kids in. We had five days, so I have not gotten to everybody's home yet. I've gotten the priority houses that I felt like for one reason or another that I needed to get their quickly and get that thing done, and obviously saw some other guys as well.

This is, obviously, the fifth signing, early signing period, and I think there's a lot of questions and concerns and conversations out there about is the early signing period a good thing? Do we need to back it back up? A lot of the things that have happened are things that as coaches, not only in the ACC but Michigan State when we were there, we had concerns where there was so much talk of moving it up. They even talked about moving the signing date up to June, I remember, ten years ago. June? You are talking about really messing up the calendar of college football. After five years you're kind of comfortable with what's going on right now as a coach, and for them to talk about changing it back is crazy. It's like going to 14 playoffs and moving it back to the two. I think once you've gone that far and once you go to 12 team playoff, to go backwards would be something that would be odd, and I don't think there would be a lot of coaches in favor of that, but I'm sure there will be some questions there.

It takes a lot to get this done, and I'm going to leave -- we got Graham up there and Adam. Our coaches are busy



being in meetings, game-planning and stuff. I'm going to leave Graham and Adam if they want to. They don't know this yet if they want to answer questions afterwards because they do an outstanding job, and I think we got the best recruiting office in the country. I'll start with a thank you to those guys. I really do. I don't think we have the most guys working in an office, and we're always working to get our numbers up. That's something we'll work on in the offseason as far as getting more people in that office because I think as these NCAA rules change, the portal changes, as we're now allowed to do videos and do all this different stuff that we need more people in that office to continue to do what we've done.

They do an outstanding job, and, again, I just think the continuity we've had in that office with Graham leading the show and Adam being his right-hand man that does an unbelievable job in there. They got a great feeling, and it's every year that makes it a little bit easier. Especially on me and the staff because they have so much control. They know the process we have, and thank you to those guys.

I want to thank our recruits and their families for everything they've done through this process. Some of them we've recruited for three years. Some two years, a year and a half. It's a long process. We appreciate their trust in sending their son, dropping their son off here, whenever that may be, being with us and trusting that we're going to take care of their son.

Thank our coaches and all the administration. All the other players out there. We thank our players that host our kids on the weekends, and, again, it was mainly in the summer. We had one weekend last weekend where we brought some kids in. Everybody that works at our facility, our trainers do a great job. Everybody is involved in this. It takes everyone. Our strength and nutrition, our equipment guy, Chad Bogard. Is Chad in here? He always wants a shout-out, and he isn't here. Chad Bogard does a great job. We do different things in videos for recruits when they come on this campus, and I think it's one of the great things we do.

Operations does a great job. Academics, Mike Farabaugh and everybody up there. Penny Semaia in life skills. I want to thank Heather. She's available when we have recruits come on campus and she can talk to them. Mark Harding, our head of admissions, who looks at these kids' transcripts that we bring in, and we either get a checkmark, hey, you're good or, hey, maybe we can find someone different. We appreciate everything they do up there in admissions.

With that I'll start talking about our guys. First one is Sean FitzSimmons, defensive lineman. 6'3", 290 pound

defensive tackle from Monaca, PA, Central Valley High School. He is coming in midyear, so he will be here for classes that start on January 10th. He will probably check into Bridges on the 9th. All these guys will do that. I laughed. All year every home game he was there. He is our newest season ticketholder. He had a great year. Obviously, won a championship, back-to-back state championships. He is also a recipient of the Bill Falic Memorial Award for the top lineman in the WPIAL. He is our one PA guy. It seems like in the last couple of years Western Pennsylvania has been a hotbed for defensive linemen, so I know Coach Partridge is fired up to work with Sean.

The next one on defense is Jimmy Scott, defensive lineman, defensive end, 6'2", about 250 pounds, from Cheektowaga, New York, St. Francis High School up there. A private high school. Super kid. He plays running back and defensive end for them, and obviously, he is going to be a defensive end for us. Very athletic, tough guy. Fits in the mold of what we want out of one of our defensive linemen. They run a regional championship up there. Was able to fly up there and see him and another prospect up in the Buffalo area last Monday. You guys might recall last Monday I didn't know if I was going to make it. I sent text messages to my wife and kids saying, "Hey, I love you guys, if I don't see you after this flight," but it was a windy day. 40 knot winds, which I guess equals to about 45-mile-an-hour winds, and I didn't know if the plane was going to get down because it was pretty shaky. We landed there, but if you recall, that Monday night game with the Patriots and the Bills, that was the night I flew up there, Monday night football, and you know how many passes did the Patriots throw that day? Three passes. When is the last time you saw three passes besides maybe an Army-Navy game with the quarterback they've got in New England? It was probably the worst weather. I'll remember that visit up to Buffalo for a long time. We're happy to have Jimmy on our football team.

The next defensive lineman, Sammy Okunlola. Again, another defensive end, 6'4", 225 from Brockton, Massachusetts. Thayer Academy. He is another midyear. The second midyear I've talked about today. Obviously, it was a battle until the end with him, and our staff did an outstanding job. Again, led by Tim Salem and Charlie Partridge on that one. Again, just a super, super smart kid. I won't explain how smart he is, but if he is out there listening, he knows why he is so smart. I'll throw that one out there. He was the only guy that visited during the season, and so we only had one guy visit during the season. It was just based on his schedule. We brought him in for that. A super athletic defensive end that we're excited to have in our program and getting him as a late guy.

Also defensively, Marquan Pope, a linebacker, 6'10", 210, 215 pounds from Denton, Texas, Guyer High School. Plays safety for them. He is a very athletic guy. He will be an outside linebacker for us. Probably a star prospect. We're anxious to see him get there. He is a field general. He makes all the calls. Talking to the coaches, and I know Coach Manalac has been down there a couple of times to see him. They play for the state championship this weekend against West Lake. He is originally from North Dakota, and the thing I really love about this guy, at least coming to this point is he wants to be a coach in the future, so he is thinking about coaching. To have a linebacker be a guy that commits and also wants to be a coach, I think that's a guy that we're going to love to coach on defense because the more coaches we have on the field playing for us, the better. Marquan Pope, a linebacker.

Next one is a kid named Kyle Louis, linebacker, 5'11", 206 pounds because he was just here this weekend. That's an official weight, John. He is from East Orange, New Jersey, East Orange Campus High School. We had him in camp last summer. It wasn't a big camp. I'm not sure if you guys were there that day. I don't see Chris today. Where is Chris at? He is not here today, but Chris may have been there watching him. He was kind of an individual, almost a one-on-one camp that we had in the indoor. I think it was passing camp, if my memory serves me right. We loved everything about him in the summer. He was committed somewhere else at that point. We worked hard on getting him. We were trying to get his parents back. He came by himself. He is also a track guy. He can run. He was a guy that thought about coming midyear, but a guy that wants to compete in his senior year in track. We're looking forward to getting out in the spring and being able to watch him run as well. Very athletic guy, like Marquan. We're excited to have him here. Again, in high school he played receiver, he played safety, he played linebacker, he played all over the place. He was a return man on punts and kickoff. We saw him live in person in the indoor, and we love what we see out of him.

The only DB in the class, Ryland Gandy, a 6-foot, 170-pound corner from Buford, Georgia, Buford High School. Just won his third state championship in a row, and if you have ever been down to Guyer, you would know what kind of football that is. It's big-time football. Was at his practice I want to say last Thursday night, which was their final practice before the state championship, so it's fun to kind of see the final details and preparation for his championship, and see that he was going to put another ring on his finger. In his home, he has a ring from last year that was this big. I've never seen a ring that big. It's something you could never put on your finger, Jerry, but we're happy for him. He is a long athletic corner like we

like. He is a guy that is going to be able to fit into exactly what we like to do there. Came on a summer visit with the family and just had a great time, and then he also came up for are a Clemson game. We're excited to have Ryland in this class.

Offensively, five individuals. First one is Addison Copeland. Ryland Gandy is also midyear, so Ryland is coming in midyear as well. I think that is one, two, three on defense. We must have three on defense and three on offense, which is perfect.

The first one on offense is Addison Copeland, wide receiver, 6'2", 175 pound young man from Maritime High School up in Buffalo, New York, area. Again, Addison will be here midyear. It will be great since we lose four senior wideouts to have him in. We expect him to come in and play for us, but he committed to us and then came to camp. He was summer visit, came to summer camp, and did an outstanding job. It was like, wow, from every drill he did out there, this kid is going to be a special wideout for us, and it's always fun to watch those guys live, but he did everything for his high school team. He is an indoor and outdoor track guy. Again, mom and dad there just very supportive of him. I believe he may have been committed when he came on his visit or this far away from being committed to a school out east, further east from here. We're happy to have him in, and, again, another part of that visit up to the Buffalo area on Monday. Just visited him and the family up there.

The next receiver that we have in the class, a 5'10", 165 pound wideout speedster from Austin, Texas, Manor High School, Che Nwabuko. He is an outstanding athlete. Played running back, played wide receiver, return guy for them. He has been timed in the 100 at a 10.4, 10.5 100 meter. A guy that can do everything. His speed is what stands out on film. A guy that's been committed since the summer visit. We've had him on campus a couple of times. Came up for a game as well. Again, just a guy that's going to add a lot of speed, whether he is lined up in the back field, running the football, obviously a wide receiver, which we're in need of. We're happy to have him here.

On the power front offensive line Isaiah Montgomery, 6'4", 290 pound probably offensive tackle from Virginia Beach, Virginia, Landstown High School. Again, great family. Just a super kid. He is long. He is athletic. He is going to keep getting bigger. He has been here, again, multiple times. I think he came down for our Duke game as well on the road. Again, Coach Borbely has worked hard on the offensive linemen, and he has done an outstanding job. Excited to get him for a home visit, so I have not been at his home yet, and he will be a guy that will come with us for

summer term two.

The next guy, Ryan Baer, 6'6", 335 pounds. I think it's actually from his weight this weekend. 338 pounds from East Lake. After he had breakfast on Sunday, he might be 345. From North High School. Again, Ryan will be a midyear enrollee as well. We're excited about that. Again, probably one of the most interesting guys he visited in the summer, but we couldn't get an official visit out of him.

Again, our staff did an outstanding job of getting him on campus, so he might be the only guy that we've ever recruited that took, I guess, four official visits. He was saving a fifth one. Canceled Notre Dame and then unofficially visited Pitt. We had him for about as long as you would have for an official visit, but just turned to unofficial into an official visit. Beat a lot of people on this young man. Excited that he is with us. Got a great family. His dad, Russ, was a 5:00 a.m., 5:30 a.m. conversation about every day in the morning for about a half hour, and just some great conversations there. We appreciate mom and dad's support there. Again, visited officially, so he had an unofficial visit, which they have to pay for all their meals, and you can't do everything you would like to do, and then he came this past weekend and had a great time and got his official visit, which was his fifth official visit of the year, so we're excited to have him.

We got a really, really athletic running back from Hillsborough High School down in Tampa, Florida, 5'10", 185 pound Jordaan Bailey. Just an explosive guy. We offered him. We loved him. We went down and to a few camps this summer. We saw him live in Florida's camp, University of Florida's camp and just loved him there. He actually worked out at wideout. For a running back to have ball skills like a wideout and running routes like a wideout, he was impressive there. Another one of those guys that you love to see live and in person, and we were able to do that and then meet his mom down there as well. Plays running back and receiver for his high school team. Kind of decommitted a little bit a couple of weeks ago, but we got him back, which does not happen very often when a kid breaks away, but his high school coach, big help, and just a great personality, great kid, and spent a lot of time in his high school last week trying to get him back in the Pitt mindset. We appreciate him signing with us today.

Then the last and final guy is specialist Sam Vander Haar, 6 foot, 180-pound punter who will be here midyear from Australia. Again, we lost one Australian punter. We got another one. He works with Pro Kick over in Australia. Have not met him. I've had Facetimes with him, and he is a 24-year-old, so we got the oldest punter -- or maybe one of the oldest punters in college football. We certainly got probably -- I think he is going to beat out Tre Tipton for the

oldest player on our team. By the time he leaves he will be 28 years old, if he stays four years, Jerry. That's pretty good.

We're excited to have him. He is getting married in June, and his fiance went to Duquesne, and there's a connection there. I think she's from Cleveland, Ohio.

With that, I will open it up for questions for you guys because I'm sure you have a few.

**Q. What you did you do in 2020 to change how recruiting -- (indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: It's interesting. You are talking a COVID year compared to what we did here. I think it opens up your eyes to different ways of doing things. If you can't get a kid on campus, now we have extended ways of getting him an official visit as far as just showing them the facilities with Zoom and Facetime. We're able to get him on campus that way just to get him a preview before we get him there or just to try to talk kids into getting on campus for an official visit.

Any of those kids that visited in the summer, you know, we're just using more techniques. Again, by Graham and Adam coming up with great ideas of how do we get Pitt in their living room wherever they live, and I think that's something that we've done a good job. It's just finding different ways to get to these kids and finding ways to -- again, we've had great success in the past before this year, and I haven't even added it up, but, again, in the past it's been 75% win ratio. When a kid comes on campus, they love it. In my office it's constantly like, "Coach, I didn't know Pittsburgh was like this. This visit is totally blowing us away." People don't think of Pittsburgh when they get here what it really is. It's a beautiful city. It's an incredible campus. The academics, the football, everything included, I think it blows people away.

I bet you we're up near the 80s, and there are those that want to commit that you can't take. That happens every year. Especially in a smaller class. It happened even more times this year where you were, like, we don't have a spot for you right now. Hang in there, and maybe on the second signing, if something changes here. Hope I answered that.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Boy, again, he is a Pittsburgh tough kid. You just watch him play inside the box. He is a leader, number one. He is aggressive. He is physical, and he is tough. When you look back there attitude, he got it. Effort, toughness, knowledge. We got a guy from our back yard

that embodies all of those things before he even gets here. When Coach Partridge is able to get his hands on Sean, it's going to be a great thing. Super people. Super family. We know we got two supporting families, and we've got a young man that loves Pitt football.

**Q. A lot of guys are coming back. Is that the reason for the smaller class?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Usually is, but we're not saving any scholarships. This is a year we're going from maybe having 98 scholarship kids where the NCAA -- it's usually 85, Jerry, but with the COVID year and the extra year, we have 12 super seniors this year, so 85 plus 12 is what we had. I believe maybe it was 13 super seniors. The NCAA, I think we've talked before, they are saying you have to be back to 85. That's one of the reasons. I'm always going to make sure that any of those seniors that want to have that extra year, they've got it as long as there's a mutual agreement between both of us that, hey, it's something that's going to be good for you, and we need you back, and you want to be back. You can only work with 85. That kind of tells you what we expect back.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Kirk will come back for another year, and he will be 32 years old. He has two degrees. He could have come back. We had this conversation a long time ago. That's why he walked out senior day. He is going to move on and try his luck in the NFL, and if not that, he will be a successful guy in whatever he does.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Sam will be the guy. He will be in competition. He will be a freshman, but at least we got him for spring ball. It will be a punting competition just like there was a kicking competition this year.

**Q. Do you still need to have some of the conversations with guys who could back and super seniors, or have you had all those conversations?**

PAT NARDUZZI: We've had a lot of those conversations. Especially after the championship game last week, and some of them maybe midseason, whenever it needed to be done. And, again, you are talking about being 1-0 each week, and we're trying to stay locked into that, but had some of the conversations, and some guys have made that decision already, but I don't want to share that until they're ready, and as soon as they're ready to make that announcement and make it official, we'll get that done. There's some that are still trying to make a decision, so we'll have something for you here I would hope in the next

four, five days. Three days, four days.

**Q. This is the first year recruiting that the NIL was in place. Did you find it to be anything different, or was it kind of expected or how has that been?**

PAT NARDUZZI: It's probably less than you would imagine. Guys aren't saying, "Hey, what's my deal going to be?" That's what you worry about as a coach. I think we've got a smart group of a dozen guys that are worried about playing football and getting their degree, and that's probably the most important thing. I think they all realize it depends what you do on the field. The guys that are getting deals are guys that are starters, so I think it's kind of like dangling that carrot out there. Hey, there could be a lot more for you if you are a productive player, and you get in the weight room and the classroom and you study and do what you're supposed to do and make plays on game day, that's what those things come. Kenny is a great example of what happens when you have a lot of success.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Just like everybody, but he is no different than everybody else. We've got a lot of great recruiters on our staff, and Brennan does an outstanding job. He ended up signing two receivers to that position and did a really nice job, just like everybody.

**Q. Obviously Mark moved on. (Indiscernible) How did that affect you guys if at all?**

PAT NARDUZZI: It affected a little bit. Certainly any time a coach leaves your staff and goes for another job, it affects you because there's uncertainty what's going on here, what are you going to do? They've got questions just like you guys do. If I can't answer them, it's tough.

I just told them the truth about what's going on and how we're going to do business, and it's just like I think I mentioned yesterday. Kenny Pickett didn't have a quarterback coach, and that's an example I laid out there. Those guys will have an opportunity when they get here to help us find that next guy, and to me that's empowering our players to be leaders and to understand where we're going direction-wise.

**Q. Do you expect to sign more people?**

PAT NARDUZZI: As we start to see what's happening and things open up or don't open up, then we'll know what our numbers are. There will be a couple more. We'll have a couple of weekends in January. We'll have some priority walk-ons in as well. We expect to have a couple more. We'll just see how the roster -- can't sign 90, unfortunately.

I would like to have 100, but they won't let us do that.

**Q. How grateful were you when the plane landed in Buffalo?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I was grateful. The only problem was I had to fly from there to go down to Tampa, and then they fogged in in Tampa, so we had to fly in Lakeland. It was a whole bad day, but I'm alive, so I'm thankful.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: That Buffalo stop, 2 for 20, and 1-0 down in Tampa.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Not really. He actually was not committed when he with walked into school that day. He was committed when we walked out of the school that day and remained committed with his entire family at his house that evening.

**Q. Was it worth it?**

PAT NARDUZZI: It's always worth it. Those are the fun battles. I don't want to say recruiting gets boring, but it's nice to have the battles on the road. That's what you do. That's what you enjoy.

**Q. (Indiscernible) What led you to that?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I think all these guys could come in and help us, but you never know. I always believe that when you see a guy live, and Chuck came in and helped us as well. Again, we see the speed. You see the blazing speed. Addison was just a little different because you watched him live, and you watched him go through Coach Marion's drills at practice. You watched him in one-on-ones, and you are watching the same drills that you are doing with your current players.

They're not necessarily going against the Damarri Mathis and Marquis Williams in those drills, but it's all comparative. He was just, like, wow. He was just impressive in everything he did there, and he was already committed to us, but when he walked out, you are, like, wow, he is special. That's, again, some of the guys you don't see live, you don't know as much about. You go based off of videotape, but we were excited. We've done our homework on every one of these guys, and were very, very selective in who we pick.

That's, again, part of our championship success is we're not bogged down with guys that can't play. We have two

deep out there, and there's three deep at some positions that you feel like he can get in the game, so we've done a good job recruiting and getting guys that we feel can help us win football games.

**Q. You said yesterday that in terms of the -- that you focus on recruiting. Do you have a time frame for --**

PAT NARDUZZI: I would say by maybe Saturday after practice. D.J., is that fair maybe? Maybe Saturday we will know. We've been focused on recruiting. Had a little bit of football. I've been neglecting football. They won't let me go into football meetings. They're saying get this stuff all done. We'll have a decision, and the work is being done.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yes.

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yes or whenever. Who knows? Take some time. Sometime in January we'll make a decision.

**Q. I heard you say you had news today.**

PAT NARDUZZI: Next question.

**Q. Something struck me yesterday. I think Will asked you when will you know about Kenny's decision? (Indiscernible) You said the day before. I thought you were kidding. Were you kidding?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I was serious. Kenny could go out there and it's his offense. Let me tell you, you can give the coaches all the credit, but Kenny Pickett is a football player. He is going to be a first-rounder. Kenny could go out there with no practice and light it up. That's how I feel. He only practiced one day before the championship game. Didn't feel well that week, and one day, and he is ready to go.

**Q. Can he call his own game?**

PAT NARDUZZI: He could call his own game. We talked about that too.

**Q. How much conversation have you had with him?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Not a ton. A phone call here. A phone call there. I'm leaving him alone. I went down to Baltimore for the Golden Arm, Unitas Award and went to New York, obviously. I didn't go there to recruit him. I went there to enjoy it with him and make sure, and I told him ahead of time, I'm coming down here. We ain't talking about it.

We're just going to have fun. That's what it's all about.

**Q. On Saturday?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I expect to talk to him before Saturday for sure. He will be at practice. We'll see. All depends on his decision.

**Q. This is a big year for the transfer portal. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: I think the portal has an affect on every recruiting class across the country. It hasn't had a big affect on us. Obviously, we'll dip and dabble in that, but we're not going to go crazy in it, because I truly believe in developing high school guys and developing a guy through, but where you have a need, you're going to go see who you can get, but it's going to come down to character and getting the right guys, not the wrong guys because all it takes is one guy that's wrong in that locker room, but it's changed the landscape of college football.

Again, I think it's great for the kids to have opportunities, but on the other end, as we've talked in here before, it teaches guys to take the easy way out. I just go over there. I can go over there. Sometimes if a kid wants to go play somewhere he can get more reps, understood, but there's something about keeping your team together. That's the one thing I'm proud of. Our kids have stuck together here 99% of them and played here. It's major. It's affecting a lot of high school teams, and there are some team that used to have ten scholarship guys, and now they're down to having five because people are going to the portal instead of that incredible high school to get a guy, and that's the sad part. It's affecting high school seniors in their recruiting, so now they're taking maybe FCS scholarship, and then what it's going to cause is when they have great success because they should have been a power five guy, they're going to spend somewhere in FCS for a year or then MidAmerican Conference School and then they're going to go in the portal and some poor college coach will have them for two years and develop them and then lose them.

**Q. Second time in three years you guys have -- a high school quarterback. What kind of goes --**

PAT NARDUZZI: Second time in three years, you said?

**Q. Yes.**

PAT NARDUZZI: We signed one last year. I don't remember the year before, but --

**Q. (Indiscernible)**

PAT NARDUZZI: All depends what you feel like you have in that room. I feel good with the group we have in that room. I feel good with Nate Yarnell being the freshman last year, but to have two freshmen quarterbacks, especially in the age we're in, those are guys that jump in the portal a lot if you stack too many young talented guys in the same room, you are bound to have guys going, hey, I'm out of here in a year. That's one of the reasons. Just knowing who you had and you better have a guy that you think can beat out Nate Yarnell as a young guy, and I think he is really, really talented.

**Q. The subject of the portal (indiscernible) -- does it ever get that serious with you here?**

PAT NARDUZZI: No, and I think basketball is a different animal than football, but if you are not finding -- I'm not going to recruit high school players if they're not good enough to play at Pitt. If you said, hey, I'm not going to be that stubborn where, hey, we're going to get a high schooler. We don't care if he is not any good. We're going to sign a 17 or 18-year-old out of high school, but if the quality of prospect athletically, academically, and -- academic, athletically, is there character-wise is there, then we're going to take him, but if they're not and we got something better and we're sure about his character, but to me any time a kid is in the portal, there's a reason sometimes. What is the reason? Let's dig and find out because he could come here and have the same problem. Is he going to jump back in the portal? That's what you have to be. I don't want a guy in and out, and he is with you one month and not with you the next month.

**Q. Had any portal conversation with your guys?**

PAT NARDUZZI: A couple. You always have a couple. Thank you. Graham and Adam, see you guys looking sharp. I'll stand over here if someone wants individual stuff. Adam and Graham, they do an outstanding job. We can give that to you. Thanks, guys.

