

Rose Bowl Game presented by Capital One Venture X: Ohio State vs Utah

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Pasadena, California, USA

Utah Utes

Brant Kuithe

Press Conference



Q. Now that you and your team are in California, how has California been treating you?

BRANT KUITHE: It's been awesome so far. Haven't been out here too much. Got to go to Disney yesterday which was fun, first time. Enjoying the trip so far. Just trying to take each day a day at a time. And just enjoying the work and also the fun also. So it's going to be a great time.

Q. What's the sense after your team won the Pac-12 Championship, coming to the Rose Bowl, what's the sense of motivation? How excited are you personally, and how excited do you feel the team is to play in the Rose Bowl?

BRANT KUITHE: As people know, it's our first time winning the Pac-12. That's a great accomplishment. But we have one goal and that's to win the Rose Bowl. And the last game, and we've got to finish this year off right.

A lot of bad things have happened this year. A lot of ups and downs. So it's a great way to finish off the year, win the Rose Bowl.

Q. You mentioned what the program has gone through over the years. What can you speak about Utah's program, to be able to stand together when the going gets tough?

BRANT KUITHE: Obviously the circumstances weren't the best. And it did make us a tighter group, and that's for the better. We're a tight group of guys. We mold very well and we work together. We're like a family. A lot of teams say that, but we actually do that. It's a big difference in our program.

Q. Imagine how winning the Rose Bowl is the No. 1 goal. When you look at Ohio State and their defense, what stands out to you just the defense and how they

run it?

BRANT KUITHE: They play hard. They're going to be the most talented team that we've played all year. But I believe if we stick to the same things, technique-wise, technically sound and scheme-wise, that I think it's going to be a great game. And obviously I hope the result is us on top. But we just have to go into the game and see.

Q. A lot of people, fans might have been assuming that (inaudible) option of coming back. Could you tell us what went into that decision?

BRANT KUITHE: Just going out throughout the season, I was just on the border kind of the whole time. With winning the Pac-12, I just kept thinking more about it. And I still had one more year of eligibility. And I was just, like, I could really definitely come back for another year, finish it off right, and (indiscernible) back and hopefully do the same things, maybe go to the playoffs. That's a good possibility, especially with Cam coming back.

And it was a thing I had to think about a lot and talk with my family, what not. And I thought it was best for me to come back and finish my last year of eligibility and see if we can do the same thing next year as we did this year.

Q. When Devin faced this decision last year, he said he could have left last year (inaudible). Now he's turning into (inaudible). Is that something on your mind?

BRANT KUITHE: Some sort. But I'm not letting it be the main focus just because I think it would kind of distract me to the bigger goals in mind. And I try not to think about it much. But it's always in the back of my mind sometimes, yeah.

Q. What kind of advice, if any, did either coach (indiscernible) or Coach Whitt try to give you as you were making up your mind?

BRANT KUITHE: Just taking everything into account and

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just take every single little knowledge and information and what not, and just think about it real hard about the decision I'm going to make, instead of kind of basing it off of, purely just impulse.

And I kind of sat there and thought about it and really just looked at everything. And I said, well, for right now it looks like I want to come back and that's where my heart is. And I decided to do that.

Q. Again the assumption was you guys win the Pac-12, the league. What is it about this group or what you guys might have next year after winning the Pac-12? (Indiscernible)?

BRANT KUITHE: I definitely do think it's a good possibility. You see how the year has went. I really do think if we had Cam right off the bat we probably would have went undefeated. It's just the season started off slow. We had a lot of questions in some areas, which was going to happen no matter what. So you can't really go back in time and say it would be different.

But I kind of do think it would be. But having him under, at the quarterback position for a whole other year, especially to lead the group and all the guys we have coming back, we're losing some phenomenal athletes stuff like that. But at the end of the day we have guys coming back and I think we can do a little bit better.

Q. Obviously you're making your decision, (indiscernible) will make his decision, But during the process how much did you guys talk to each other?

BRANT KUITHE: We talked about it. And we were going to do something together but we decided to do our own thing. But we talked about it the whole time. And I let him know, I was, like, I'm going to stay and just go running back. Because I knew he was going to.

And it was just kind of great to -- it's sad that Cole's not coming back, but I understand him and his circumstances and everything. And I think that he's going to make an NFL team and whatnot. But it's great to have Dalton back, and just running back.

Q. What went into the thought process and why ultimately did you decide to come back?

BRANT KUITHE: So, I just kind of looked at everything and all the things and whatnot. I didn't really look at draft stock what not because I didn't want it to distract me, what not. And overall team and our record and everything that we've done so far.

With winning the Pac-12 it was a big thought of mine. It was like, okay, I could leave, end on a high note, what not, play in the Rose Bowl, biggest bowl there is. But I thought about it more, and we have so many guys coming back, so many great players.

I figured since I have one more year of eligibility I might as well, plus I'm young. I'm not old. So it's great to not -- turn missionary, and just, no offense to them, it's a little rough sometimes.

Q. Were you and Dalton communicating during the process? Did you guys talk through it because he had an opportunity to go too?

BRANT KUITHE: We were talking a lot. We thought about it. It was, like, we have Cam coming back, a lot of good players coming back. Especially if we come back, it's a lot of leadership that comes back. It kind of helps the team. We thought about it more. And we want to do it again.

Which is it's a great possibility that we easily do it again. So we just have to put in the work. I'm just happy I made the decision and he also did too.

Q. As you put on the tape and watch the Ohio State football team, what jumps out immediately, what jumps out about Ohio State when you watch them?

BRANT KUITHE: They're definitely going to be the most talented team we played all year. But with some of the guys that are coming out and saying they're not playing, I wouldn't say it helps. But it just kind of gives us a better sense on who we're going to be playing.

And they're a great team. They're fast. But if you saw them the other couple games, if you outphysical them then they kind of don't like it.

So we just have to come in, hard-nosed football and do what we do best and bring the physicality and I think we'll be good.

Q. Are they comparable to anybody you guys have played this year from a stylistic or scheme standpoint?

BRANT KUITHE: Not much. They do a lot of cover 3, some man. But not really. They're kind of a base defense but they just let their guys play.

Q. Have you guys, winning the Pac-12 Championship was such a big deal, and then it was the award season and all this other stuff. Do you feel like the last week or two you pushed that aside and focus on this game and have all that behind you because a lot of times

you'll get caught up in, hey, we're Pac-12 champions, we're in the Rose Bowl. Is the focus the Rose Bowl? Do you feel like you're dialed in?

BRANT KUITHE: For sure. I would say the first week after winning the Pac-12 was definitely a different period because we were just kind of sitting there thinking, wow, we just won the Pac-12. And just thinking that we were, like, all right, we've got a week on celebrating, and we just go straight back to work because we had a couple of weeks for the Rose Bowl.

No, we don't take any game lightly. We take it all the same. Winning the Pac-12, it's great. We have one game left. It's the Rose Bowl. We have to keep our focus on that.

Q. How excited are you for Saturday's game and that ability and knowing there's going to be a lot of Utah fans at this game and running out on that field on New Year's. I'm sure you watched the bowl game growing up.

BRANT KUITHE: It's awesome. I've always watched it. Big memories watching Chris McCaffrey and all those guys playing in one of those games. It's awesome. Can't wait to step on the field when all the fans are there and it's going to be really exciting.

Q. Looking ahead is kind of the goal but when you take a step back and look at what you guys have been through this season, the ups and downs, what's the one real lasting memory you'll have about this team?

BRANT KUITHE: I would just say the whole season. It's kind of hard to narrow it down to one thing. It's probably the most challenging season we've ever had and also the most rewarding. So it was kind of a different year, but I'm just glad that some of the guys that can't be here with us can kind of experience and see what we're going through.

And it's just basically playing the season for them, tying A-Lowe. So it's hard, but with winning these games and showing that we can do this is definitely rewarding and showing that, well, all these bad things happened during the season but this is what we can accomplish and we're doing it for them.

Q. The way that the Utah fan base travels, you guys might have 60-plus thousand people at the stadium. How exciting is that?

BRANT KUITHE: Oh, it's awesome. It will be a different feeling when we step out onto the field and most of the fans are ours. And we kind of felt that during the Pac-12

Championship game. There wasn't much Oregon fans there. It was definitely nice to have that support. I definitely do think it was a factor going into the game and throughout the whole game because they really didn't have much people there.

It's kind of hard playing in front of a stadium you don't have much people there supporting you. And it's going to be a great environment. And hopefully they can help.

Q. Fans want to know, if you were an actor to play in a movie who would that be?

BRANT KUITHE: I answered this question, people will see in a couple of weeks, on our Utah football page, but I would probably put if Ryan Gosling and Channing Tatum made a baby, I think I would be the perfect fit for that, I think so.

Q. First Rose Bowl in program history. How special is this moment, and how do you try to not get caught up in the enormity of it?

BRANT KUITHE: I would say for the most part just treat it as any other game. Obviously the Rose Bowl isn't any other game, but you just kind of know when to have fun, know when it's work time. Just any part where we're going -- we went to Disney yesterday. In things like that, you can have fun and enjoy the moment, take your mind off football, but anytime we're in the facility training, whatnot, it's all ball. You've got to know the difference between the two and just know that it's any other game and we just have to prepare like it.

Q. Ohio State fans don't know a ton about Utah, but when they talk about that offense, they're, like, wow, it's a physical offense, a physical hit-you-in-the-mouth type of team. Is that the identity you feel you guys are trying to portray?

BRANT KUITHE: For sure. And Coach Ludwig definitely instills it's a hardcore mentality. That's what we need to do. We establish the run game first and every single game I think we've done a good job at that. Some games a little rocky at first. But I definitely think that's the theme of our game plan. And just in general of how we play the game is a hardcore mentality. And I think we're going to show it this Saturday.

Q. What was your decision to decide to come back to Utah?

BRANT KUITHE: So I kind of put everything all together and thought about it, whatnot. Tried not to make a decision based on impulse and just little things like that. And I came to the assumption that we have one more year,

have a lot of guys coming back. Figured I might as well come back for one more year. I have one year left. I'm not really old. I'm only 22.

So to stay another year is not going to affect anything, anything like that. So I decided to come back because also Dalton was coming back. And having me and him back is definitely a big plus for the offense. And definitely helps especially having Cam back under the quarterback position for another year, it's great.

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