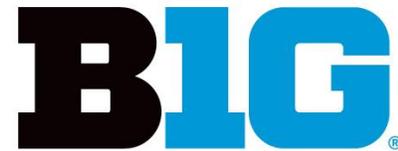


July 28, 2014



An Interview With:

PURDUE COACH DARRELL HAZELL

COACH HAZELL: Nice start. Appreciate it so much. Excited to get the season started 2014. We'll come into camp on Sunday, August the 3rd. Our first practice will be August the 4th. Most of our practices throughout the fall camp will be open to the public as well as the media. There will be a few that are closed, but then we'll kick it off against Western Michigan on August the 30th.

Let me first start off by saying I'm extremely proud of our football team. There's a tremendous environment right now around our facilities that's very conducive for learning and success. And our guys have done everything we've asked since January, above and beyond what we've asked.

And as you see our players, as they come to work every single day, there's a different Boilermaker walking around our facilities. And I'm excited about all the things those guys have done since January.

I think one of the things you watch, last Friday we tested our conditioning tests, and you're seeing a different guy walk around our facilities, much more confident. They look a lot better. Our strength coaches did an excellent job. So they're very excited to get started.

I think one of the things that you always ask, what do you have first, do you have the confidence or do you have the success first? And I think our guys are walking around with a lot more confidence right now.

I know they're excited about all the things that they plan on doing, and we're in a good position right now.

Obviously we hadn't -- we didn't finish as well as we'd like to last year. There's a lot of things for improvement. But I think this is the time where you rip off the rearview mirror and you take a look

at what's in front of you and all the things that we need to do to be successful in this 2014 season.

We've got a great locker room right now, and I can't be more proud of our guys and how hard they've worked to put themselves in position to be successful for this campaign.

And I think this offseason's new rule of being able to use two hours to meet with our guys couldn't have come at a better time, because what we've seen, we used it as a staff to meet with our younger guys, to get those guys caught up, then we took the second hour to meet with the rest of the team, just so we can get advanced in the football knowledge that we needed to get advanced in.

But the thing that we did that I thought helped our guys this summer was we had player-led meetings. And what those guys did -- and you always are concerned, do they know the material well enough to teach it to each other? And just being able to advance their knowledge of what we're doing offensively and defensively and in the kicking game, but you can see we made tremendous strides this offseason because of the new rule this summer.

So we're excited to get going. I know our coaching staff is excited. We're going to do some things structurally a little bit different offensively that will help our guys, our personnel. I think what you're going to see, you know, with Raheem Mostert's success on the track, he was a different player for us this springtime. Played with a lot more confidence. Played more physical. He's probably one of the fastest players in college football this year. We also have one of the largest players in college football this year with one of our junior college lineman coming in, a 6'8", 400-pound offensive guard.

So we're excited to get rolling. I'll open it up for questions.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Do you get the feel Purdue is starting to invest more in the football program for resources? Do you think Purdue, is the



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Purdue Coach Darrell Hazell

school starting to invest more into the football program?

COACH HAZELL: Oh, absolutely. I have had many meetings with Morgan Burke, and it's very important to him for Purdue to have success on the football field. And we've talked extensively about the things that we need to do to get to that level we need to get to, and we're working in that direction, absolutely.

Q. Coach, talk a little bit about your second season at the helm. First season, you're new to the program, you don't do as well as you want to. But things are -- you got a lot of players coming back. Talk a little bit about what that means and what you look forward to this year as you start your second season?

COACH HAZELL: Here's the biggest thing that I've learned when you take over a program. And nobody's at fault, but there's so much learning that has to happen in that first year, how you want things done. And it's not only coaches to coaches. It's coaches to players, to equipment people, to trainers. So it's a learning process.

And at this junction, as a staff, as equipment -- everybody knows where they're supposed to be. And I think that's the biggest maturity you make as a program between years one and year two.

Our players, they know what the expectations are from the coaches. So we've made -- you'll be impressed on the significant strides that we've made as a program.

Q. On the field, then, what is the single biggest area that has to improve if this team is going to have the level of success that you hope for?

COACH HAZELL: Well, I think it's up front for both sides of the ball. I mean, obviously we didn't play as well as we'd like to up front on the defensive line last year. We lost the edge way too many times. We have to be much more sound, gap sound. But also offensive line-wise, we have some very good young quarterbacks in our program right now. We have to be able to pass protect and be able to protect those guys.

If we can do those two things on both sides of the ball, we'll have some success.

Q. Coach, given the depth of talent between yourself, Notre Dame and Indiana, do you think that will impact recruiting going forward?

COACH HAZELL: Absolutely. I think so. I think there's 300 schools in the state of Indiana that play football. So we're all fighting for that same talent. But you have to go out and you've got to find those three or four guys each year that can make an impact and make a difference in your program.

But there's good coaches at all those places that you mentioned and there's good recruiters. We have to do our due diligence to make sure that we get the best players to help Purdue win championships.

Q. Darrell, 19 starters coming back, but how much is this camp going to thrive from a competition standpoint with some of the young kids you're bringing in?

COACH HAZELL: They're going to play a huge role. What I said to our staff on Friday was we have to find out quickly, because once we report to camp on the 3rd and practice on the 4th, there's such a short window before that first game, 26 or 27 days later.

We've got to find out fast who our guys are. I don't want to have good players standing on the sideline because the scheme is holding them up or they haven't caught up fast enough. But there's going to be four or five guys that we brought in this year that will see the field because they're good players. And being able to analyze and watch them this summer has really helped us to say, OK, this guy can run, this guy moves well enough to help us.

Especially, you look, can they help us in the offense and defense, but also in the special teams game as well.

Q. What are your realistic expectations for this season? Obviously coming off the season that you did and knowing that, I guess, this isn't going to happen overnight, what are your realistic expectations both on the football field and maybe off the football field as well?

COACH HAZELL: I don't want to sound cliché, but I want to make sure that our team comes out and competes in game one to get us off on the right foot. Without putting out too much, I think it's very important to understand that we're a different football team than what we were last year.

Every year is its own separate entity. And until you understand that, whether you are a great football team last year or whether you are a poor

football team last year, each year takes on its own little role. And we gotta make sure we separate ourselves from last year's role and move forward.

Q. For any new coach, when is it really your program fully? Like by year two, do you feel like you've been able to integrate everything you want to do, or does it take until you have all your recruiting classes on the field? When does it really happen?

COACH HAZELL: I don't feel like that. I thought that we had a very in-depth meeting at the end of December last year with the sophomores and juniors once the seniors were gone. We laid out some things, that the strong has to overtake the weak and right has to overtake the wrong.

And I wanted them to think about that through the month of December as they left home and they weren't playing in a Bowl game, and I wanted to see what kind of team we had once we came back in January.

Like I mentioned at the beginning, our guys have dove completely in, and I really feel like this is our football team right now, our coaches staff football team. It's a great environment around our facility right now, because it starts with trust. It really does. It starts with trust. And players -- coaches trust in players and players trust in coaches. And I think that's where we are right now.

Q. Obviously the quarterback position is so key in any program. How is the development of that position going for you right now?

COACH HAZELL: Our quarterback situation, it's outstanding. We have three young guys in the room, they're all gym rats. They love coming in and studying. Quite often you'll see them in the office at 6:00 a.m. just studying film by themselves, and they're all battling for that position.

Obviously Danny Etling was the guy that finished the season for us last year. Our last game he threw for 438 yards, four touchdowns, no interceptions. So obviously he'll come in the camp first, but those other guys are pushing him. But it's a very healthy environment.

I know Coach Shoop has done a great job with those guys and getting them ready to understand the offense. And last year at this time -- I'll be honest with you -- last year at this time, we couldn't even call a play. We couldn't call a play at this time last year.

Now, at this point in time, those guys are well advanced, not only calling a play, but making sure the play works efficiently.

Q. Darrell, are your players distracted at all about what's been going on in the offseason from the standpoint of the arguments or whatever with the NCAA about stipends, et cetera? How are you addressing those kinds of things with your team?

COACH HAZELL: We had a meeting about that in the springtime. We talked about it. I said the worst thing you can do is talk about something you have no idea what you're talking about. So I said, you know, take care of the things that you can control, and if an issue comes up in our house, we'll address it. But right now, you don't know anything about what's really going on, so don't talk about it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.
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