



COLORADO FOOTBALL/JON EMBREE QUOTES

Post-Spring Press Conference, Boulder, Colo. (April 16, 2012)

On Recruiting

"Everybody's out, they left yesterday. The two off the road this week are Eric [Bieniemy] and [Greg Brown], so they can get some things finished out this week from an offensive and defensive standpoint, then they'll be out on the road. Coaches will all be in next week, but they'll out off and on for the remainder of May."

On When He Can Go On The Road And Recruit

"I can't go out until December 1. I can phone call, so I'll start on that phone calling from a recruiting standpoint over the next five or six weeks."

On Junior Day

"Junior Day went well; I would imagine we will hear from some kids here. There were a couple kids in particular. There were seven kids that came, that it was good they got here, they made a great effort to get here, so we'll see on that. We had kids coming in all last week, and really the week before because they couldn't make that particular day. We'll continue to recruit to get some guys in here and see what happens."

On Expected Size Of 2013 Class

"Probably 16 to 20."

On Having A Young Team

"It's always important to keep the standard or set the tone, so they understand what you're trying to do. Every game counts for us, we don't have the luxury of trying to let guys ease their way into it. We have to go. It's important we get off to a fast start and it's important for the kids who play to understand they can help us get off to a fast start."

On WR Paul Richardson

"He goes in today, I was with him this morning for 15 minutes and he's in great spirits. I had to talk to him about some of the things he'll go through a little bit, from that standpoint, I'll probably see him tomorrow and keep checking in on him."

On Players Not Returning

"We're in the process of evaluating a few things and seeing who's doing what. Never say never, but it would be a minimum amount I'd imagine. For the most part kids are handling their business, doing what they're supposed to do, giving us maximum effort on and off the field. Last year I had a good idea what the number was and this year it will be minimal if at all."

On The Leadership Of Returning Players

"I feel very good about the direction of the leadership coming from the juniors and seniors. The sophomores and juniors and seniors are doing a freshman dinner tonight, so all the freshmen will be at my house tonight so I'm excited about that and getting to spend some time with them. This is a critical time for them because a lot of them are coming off a redshirt year and want to finish the school year strong, but I want to impress upon them if they're going to be here this summer, the urgency and sense of purpose they need to show if they're going to be around here this summer. It's going to be a good time and good environment to get that communicated."

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On The Advantage Of Clearly Communicating Where Players Need To Be

"I felt like a lot of things around here, from what they've done, they have raised. From their expectations to their work ethic, to from when they do hit something to raise the bar themselves, not having me or the coaches or Malcolm [Blacken] do it for them. They have been very good about that, about understanding self motivation and raising their own expectations and standards as they continue to hit some things.

On Captains

"It may be more of a game-by-game basis, rewarding kids for playing. Sometimes when you just say, 'Hey, you're the guy,' last year if you look at our captains, two of them were hurt and done for a significant amount of time. To me I want to try to promote and foster an environment of leadership by committee not by one or two people."

On Who He Expects To Emerge As Leaders

"Off the top of my head, Doug Rippey, [Will] Pericak, [Nick] Hirschman, [Connor] Wood. I expect [Paul Richardson] to still be involved, David Bakhtiari, [Gus] Handler, Ray Polk, Chidera [Uzo-Diribe], those are the guys off the top of my head who I'll look to. No shortage. Jon Major. They're all different and I think that's the good thing about it because kids respond differently to different people, the more diverse your leadership is the better your chances of getting to more people. The thing about all those guys too, they're all comfortable in their role and their position on the team. That's important because we're bringing in new guys, so are you about the team or are you about you? Are you going to help the new kids coming in for summer school, show them how to work out and how to do it, or will you step back and hope they fail because you think it helps you? We'll find out about a lot of those guys to see if they're about the team or about themselves."

On Instilling The Culture Of Players Helping Incoming Freshmen Learn The Ropes

"As we continue to build as a program, it becomes second nature. We have a lot of freshman, who last summer they know how things went for them. So if it was bad for them, they know what not to do and how it felt, so they can make sure the next guy doesn't feel that way. As you continue to build as a program, pretty soon that expectation is standard and more of an automatic thing for them."

On Freshmen Getting Early Reps

"That's every year, but it probably won't be on the same kind of scale as this year. It's something I think you have to do, you have to find out early which freshmen can help you and what's their role. A classic example, Rashaan Salaam wanted to play, so his freshman year was primarily special teams and a carry here or there. If you have a kid who is adamant about playing and can help you a little bit on offense, you have to evaluate him quickly from a team standpoint, so you're not completely wasting his year. Those are the kinds of things we need to find out and find out early is who can do what and if it's something we need and if it's better than what we have."

On His Philosophy Of Giving Freshmen An Opportunity

"If it can be helped, I don't want the better player standing next to me. I think as a coach you have to look at it as what is that you're not getting done. It's easy to always say he can't learn it, but why can't he learn it, let's find out the why and if it's something we can fix, let's fix it. That's the first thing. As a coach, sometimes you're comfortable putting the guy in who knows what to do, but it doesn't do any good if he knows what to do but can't do it. Let's try to put the kid in who can do it and try to figure out what it is he can do and not ask him to do what he can't do. For some coaches, it's just a comfort level, and we have to find out how to get the best guys out there."

On Whether He Expects QB Shane Dillon To Redshirt

"I'm not, I want to see what he can do. I want to see what all these guys can do. If you come in expecting to redshirt, sometimes on the offensive line that's going to happen. If I'm 6-5, 255 pounds at tackle, I'm going to redshirt, but I want to see what we have, I want them to come in working, expecting to play. The other thing about playing freshmen, this is the only time they're really healthy. You redshirt and save them, then they leave early for the draft or they break down and you don't get four years out of them anyway. This is the only time you know for sure they're healthy and they're happy for the most part. Then things start to happen."

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On Being Around A Team This Young Before

“Have I been around a team this young before? I felt like the team Neuheisels’s last team (1998) I felt like was a pretty young team, Dan [Graham] and Victor [Rogers] and Andre [Gurode] and Mike Lewis. We had some veterans sprinkled in there, Ben Kelly and Damen Wheeler, but I felt like that was a young team because I was trying to think about that too. A lot of the guys who went on to win the Big 12 Championship (in 2001), I remember a lot of those guys at the Aloha Bowl (in 1998). If you have enough leadership and things fall the right way, it’s a huge benefit to play some guys when they’re young.”

On Whether The Approach Changes When Coaching A Younger Team

“You have to have more patience. There’s no doubt on that. You have to have more patience with them when they’re younger. You probably have to put your arm around them more than what you’re used to. They’re going to do something wrong, and score a touchdown and be excited and you’ll have to tell them that wasn’t the right thing to do. They will be like, ‘But I just scored.’ Then they’ll do something wrong and give up a touchdown the very next play. You just have to have some patience as they grow and get caught up to speed with the college game. It’s a different game, it’s a big leap. For other kids like Greg Henderson, it was fairly natural for him, but there’s going to be some kids that will be like, ‘Holy cow,’ then they come to me and ask to redshirt, do the job for you.”

On Managing Fan Expectations

“You can’t manage the fans’ expectations. You’ll have some who won’t think you will win one game and some who think you should win them all. You can’t manage their expectations and you can’t let that affect how you handle and prepare the team. There’s a lot of enthusiasm and excitement out there at the couple places I have been. I know there are some things coming up and it’s always good to be around and see the excitement. I always wish I could take the players with me, because I don’t think they always realize the support out there and how the fans feel about them and the excitement they have about the upcoming season. It’d be great to do that but obviously you can’t. But I don’t worry about trying to manage their expectations because it’ll be whatever it is for them anyway.”

On Positions That Freshmen Have An Opportunity To Make An Early Impact At

“Defensive line, defensive back, running back, receiver, tight end, don’t have any linebackers coming in.”

On Freshmen Playing At Safety

“If one of those guys ends up back there, they could, if there’s one that’s a good fit for the back end. We signed five of them, they all have good size and range, so there might be an opportunity for one of them to play quicker back there. That’s part of the evaluation, we need to get them quickly into training camp and see who’s what. If they’ll help in the return games, that will change things too. There are a lot of things we need to see in a short period of time to make sure we get the right guys out there.”

On The Difficulty Of A Freshman Starting At Cornerback

“To me, on the edges, so corner and receiver, is probably the easiest position from a transitional standpoint to play as a freshman. Greg is working like he’s not going to give his job up. He had a very good camp, obviously he wasn’t around for the Spring Game. He had a good spring, we did a lot of different things with him. I was pleased that he was more physical, whether it was jamming at the line of scrimmage or tackling in the run game and his awareness of things like pattern reading. Some of those things, I feel like he was better at. He’s working hard, because he knows how it can happen, because he was that guy last year and he wasn’t that highly touted, so we have some guys who are obviously highly recruited coming in, if anyone understands how quickly it can happen, it’s him.”

On CB Jered Bell

“I’d love for him to come back, I think he’ll be cleared either early July or early June to do everything, it will be good to get him back out there and see what he can do. He’s been great, he was helping coaching guys, he was into it, even though he couldn’t go through spring. That will give us another person back there to evaluate and give us a good opportunity to get our best players out on the field. He can really run and do some good things too. He’s got good size, Yuri [Wright] has good size. Marques [Mosley], Jeff Hall, all those guys have good size and good length, so between that group, I’m sure there’s somebody that could possibly be a safety-type.”

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On Who Will Be Limited At The Start Of Fall Camp Other Than Paul Richardson

"No, there shouldn't be. Jered's back, Rippy's back. I think Malcolm [Creer] will be back and Parker [Orms], yeah."

On DT Nate Bonsu

"I haven't seen him play much. I'm not sure he played much for us last year as far as what we're asking him to do this year for his role. This is a big summer for him, big summer."

On Graduate Assistants

"T.C. [McCartney], and Cha'pelle Brown will be the new GAs on August 1. They do a lot, breaking down film. Self-scout, helping to put together playbooks. Helping some coaches when their computers aren't working, getting them fixed while they're watching tape. It's a thankless job, but it's how everyone came up through it. I told them at least they're not getting cars washed and filled with gas. Some coaches may still do it, it was kind of like that when I was here as a volunteer coach, a lot of none football stuff you may have to do and you're like, 'Really?'"

On Uniforms

"We'll stay as is. I went to Nike more about some stuff, some possibilities for the 2013 season. Nothing radical. We have great colors a great scheme, so let's not mess it up."

On Objective Of Spring Practices

"This year it was to not get hurt, so we didn't meet that. There were 15-20 kids that we identified that from a learning and teaching standpoint we had a few little things we wanted to get done whether it was a technique or playing the run better, playing the pass better, making sure we addressed that issue with those kids. I feel good coming out of spring from that standpoint, obviously P-Rich getting hurt is the only negative."

On Will Harlos Getting His Year Back

"Yes, he did. But he was hurt, he had some hamstring issues, that's why he wasn't in the Spring Game. I want to say two Thursdays before the Spring Game, he tweaked his hamstring, so that's why he wasn't out there."

On What Will Change This Summer

"We've already met with Malcolm [Blacken], and talked from a training standpoint about some things we will do. From a playcalling standpoint, we'll stay as is and keep fine tuning that. Really this summer just have the guys over to the house as much as we can, do some reading, start planning that first team meeting on August 6."