



**Introductory Press Conference
Head Coach Jordan Bischel
June 21, 2023**

Opening Statement

“Good afternoon. I don't do a lot of reading off scripts. I don't do a lot of wearing suits. I don't do a lot of any of this. I'm a baseball coach. I got out of out of the college world as an accountant, and I got out of being an accountant so I could stop doing this, so don't get used to it. But I had to have a little script today because there's stuff I want to make sure I don't forget to say but obviously it's an incredible honor. It's humbling. It just really hits. What an amazing opportunity to be the baseball coach here at the University of Cincinnati.

I have a list of thank you's. I can't afford to miss somebody here, so it's written down, but you know, Katie, Luke, Parker and Chase. I'll start with Katie. I met Katie in 2010, and if you look at my resume, it's no coincidence that's when my coaching career took off. You made me a better person. You made me a better coach. She's the best, and it's no coincidence. Then there are these three guys too. I missed a lot. I missed a lot of games this spring because I had to go coach my games and you did a great job telling me about it, sending me videos and telling me about the digger you hit. You'll hear this from coaches a lot, but obviously this is a lifestyle. And these guys, they embrace it, they buy into it. Guys, you're going to get to know them off the field and I want you to. I can't thank them enough.

Dr. (Neville) Pinto, John (Cunningham), and then the search committee, the Board of Trustees, everybody that's gotten behind this thing. What I loved about this process is it mattered. It really mattered. John, I don't know where he got all the phone numbers, but he dug as far as he could to figure out what I was all about. And I'm glad he did that. We got to find the right guy to be here, and I could not think thank that group enough for going after this, to try to find the right person. That meant a lot to me. My parents, Katie's parents, my siblings, a lot of people that have supported us. As we've moved around, as we've had commitments that are difficult and understood us not getting home as much as we would like those people are incredibly valuable.

Staff, the coaching staffs we've had over the last 11 years. They are so undervalued and they've always overperformed. I've never had to ask a coach to work harder. They're the reason I'm here and I can't thank them enough. It's not just coaching staff, right? The academic support people, the compliance people, the student managers, I'm again forgetting people, but you don't run a good program without those people. And that's really, really important. The

student-athletes, that's 11 years of being a head coach. I'm not sitting here without good players that bought into it and everywhere I've been I've had to sell a vision. This is what we're going to be all about. But you guys have got to believe in it, and then it's work. It's not easy. You got to work for it and so the 11 years of guys that have played for me, the buy-in and the work they've put in, that's why the record looks good. Not because I have this magic pixie dust on how to win baseball games. It's those guys and that's huge.

The people that have hired me through the years: Ben Sasse at Midland University, Dave Marsh at Northwood, Michael Alford at Central Michigan; every one of those guys took a leap of faith on me and believed in who I was and what I thought we were going to be all about. And I don't have this opportunity without them. Amy Folan, our athletic director at Central Michigan; it's never easy when the person that hires you leaves and you don't know what to expect and amazing what she did to support our program but more amazing what she did to support our family and so I can't thank her enough. And then the last one. People may not know who this is, but Dave and Sue Keilitz. Dave, former baseball coach at Central Michigan, over the last five years has become an absolute mentor to me if you don't know who Dave Keilitz is, look him up on Wikipedia, because you're going to be enlightened about a lot of things. When I moved to Mount Pleasant, I thought I was really good man and I thought it was really good husband, and then I met Dave and I realized I had a heck of a long ways to go. So, Coach Keilitz, the number 34 at Central Michigan was his, and that's why I wanted this number today. He's a mentor to me.

From there, why am I here? Why am I here? It's you guys. It's the student athletes, all the other stuff, the facilities, the Big 12, but I'm here for (the players). I told you guys a couple of things on the Zoom call. We want to make this the most enjoyable experience of your life. I want to make sure you guys feel like there's a guide to help you be the best players, the best team and really just the best people that you can be. I can't get you there, but I have to give you the roadmap. I have to give you the blueprint, and that's why I'm here. This program is never going to be about me, and it's never going to be about our coaching staff. It's going to be about you and what you put into it. We want to make you happy, and we want you to enjoy it. It's got to be fun. All these people have been telling you what a grind this is, and you guys are playing college baseball. That's pretty darn cool, and you're doing it at a really high level. You're going to have fun doing it. That's really, really important to me. And the other reason I'm here is the opportunity. We had a lot of success at Central Michigan, and I was surrounded by a lot of very good people with an amazing home for our family. When you have success, recruits say to you, 'well, if I come here are you going to stay?' and I said I plan to stay. I'm only leaving here if there's an incredibly, special opportunity. This was that opportunity.

There's just no doubt we love the Midwest. I don't want to coach way down south. This is the South for me. This is going to be tropical in the winter, guys. You don't know what cold is. We wanted to say in the Midwest, and this gave us the opportunity to do that. This is an awesome city. We're driving in yesterday, and we drove by the zoo, and I almost skipped the press conference just to go check out the animals there. I love the zoo. Well, we'll get there pretty quick here. But you know, my job is baseball coach and this is a baseball city, right? I wasn't

quite born in the 70s, but I know the Big Red Machine and the success. Why wouldn't I want to be a part of that? John's vision was really important in this. He wants his program to be great. It's great to say you want something to be great, but he's got a vision for it. He's going to find the resources with his team to put us in a position where we can compete, and that meant a lot to me. I don't like losing, and he has a vision to help us get there. And then we can compete nationally. I think we did some good things where we did that on some stages at CMU, but in the Big 12, If you're competing and doing well, you're nationally relevant, right? That's an automatic. If you're competing for a Big 12 Championship, you're competing for a national championship. It's just that simple."

On the impression of John Cunningham recruiting him for the job

"What impressed me the most about John [Cunningham] was that he was involved every step of the way. There are some schools out there that do not make college baseball a priority. I'm not saying that's right, wrong or indifferent. I didn't know when we initially talked if I was going to be the guy, but I knew that he was going to find the right guy given how invested he was in this whole process."

On his coaching style and playing small ball

"Listen, if these guys are good enough to get them in from the batter's box, then I am going to be really happy about that. I don't mind how many balls we launch out of the yard. I also know that we will probably play on some 43-degree days with the wind blowing straight in. On those days, no matter how hard you hit the ball, it's not going to end up on the other side of the fence. We are going to get on base like crazy. I would like to think that we have guys that love to drive in runs. That's a piece of all this, but you don't win at a high-level squaring around to bunt every time in the box. There is a balance to it all."

On whom has reached out to him during the process and after accepting the position

"Kevin [Youkilis] texted me yesterday and talked to me as well during the process. The people I have heard from have been amazing with all their pride and support through it all. I probably haven't responded to everybody yet but if you're listening, I promise I will get back to you."

On what he learned from his years at Central Michigan and as a person

"At the end of every year I believe you sit back and think about what you can do better. I think what I have learned over 11 years as a head coach is that if you do things the right way then the wins will come. If you prepare and invest in this and have the right people, then the winning will take care of itself. When I first got to Central Michigan, there was a tremendous history there, but the program had not been successful in recent years. You could feel the pressure on our guys that we have to win and have to make it back to the NCAA Tournament. I came in as the little guy coaching at a Division II school. I told them if we worked really hard to get better every day, then I'd like to think good things will happen. At the end of my first year the team was 47-14 and we had a good buy-in from everyone. I believe that is the message we need to carry, let's see how good we can get and then let the winning take care of itself."

On the improvements of the field and the atmosphere at the park

“I have seen the renderings of the new turf field coming in and it looks incredible. We are headed in a wonderful direction here and this is going to be a fun place to watch baseball. I believe several years down the road it is going to continue to be enhanced and get better. My thoughts on the field are that I have seen the Twitter pictures throughout the year of that cold midweek game, but there’s 1,500 people there. There is a lot of excitement to this whole program. When we start pounding out more wins, stealing bases and hitting balls in the gap we are going to see that continue to grow. The most exciting part I look forward to is looking up in the stands and seeing this place full.”