

## **Tom Bradley Press Conference November 10, 2011**

**Q: How do you feel about the recent events leading up to your current position as interim head coach of the Nittany Lion football team?**

A: I take this job with very mixed emotions due to the situation at hand. I've been asked by the University, Board of Trustees and Rodney Erickson to handle this, last night. I will proceed in the matter that Penn State expects. I met with the players last night and today and told them that the expectations will remain. We're not going to waver from that. That's where we are right now. The players came over to the Lasch Building last night and we talked about certain things. We proceeded this morning to have a staff meeting followed by an 8 a.m. team meeting.

**Q: Do you have any immediate reservations?**

A: I have no reservations about taking this job.

**Q: When and how did you learn that you would become the interim head coach?**

A: I was actually down in my office watching film like I do every Wednesday night. Around 9:40 p.m., the phone rang and it was Rodney Erickson. He asked if I would accept the job as the team's interim head coach and I accepted. I proceeded to get in contact with team captains and other individuals so we could immediately get started on the process.

**Q: Your brother (Jim) said that you were saddened about the entire situation and that you face a huge challenge. How are you handling this situation?**

A: I did talk to my brother last night. I grieve for the victims and the families. I'm deeply saddened by the events and I express that with great emotion. We'll get working on the football aspect right away but everyone should know where our team is with this entire issue. We're with the children and their families. Our thoughts and our prayers are with them.

**Q: Have you spoken with Joe Paterno yet? How did he handle the news of him being fired from his position as the head coach?**

A: I spoke with Coach Paterno around 11 p.m. last night. I think that conversation is personal in nature.

**Q: Will Mike McQueary be coaching in the upcoming home game against Nebraska? Will McQueary be coaching on the sideline or in the press box?**

A: Yes, Mike McQueary will be coaching on Saturday. It'll be a game time decision as to where he will be placed.

**Q: Given how long you've been here, did you think it was appropriate for Joe Paterno to receive his termination via phone call?**

A: I wasn't actually aware of the method of Paterno's termination until this morning. As far as the method, it's not for me to say. The Board of Trustees made a decision. That's their decision.

**Q: Can you explain what you came to know about that 2002 incident described in the grand jury report concerning former assistant coach Jerry Sandusky?**

A: Due to the ongoing investigation, I won't say anything about the matter.

**Q: How involved will you be with the offense? What will be the process that you use to determine the starting quarterbacks and how you will use them on the field?**

A: I talked to the team today and I think they know me pretty well. I am who I am and I'm not going to change. When the time comes, I will sit down with the coaching staff and we will determine who the starting quarterback will be. Right now, we've made some decisions on staffing positions but we're not completely sure. Right now, Larry Johnson and Ron Vanderlinden will be co-coordinators on defense. I'm not sure if we'll be able to get it into full swing for Saturday's game since we haven't practiced signals and calls for those positions. Our defensive graduate assistant, Elijah Robinson, will become a full-time coach today.

**Q: Some people have stated that all of the current football staff should be replaced. How would you feel if these changes were to be made in the future?**

A: That's a decision that is up to the Board of Trustees and Penn State University. It's not my decision. I've been asked to do a job and I'm going to do it.

**Q: Can you characterize your relationship with Jerry Sandusky and how shocked were you when you heard the allegations?**

A: I won't comment on the allegations. Sandusky was a defensive coordinator when he worked with the Nittany Lions and I worked underneath him.

**Q: Is it reasonable for the public to assume that Mike McQueary and Joe Paterno were the only coaches aware of Jerry Sandusky's alleged perversions?**

A: Due to the ongoing investigation, I'm not going to discuss that matter.

**Q: From a reputation standpoint, what must Penn State and the Nittany Lion football team do to rebuild the community's trust off the football field?**

A: I think we've got to understand that this team has put in a lot of hard work. Saturday will be Senior Day for many of them. They deserve to have this day. That's what they've worked for this entire year. My job is to make sure that it happens. As far as reputation, I believe that Penn State will go about it in the proper manner and restore the proper principles of The Pennsylvania State University.

**Q: First of all your thoughts about the riots last night in the wake of the decision about Joe Paterno and do you worry about the safety and atmosphere for the players and fans in the stadium on Saturday?**

A: I do understand there was some activity last night and no I do not worry about the safety of our players on Saturday.

**Q: You met with the players last night. How are they dealing with such a monumental change right now?**

A: Well, obviously, a lot of them are in shock. They have mixed emotions. When I called up and spoke to the captains, a whole bunch of guys came over to the Lasch Building last night and piled into my office and we discussed team matters.

**Q: Will the team be playing after Saturday?**

A: Hopefully so. That is up to the administration.

**Q: Coach, you guys have a lot left to play for. Can you talk about getting this team back together considering what they have been through and trying to march forward with what could potentially still be in front of them?**

A: We have great leadership on this football team. Once again, when I spoke to them this morning, it is their team. They are not here for me. I am trying to help them be as good as they can possibly be and that is the direction we are going. If there is any problem, they will be focused. My job is to make sure they stay focused. Obviously, they have had a tremendous amount of distractions over the past week. It is a very resilient group. They will come to play on Saturday.

**Q: Tom, given the intense national scrutiny for Mike McQueary, why do you think it is appropriate for him to coach in this game and be the face for this University?**

A: That is a decision that is up to the administration and Mark Sherburne, our acting athletic director.

**Q: Was there any consideration given to dismissing Mike McQueary? Were you a part of any conversation whatsoever about potentially relieving him of his duties with the football team?**

A: Absolutely not.

**Q: I know you have waited a long time to be a head coach. I couldn't imagine you thought it would be under these circumstances. Can you sum up your feelings?**

A: Well, we are obviously in a very unprecedented situation. I just have to find a way to restore the confidence and to start a healing process with everybody. I am going to try and go about it. As I said earlier, it is with very mixed emotions and a heavy heart that this has occurred; that we are going through this.

**Q: You said that you hope that this team can finish the rest of the season, but it is up to the administration. Are you saying there is a chance the administration could cancel the rest of the season?**

A: That has never come up yet, so that is why I am not sure of that question.

**Q: I understand you're reluctant to maybe go in this direction, but in the interest of transparency and getting everything off to as fresh and clean a start as possible. Could you comment on what you did know about the Sandusky allegations and what steps you may have taken and why or why not you did report them, if you knew?**

A: I have answered this question before. Due to the ongoing investigation, I am not going to comment on that matter.

**Q: What do you think the (mindset) of your team will be with all this craziness? How do you think they will play Saturday?**

A: I think they will be ready to play Saturday. They had a lengthy team meeting after I got done today. They talked it out. This afternoon there is a letter arriving from the former Penn State football lettermen who wrote a letter to these guys explaining to them the importance of what Penn State means and I think they will be ready to play.

**Q: In light of what happened with student conduct last night. What message would you have for students anticipating before, during and after the game Saturday?**

A: Well, I think the message is clear. Let's show them what Penn State is really all about. It is not about some of those activities. Let's show class, let's show dignity and let's show what we are really all about.

**Q: How has all of this impacted recruiting? I have to imagine it is difficult to explain this to kids who are looking at the program.**

A: I will address tonight at 7:30 p.m. with the parents and families of our current players and after that, at 8 p.m., I will address the recruits.

**Q: I understand that you are unwilling to speak about the specific allegations. In general what are your thoughts about whether football coaches have a responsibility to report wider allegations of sex crimes, either to officials or police. Do football coaches have a wider responsibility beyond what goes on the field with the players?**

A: We all have a responsibility to take care of our children. All of us.

**Q: When these allegations first surfaced, were you aware Coach Sandusky was still on campus, still had an office, was still working out. If so, what did you do about that? What was your feeling about that?**

A: Yes, I was aware of that. This was taken to a higher authority that was handling that.

**Q: Do you think it was appropriate for him to remain on campus?**

A: Once again, this is on-going investigation, I'm not going to answer that question.

**Q: This has obviously tarnished Joe Paterno's legacy. How do you repair Penn State's image that this point?**

A: That is a rather lengthy answer and I could get into that, but I'm not sure I have all the answers right now.

**Q: There has been a movement on the social networks, on the media networks to try and get a lot of the former players to come back. Have you been in contact with any former players or have they been in contact with you in support?**

A: I've been here for 35 years, you would think I would have a lot of emails right now with the former players. I do not know if you know about the Penn State players, but it is a tight knit group. It is a family group and they will be here on Saturday.

**Q: After Paterno's resignation, this would have been his last home game. Are there any plans to have any tribute or acknowledgement to him and if so, do you think that is appropriate?**

A: Right now, I am not sure if there are any. I do not know where that stands. Obviously, if the players do a tribute, there is not anything I can do about that. I am not aware of any University plans right now.

**Q: I know it is very soon. Can you talk about Saturday and the contrast between showing empathy and at the same time showing solidarity when you talk about players coming back and the like?**

A: I think the solidarity is with everybody. First off, the thoughts and prayers of everybody are with the families and the children. So, it is more than football and they realize that. They are coming back on Saturday and a lot of them (are) because they want to show support for the Penn State program, the pride that they have in Penn State Football and the Penn State University.

**Q: In your mind, where do you think Joe Paterno should be on Saturday?**

A: Coach Paterno has meant more to me than anyone except my father. I do not want to get emotional and start talking about that.

**Q: When did you get the sense that this thing was going south or this might happen?**

A: I never had a sense that this was going to happen. I was down at the office working on the game plan (Wednesday night), actually, and I did not have any idea what was going on.

**Q: What is Jay Paterno's status on your staff and have you discussed this with him? What are his feelings on all of this?**

A: I texted Jay earlier this morning. We met right after the staff meeting. He will be coaching on Saturday. Jay is a great competitor. He knows he has a job to do. He wants to do that job. I'm sure he has a heavy heart and love for his father, but he will be with the team.

**Q: Do you think [Joe Paterno] should have had one last home game? Should he have been allowed to coach this one last game?**

A: The whole week has been something of a whirlwind. It's been an unprecedented week. I'm sure the Board of Trustees made a decision with the facts that they had and they decided to do what they did. I often tell my players -- players play, coaches coach, administrators administrate. I was not involved in those discussions and with the facts that they had, they thought that this was best for the University.

**Q: You've been in charge on the sideline before, while Joe was hurt and in the coach's booth. How much of that has prepared you for this and not having total chaos on Saturday?**

A: We've had that happen before. In 2006, Coach wasn't here. He was up in the box and we've functioned with him in the box before and it will be business as usual on that sideline on Saturday.

**Q: You mentioned it would be a game-time decision on Mike's role whether he would be upstairs, and if he is will you move somebody downstairs? Has that process been mapped out?**

A: Yes, that process has been mapped out. If he's upstairs, we will have (graduate assistant coach) Terrell Golden; he will do the duties that Mike was doing on the sideline.

**Q: Was there any indication between you and Joe that you would speak again before the game?**

A: Once again, that conversation is personal in nature.

**Q: How have the players handled this very chaotic week and what do you expect from them on Saturday?**

A: As I stated before, the expectations are the expectations. They know what they have to get done, I expect them to come out and play a good hard football game. They've prepared themselves, they've worked awfully hard and I would be disappointed if they didn't.

**Q: Can you put into words why McQueary gets to coach on Saturday but Joe Paterno does not?**

A: Once again, that's based on the administration.

**Q: What do you think Coach Paterno's legacy is going to be?**

A: Coach Paterno will go down in history as one of the greatest men. Maybe most of you know him as a great football coach. I've had the privilege and the honor to spend time with him, he's had such a dynamic impact on so many, so many and I'll say it again, so many people and players' lives. It's with great respect that I speak of him and I'm proud to say that I worked for him.

**Q: Have you slept at all?**

A: Do I look that bad? No, no, I have not. It started last night and there were a lot of things that needed to get done before this morning. I have not slept yet.

**Q: When you replaced Jerry Sandusky in 2000, what was your understanding of why he was leaving at the age of 55 or so?**

A: Coach Sandusky got the retirement package that was released for a lot of state employees. Coach Sandusky was a professor here at the university, he had the opportunity to retire and get, I believe, 35 years. The last year he worked for us, he was a consultant. He had actually retired in that summer.

**Q: You had not heard any allegations at that time?**

A: No.

**Q: Have you had a chance to prepare the way you wanted to for this game? Has this caused a problem with doing the preparations needed?**

A: It has not caused a problem; obviously today will be a little bit different when we go to practice. One of the great things about our staff is that we've been around for a long time and we know how to adjust. We each know each other's strengths and weaknesses. We know what has to get done.

**Q: What would you say to those who question how involved Joe was on a day-to-day basis in the past five years or so?**

A: Well, Coach, as the time went on, was a lot more involved than everyone thought. He knew everything that was going on. On defense, he would critique it. We knew what was expected of us to get done and if Coach didn't like it he was going to tell us, for sure. He would set the parameters and we would work within them.

**Q: Can you compare your emotions back in 1999 when you were named Defensive Coordinator to right now? I'm sure they are very different.**

A: Obviously, very different mixed emotions. Back in 1999, it was an opportunity when Coach Sandusky was retiring and Coach Paterno asked if I would like to be the Defensive Coordinator. It was a very different emotion back then. I was excited. It was a challenge. This one comes with very, very mixed emotions.

**Q: You've been a lifelong Penn State guy. What are your thoughts and emotions seeing this university's reputation being dragged through the mud across the country, around the world, over the past few days?**

A: Well, it's been very difficult. Very difficult to go through this but I'm confident that we will find a way to heal, to get back on track and to come together.

**Q: You said you were not aware of Sandusky allegations in 1999, were you aware of them in 2002?**

A: No.

**Q: When do you plan to sleep and are you planning on trying to see Coach Paterno in person before the game Saturday?**

A: I'll sleep when it's time to sleep. I will talk to Coach Paterno again in the near future, I'm not sure when I will. I think you know about Coach, I know he'll say, "Would you just stay focused on the task

at hand. You know what has to be done.” I know him well enough to say, “Take care of the kids. Take care of the team. I’m okay.” It’s just the way he’s going to be. I don’t think he would want me to come over to the house; he might kick me out anyway. He would tell me to, “Go do what you need to do.”

**Q: How do you get the players to really focus on just football admits all of this?**

A: One thing I have tried to do and I have made a point of doing is letting the captains do most of the talking. They are the guys the team selected to lead them. I let them do most of the talking. Together we will get this team ready to play.