

Joe Paterno News Conference

September 27, 2011

Q. Can you update us on D'Anton Lynn's condition and status?

COACH PATERNO: Lynn is, thank goodness, his prognosis is not as severe as we were scared to death of. And they're talking about he can start working out on Thursday.

The other kid (Michael Mauti) is going to have the knee operated on, so he's out for the year. Now, in Lynn's case, even though they may let him go Thursday, they tested him again for a concussion yesterday. And a lot of is medical stuff that probably ought to come from the doctors and the trainers, because there's nerves involved and some different things.

But the underlying fact is that Lynn is not anywhere near as severe as we were scared to death of. And the other kid's got the ACL and going to have it operated on. I guess when everything I - when it gets to the point where it's more effective....

Q. Just a follow-up on Rich's question about D'Anton Lynn, who are some of the corners who you may have to count on if he can't go? I was wondering specifically about Adrian Amos, the true freshman?

COACH PATERNO: We've played three (other) corners. We've played (Derrick) Thomas and (Stephon) Morris and we have played Lynn. We will not have the luxury of that kind of a round robin arrangement. But then the freshman kid Amos has done well when he's been in there.

So we'll have three kids ready. Obviously, you'd like to have Lynn, because Lynn's been in a lot of big games and Lynn's got the experience as opposed to sticking a freshman in there as westart to come down to Big Ten games.

But that's where we are. I think we're fortunate that we have a couple of these younger kids that can step in.

Q. What are your expectations for Nate Stupar now that he'll be on the field more for you? How has he handled the situation with Mauti going out?

COACH PATERNO: With Mauti out -- Stupar has gone out, we've had a little depth there. Mauti has been the leader of the group. Stupar has played well when he's been in there, and he has to rise to the occasion as will the other kids. (Gerald) Hodges has been a kid that's played well at times. Other times he's been a little bit -- just hasn't been as intense as you'd like.

You have to look at the situation and realize they have to come to the front. There again, I think there are two positions where we had some depth on both with Lynn and the other kid (Mauti). And you'd like to have them but we don't. That's the way the game's played.

Q. So far, how have the offenses been different with Rob Bolden at quarterback as opposed to Matt McGloin at quarterback?

COACH PATERNO: There's no difference, really. We go out there and they both practice the things that we do, that we can do as a team offensively.

So there's really nothing -- no difference. Now, when you get into a game, sometimes when a kid has a little hotter hand than the other one -- in fact, I think it's an advantage if you don't start at quarterback, as long as you know you're going to play because of the fact you're getting an opportunity from the sideline to see what the defense is doing, get a little feel for the pace of the game and so forth.

So when you go in, you don't have to make quite that adjustment that you do when you start a game, because you're never sure what you're going to get. For me to tell you we're going to get this, this and this by the defense against our offense is not -- I wish it was that easy. It isn't.

You are never quite sure what you're going to get. Everybody plays it a little bit differently. And good coaches adjust to what they think they have to do to stop you, because what we do may not be the same thing that somebody else does.

So I don't think that's a problem. I think both the kids understand where they are. And so far, so good.

Q. Derek Moyer, a couple of weeks ago against Temple, looked good on punt returns, I was wondering what your thought is on using him in that position as the season goes forward?

COACH PATERNO: I would agree with you. I think he has indicated at different times that he could be a very fine punt return guy. He's played a lot of football.

He played one ballgame, it may have been the Temple game, I don't know which one, he played 50 something plays. That's a lot of plays for a skill guy running, because there's -- in every single play he's running.

He may not get the football, but he may be running a 40-yard dash, clearing out the situation for somebody coming across or a back coming in the flat. So that's a lot of plays for him. But I think right now, and we had high hopes for Smitty (Devon Smith). So I think we got -- Smitty and (Justin) Brown are okay. And I think Moyer would be fine.

He might at the end of this week, depending on how hard we practice, how banged up we are and field position and all those kinds of things, as to whether Moyer will return punts or not. He practices every day when we go out there to do our kicking early, he catches punts every day. So if we want to use him, we can.

Q. You just said that sometimes it's a little better for the quarterback to adjust in starts. Do you plan to go the same way with both Bolden and McGloin as starter and reliever, or are you tempted to start McGloin and see how Bolden handles coming off the bench?

COACH PATERNO: No, we just plan each week going out and practicing. And there again, even though both of them are practicing the same things, one may be a little bit more adaptive to certain type of defense.

So we might have a tendency towards starting that guy until we get a feel for what's going on before we make the substitution. But as we talk right now, I couldn't tell you who we're going to start.

Q. Could you update Curtis Drake's situation? Is he close to 100 percent physically and how much is that impacting how much he's getting to play?

COACH PATERNO: I wish I could answer that in a more definitive way. I don't know. Drake is not 100 percent. They're letting him work. He's kind of calling the shots himself. If he gets tired, they want him to come out. Because that leg is not 100 percent, but there's nothing wrong with it except for the fact that it's not strong enough in some areas.

There again, I go back to what I said earlier about the medical people could probably give you a better idea as to what the situation is. Drake does not do a lot in practice; doesn't do as much as the other wideouts.

He's obviously a kid with an awful lot of ability, and we'd like to be able to just plug him in as a guy that we know is going to play 25, 30, 35 plays. But they're not sure he's ready for it. And I don't think Curtis himself feels he's ready for it.

I think he may have played eight, ten plays last weekend. We're trying to bring him along so that we don't jeopardize his future and yet keep him close enough so that when he feels really well that he can go in there and be a factor in the football game.

Q. There's been a lot of talk about losing Michael Mauti's leadership ability on the field. How big a transition do you think that will be for the guys taking over him, and what does losing an emotional leader like that mean to the team?

COACH PATERNO: As I said earlier, I think we have some kids that have been, I think (Devon) Still is obviously a very much underrated football player. I think Still is one of the better linemen in the country. Makes a lot of plays. Demands in some cases some double-teaming by the offense. He's been one of the captains, elected as one of the captains. (Drew) Astorino, elected as one of the captains. So we have some leadership on that team.

As I've said from day one, our biggest problem is a little bit more confidence in anticipating what we see so we can make some more plays. I'm still not comfortable that we can go out there and grab a couple of passes or make a couple of things happen for ourselves.

But I don't think it will be because we don't have Mauti or we don't have Lynn. I think we do have some kids that can do it that it's just a question now of some -- you tell me what it takes to get that done, I don't know.

I've tried to preach that since we came back after getting licked by Florida. We got licked by Florida. How many turnovers do we have? I don't know. So we're struggling a little bit along those lines, but it will not be because of the leadership that we lose in Mauti and Lynn.

Q. Kevin Wilson came into Indiana from Oklahoma. And I think he's tried to implement a lot of what he did at Oklahoma but he doesn't have Oklahoma personnel. How difficult is it for a coach to come into a situation from like he has in Indiana and try to replicate what he had at a powerhouse like Oklahoma?

COACH PATERNO: I'm not quite sure what you're asking. I'm not sure he's trying to do exactly what they did at Oklahoma because I really have not looked at a lot of Oklahoma. We don't play Oklahoma. What I see in Oklahoma would be when they may have played somebody we were going to play, or, like everybody else, once in a while on a Saturday night, the company's gone home and I'll turn on the television and watch it.

So I don't really know the background. Obviously he comes from a great young coach. He's probably not young anymore. Bobby Stoops has done a heck of a job. Bobby Stoops comes from a great football family. I knew his dad. Unfortunately his dad had a very premature death and Bobby's got a brother who is a head coach. So what's being done at Indiana right now might be what's been done at Oklahoma. I would think, if you throw me to the wall and said you've got to say something about it, I'd say if he's a good coach, which he is, he took a look at his personnel and said these are the things that we can do well, we can do what we've done and had success at Oklahoma, or looked at his squad and said, "hey, I wish we could do what we did at Oklahoma in this area but we've got to improvise a little bit. We've got to change some things. We've got to do what our players can do, not what Oklahoma players can do."

So I think that's where he is. I don't know him well. At a couple of Big Ten meetings where he's been there and a very impressive person. And I'm sure he will do a good job.

There's nothing against the team that they just played, but when you look at them (Indiana) at the beginning of the game there's three or four kids that have been first-stringers that didn't play. So he may be a discipline problem, may be an academic problem, I don't know.

But when those kids got back in the game that second half, they were -- Indiana was a much stronger, much better football team.

Q. You said earlier that Lynn could start practicing Thursday. But how long do you think it can be before he can actually get in the game?

COACH PATERNO: I also said you ought to talk to the doctor. I don't know. He's not in any kind of football gear on the field now. He's out there watching.

They have said -- they gave him an exam for concussion on -- they released him. I think he got released Saturday night after an examination, for a concussion. They gave him another one (test), and I talked to the doctors yesterday. They said they're still -- there's still a couple of problems with that.

If I had my sheet, I have him down, maybe he can do something after Thursday.

It's a tough call. You gotta be -- you've got to lean a little backwards right now.

Q. Do you have any updates on Beachum or Farrell?

COACH PATERNO: (Brandon) Beachum is not going to make it this week. Not yet. And (Mike) Farrell is going to make it this week.

Q. How do you think the rest of the offense has adjusted to the two-quarterback system and how does that factor --

COACH PATERNO: We're getting a little better. We've caught the ball a little better. When we lost to Alabama we didn't catch the ball very well and we didn't do a couple of things that we could have done. But I think we made some strides.

We've got a long way to go yet to be really, feel like we're as good as we -- not only as good as we can be, but as good as we're going to have to be.

But we've made progress. We're a little better today than we were last Tuesday.

Q. Is it a comfort level? Does the comfort level during the game, does that have an impact on which quarterback you go with?

COACH PATERNO: We've got two quarterbacks. You know, when I die they're going to give me two stones. One for dying and the other for being part of it, I guess, I don't know. I don't know.

The kids, it's all in the results. And I think both those kids (Rob Bolden and Matt McGloin) are doing a good job for us. My problem, as I've said, you guys have heard me say it 15 times: Our problem is not the quarterback. We've got two good, solid quarterbacks.

Are they the kind of kids that go around there and scramble and all that kind of thing? No. We're not built for that. Can we get the job done? Yeah, we've got to do the little things right. We can't have stupid penalties. We had four major penalties last week. Three of them were foolish. One was field position. We've got to kick the ball better. I mean, we've got to do -- there's a lot of things that surround success. And the quarterback's part of it. But our quarterbacking has been fine. That's not our problem.

Q. You mentioned late last year you thought the team could go about 8 and 3. You're 3 and 1 now heading into the Big Ten. Are you about where you thought you would be for this year, and how do you think look at the rest of this season with what the Big Ten can do?

COACH PATERNO: Did I say that last year?

Q. It sounded like it was you.

COACH PATERNO: I don't know. I must have been trying to get rid of you guys. I don't know. I'm trying to get this football team just to think about getting a little bit better each week.

If you ask me, "are we a better team this year going into our fifth game as compared to last year?" we're a better team this year than we were going into the fifth game. What's that going to determine as far as wins and losses, I don't know. I'm just trying to get us to play a little bit better this week and a little bit better the following week and see where we go.

But this team has been a little bit easier to coach. They've been a little bit more committed. They have a little bit more I don't want to say poise, maturity is the word I was struggling for, they are a little bit more mature. And I think overall they have a chance to be a good football team.

Are we good enough right now to say, "hey, let's just go out and maintain a certain level," no. We've got a long ways to go to be a really good team yet. But I think we can make it. I think we can. We haven't made it yet.

Q. This is the second knee injury for Mike Mauti. Do you sit down with him? Have you had a conversation with him about what his role will be to try to keep his spirits up?

COACH PATERNO: You try to keep his spirits up. There's nothing he can do about it. I think that's a tough thing for a kid. I don't care whether it's the first time you're injured, second time you're injured or what.

You work your butt off all winter, summer. Spring practice. Pre-season practice. You go out there all excited about playing. And, boom, one play and you can't do it.

So it's tough. It's tough. But you try to keep them encouraged and tell them, hey, that's what happens. Life is that way. And it's not fair all the time.

Q. I was wondering if you are aware that this is the 700th game that you're going to coach as a part of the Penn State program?

COACH PATERNO: I've coached 700 games? Well, I've done my penance. I've had 700 press conferences. I've done my penance. I'm on my way.

But, yeah, really honest to goodness that may sound like I'm being a phony, but I was unaware of it.