

**August 5, 2011**



An interview with:

## **COACH FERENTZ**

**COACH FERENTZ:** Sorry to keep everybody waiting. It wasn't that good. It wasn't like it was that great of practice. I just want to welcome everybody, first of all. Just recognize a couple people. First of all, Phil Haddy, I mentioned last week in Chicago. That was Phil's 40th time to the Big 10 media luncheon/outing what have you, and I think Phil's the only guy that worked through 40 of those events.

So just want to congratulate him on that, and thank him for his service to the university. And tip of the hat to you, Phil, great job there.

Also just want to recognize during the course somewhere back in June Matt Engelbert, our director of video operations, was voted national video coordinator by their association. It's really a nice honor and want to certainly recognize him as well.

I know earlier today Coach Fry visited with you. It's great to have Coach and Shirley in town. I think it's just a tremendous event, great for the whole idea of the ANF stickers, the story retold and recognition to a great initiative at a very important point in time when that took place. I think it's just fantastic that Coach Fry would come back and be part of that recognition.

Certainly appreciate the Iowa Farm Bureau being part of that celebration as well. I think all of us realize that we have an awful lot to be proud of certainly in this state, and the fact that we lead in so many areas agriculturally, producers of corn, soy beans, eggs, and ethanol. Certainly right now with the demand for food globally right now, I think that's all the more reason we can be very, very

proud of what this state does. It's great to have that recognition.

I think also just pertinent to that and one of the things that we grabbed on to, certainly it was part of the fabric and tradition of this program going back to '85 when it all came about. There are a lot of things that have dawned on me through the years. But one thing is that when I was here in the '80s, guys that wrestled, we had a lot of good players that wrestled growing up in this state. We had a lot of guys that grew up on farms or in farm communities that brought a lot of those great attributes that they were raised with through the program.

Recently a guy like Matt Kroul or Chad Greenway, I know Chad's not from the state of Iowa, but the way they operate, and the way they have great effort and self-discipline and knew how to persevere, that's one of the great things about it. I think we've got a tremendous state. That's something we can celebrate and we're happy about that.

Moving forward, this is season, a new year for us. We've got a new team and new opportunities in front of us. I'm sure we'll have new challenges as well. We're really eager to get going.

We don't have a senior class that approaches the numbers we had last year and 2002, our two largest classes, but we've got an excellent group that's ready to not only play well, but take a leadership role with our football team. So we're excited about that.

If you look at it defensively right now, we've got guys like Shaun Prater in the back end coming back, and Tyler Nielsen in the linebacker corps. Two guys up front that started through the years with Broderick Binns and Mike Daniels. Then on the offensive side with Marv McNutt being the senior receiver, Brad Herman at tight end, and Markus Zusevics, Adam Gettis started last year. So guys that I think are really ready to lead.

Then we have other guys that we expect to fill in some prominent roles, guys like Eric Guthrie, Lebron Daniel on the defensive line. Certainly Bruce Davis at linebacker and Jordan Bernstine, those guys are anxious to fight for an opportunity.

So it's a great group of seniors. We're counting on them to lead the football team and looking forward to that.

Then, obviously, we had a lot of losses last year. Lost some significant players at several positions, most notably, I think the defensive line in wide receiver position, the quarterback as well with Ricky Stanzi being a three-year starter. Then on special teams, Ryan Donahue did a great job for us, and Andy Schultz who is down in be Atlanta right now with the Falcons, our deep snapper.

So we've got a lot of guys that are going to have to be replaced, certainly. What we're looking for now is how things uncover themselves here in the next several weeks.

We've got a good group of guys. Underclassmen that have played. We expect them to play better this year, certainly. Got some guys that played a little bit. Looking for a bigger role and guys that haven't hit the field yet that we're counting on as well.

All that being said, we've got a lot of moving parts and we'll have a lot of moving parts through the month of August. My guess is it's a little like '08, we may have some moving parts into September as well.

As far as the schedule goes, the obvious thing is the news in the Big 10 with the expansion, which is old news now. Certainly Nebraska coming into the league. This is our first year with them in, and certainly with that, playing divisional play. I heard a lot of talk about both of those topics in Chicago. That was the dominant topic it seems at least.

At the end of the day, I'm not so sure how it affects us. The way I look at it, two teams came off our schedule in conference play, two other good teams came on. We lost Ohio State, we lost Wisconsin, and then we've gained Nebraska and we've gained Purdue, who is a very veteran team this year. They've got some injured players back.

They've had a couple of very close, but no cigar type seasons, but I think they're ready to make a move. So we're putting two additional tough, tough teams on the schedule. I think it's interesting that we're almost in a new conference, because we look at our conference play, and we have five new preparations and five staffs that we've never faced before on our conference

schedule, and then we have three more in the non-conference schedule, so eight total. It's almost like we were entering a new conference in some ways from that standpoint.

Lastly, we expect all the games to be tough starting with our opener, and I go back to the night of the championship game in the NCAA basketball. I reference that Butler lost to Youngstown State, I think it was, in February, and our youngest son was sitting on the couch. I looked at him and said, can you imagine these guys lost to Youngstown a couple weeks ago, and now they're playing Duke for the National Championship. He looked at me and said you almost lost to UNI in your opener in 2009.

It kind of dawned on me, a pretty good comparison, and ended up in the Orange Bowl. Just like I'm sure Butler wouldn't expect to go to the finals after their loss, and there weren't many people picking us to go anywhere certainly after our opener in 2009. That's what makes it interesting.

We've got 12 tough challenges on our schedule. What we need to do is worry about us right now. That's where our focus is. Then the last thing, just make quick reference, I think it certainly got out last week that Kyle Spading, one of our former players, was involved in a very serious accident several weeks ago. And Kyle remains in pretty serious shape right now.

He's getting great care at the University Hospital. His spirits are outstanding and he's got a tremendous attitude. He's going to need that moving forward. He's getting great support from his family, his friends and former teammates. He's certainly going to need great support moving forward.

It's a little like the young man at Rutgers, and the young man at Penn State about a decade ago. It's a tough road they face, and it all starts with their attitudes. So certainly our thoughts are with Kyle and our support is with him.

With that being said, I'll throw it out to questions and we'll go from there.

**Q. Yesterday the Big 10 announced plans to start a nine-game schedule. Can you comment on your reaction to that news?**

COACH FERENTZ: Two things: It's not a long ways off. It's a real long ways off. Six years is like a lifetime in football. By that time we may have 20 teams in our conference the way college

football's going right now, so I'm not too worried about it.

The one observation I'd make, I think we're going to like it a lot better when we have the five home games, that is one thing I started figuring out when they started discussing this years ago. So in the years you have five home games in conference, you're good. In the years you don't, not so good.

**Q. What about Brad Rogers? How's he doing?**

COACH FERENTZ: Brad continues to move forward. He's still under the care of the people at the hospital. We're optimistic, but it's cautious optimism right now. All that being said, we realize right now he's in camp. He's in the meetings, participating that way. But all of his treatment, exercise, rehab, all of that is being done in the hospital.

So I think we're getting closer. With a little luck, maybe we'll get Him back involved somewhere at the end of camp, but we'll take it a day at a time. The good news is it looks better every day. That's been a long wait, and hopefully we're going to have good resolution here shortly.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

COACH FERENTZ: I think we have other players, too, that are going to post throughout. We're expecting a lot out of Keenan Davis. He certainly came here to play good football, and we expect him to do that. Based on what we saw in the spring, we think he's capable.

Brad Herman is certainly a threat at tight end, and we're counting on C.J. Fiedorowicz and Zach Derby to help us there too. We hopefully will have a running game that people have to respect too. Our goal is always to be balanced offensively, and that's hopefully how it will turn out this year. But it takes players at all positions to do that.

I think a big concern for us right now is to continue to develop other players that can come in the game outside of the front line guys. We have a pretty good feeling about the front line guys, but we have a lot of work to do with the guys behind them.

**Q. How do you expect James Vanderberg to play?**

COACH FERENTZ: Expect him to play well. We felt if James had been called upon last year, I think he would have played very, very well based on what we saw at the end of the '09

season. He's a year better as a football player in my mind right now than he was a year ago at this time, and we all felt good a year ago.

I've made the point on the banquet circuits, sometimes good players get positioned behind other good players. The quarterback position is one of those that's hard to play the number two guy. The parallel I'd rather a year ago A.J. Eads graduated after being a three-year starter, and again that's a very important position in our defense.

We really didn't have much chance to play Tyler Nielsen, yet when he got his opportunity, he played really, really well, and he did because he prepared for that. We've seen him work the way he was supposed to work, and we feel the same way about James. So we expect him to play well.

That being said, it's going to be new to him. He's going to have ups and downs early. As it goes on, it's going to get better. I really believe that.

**Q. The move of Micah Hyde to free safety. Is that a permanent switch, and if so, what precipitated that?**

COACH FERENTZ: I'll go back to what I said a minute ago. I think the next four weeks, we have a lot of questions to answer, and a lot of things to look at. It's not like a desperate situation. It's just one of those situations where we have to assess things.

I think we'll be a very different football team as we get going here. We've only had one practice. But I think we'll be a different team than we were in April.

My guess is by the end of the month, maybe more so than some other years, we'll be a different looking team than we were when we started out here. That's a position and a lot of things that we're looking at and other positions, other players affect what we do with Micah.

The nice thing is we've had a chance to look at him in spring, we feel he can play that safety position well. That's an important position on our team too. Brett Greenwood did an outstanding job for two and a half years, and we just need to make sure we have someone that can handle that role. Maybe Tanner Miller, Kyle Steinbrecher can emerge and take that job. We can move Micah back out, or maybe one of the guys at the corner position are better than those guys that are back-up free safeties.

So we're looking at a lot of things. We feel confident that Micah can play free safety, and we know he can play corner. So he's a little bit of a luxury for us right now.

**Q. If you look at Dominic Alvis, his weight, size kind of the sum of Mitch King or Karl Klug a few years ago. Is that his make-up and his motor?**

COACH FERENTZ: I'd probably compare him more to Karl in that he's a little more linear than Mitch and Matt Kroul, but, you know, some parallels. The other parallels are he's moved inside last spring. We played him inside predominantly, and he really did a good job. So I think he's got position, flexibility kind of like Micah. It's not quite the same, but it's not always easy to play in and out.

Again, that will give us some flexibility depending on who is doing the best. But one thing, at the end of the day, we're probably looking at playing six to eight guys on that defensive front, where in the last couple of years we pretty much played five. For good reason, we had three NFL players up there.

I think it's going to be more of a committee effort right now. We have high hopes for Dominic. We think he'll do some good things for us.

**Q. Coach, can you talk a little about your depth at running back position?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, there's not much. That's a quick discussion. I say that jokingly, but that's one of the things we're looking forward to in August. Certainly Markus Coker showed a lot of good things last year once he got healthy and got back out on the field. I said back in Chicago, one of the most impressive things he did last year was the way he was practicing pretty well. When he got able to get back on the field from a health standpoint, it was clear that he had paid attention.

That's unusual when a player improves when they're not practicing, but I thought he did that. So his attitude was good that way. Certainly I thought the other highlight was the third down run he had in the second half of the Bowl game. He got his pads on a little bit and ran over one of the safeties from the other team and went on for another 10, 15 yards. If he can run more efficiently or smarter, that's going to help him.

But we've got something to work with there. After that, we're counting on Jason White right now to do a nice job. Jason's been strong in

our program in a lot of areas. We see improving. De'Andre Johnson wasn't at full speed last fall. He looked better in the spring. We need him to continue to progress and we'll look at the newcomers as well.

**Q. How big of a role do you see Marvin McNutt having on the offense here?**

COACH FERENTZ: In a perfect world we'd like to get the ball to Marvin. Get the ball to all of our skill guys, but certainly our running back and our offense is a good, prominent position for us. We count on that player to be productive.

We've had big guys like Shonn Green, we've had little guys like Fred Russell that have played well and they've pretty much been the sole player and sole running back during their careers, at least when they were featured in '02, '03 and '08.

In a perfect world hopefully we can spread it around a little bit, but we're counting on Markus to do a good job. But I thought he improved in the spring, so that's a good sign too.

**Q. Do you know of any incoming freshmen who reported to your program this summer that might make an impact on your team this year?**

COACH FERENTZ: I think we're not ruling anybody out right now. We're excited to have them all here. I'll start with one from left field, Marshall Koehn who just got done playing in a pretty impressive baseball season. I've heard a lot of great things about him. We're eager to see him compete.

If a true freshman can walk in here and earn some playing time or get it by default, hopefully that's not the case. But if they can earn some, we're trying to win today. So we're going to give everybody a chance to play and contribute.

**Q. Are you tired of answering the Nebraska questions yet?**

COACH FERENTZ: Getting close, but it's not bad.

**Q. I was going to ask you how important a game you think this will be?**

COACH FERENTZ: I think they're all going to be important, all 12 of them. I know it's going to be a tough game. Two things, it's pretty much a constant they're going to have a good

team. That's one of the reasons they were so attractive in the expansion talks. Outstanding school, outstanding tradition, tremendous people involved.

They've had great success since Coach Pelini came back there. Seen them on film, they're an excellent football team on both sides of the ball. It will be tough from that front and it will be tough going over there. We've been there twice, and it's not an easy place to play, but I think it's a great thing.

There are a lot of great stadiums and environments in our conference, now we've added one more. So I think it's going to be a great thrill for all of us to be associated with that game.

**Q. On a less serious note, we're talking about Nebraska. What did you think of the Nebraska media guy asking for the autograph last week?**

COACH FERENTZ: It was unique. It was unique. Just trying to help him out.

**Q. James Morris is a guy that came in as a true freshman last year and didn't play like it. Two part question, one, how big of a role is he going to be for this defense this year? Two, what is it about him that's allowed the coaching staff and his teammates to have such trust and faith in him?**

COACH FERENTZ: To the last point, he's earned it. Everything he does, he does it the way you would hope a player would do. He works hard from a physical standpoint. He's extremely conscientious and detailed. He's a mature young man. Easily beyond his years.

But his approach, boy, that's what you're looking for. You get that in a player and that's a great thing. He's fairly skilled on top. So that's a great combination, a rare combination. It's a great teaching point with great illustration, because I think the reality is I'm pretty sure we played Arizona the week before if I'm not mistaken. He's on the plane taking pictures of the cactus and all the stuff they've got down there. Next thing you know Bruce Davis gets hurt in that ballgame. Maybe we had a game in between, but a week later or two weeks later now all of a sudden he's second team. Little bit more interesting in the middle of the game, he's in there playing against Penn State on national TV on a Saturday night game.

It's just funny how things can happen. I talked about challenges that take place in a

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season, that was one of them for us last year, injuries at the linebacker position. Fortunately James was ready to go. Credit goes to him he had prepared himself. Not unlike Marcus Coker because he had done the same thing on the other side of the football. That's what you're hoping for.

But we tell our players right now, every guy sitting in the meeting room, great illustration, Sam Brownlee in '04, he might have quit if he knew what he was going to have to do that year. If he knew in August what was in front of him, but you never know. That's one of the great things.

So you hope the players are working hard to prepare for that opportunity.

**Q. Punt returns, who are your top three guys so far?**

COACH FERENTZ: We'll play it by ear. But couple names I'd throw out there right off the bat. It dawned on us that Micah Hyde might be a guy we look closer at in the return game. Then also Marvin McNutt's a guy we trust back there as well. So those are a couple of guys.

That's another question this August. Good news is I think we have a healthy list of return candidates, both on kickoff and on the punt team. We've been in situations where we've had guys injured and really gotten pretty thin. That's not a good thing.

**Q. Can you talk a little about the cornerback battle, the opposite of Prater, Castillo, Lowery and those guys?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, I think right now the two prominent names would be Greg Castillo and B.J. Lowery, and then yeah, Jordan Bernstein's in that equation.

It's like Micah, he's also competing at the strong safety position, so all those guys are a year better. You know, I'd say they've all improved. Certainly B.J. last year was just a guy that was in here as a young guy. I think he's really made strides. It's interesting competition and as much as any position I think right now, that's the one that I'd be most hesitant to try to predict because it's going to be interesting to see how the guys go here in the next four weeks or so.

**Q. Are you hoping by the end of August to be able to sort out whether it will be Wienke or Derby behind James?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, it's important

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that we do. James still has to hold his job too. But I think he's clearly right now ahead of the group. You know, we need to assess that position. We've got that going on in a lot of positions, but that's a real key one.

Again, it's really hard to split reps with the number two quarterback, hard to give the number two quarterback work period. So at some point we're going to have to figure that out.

**Q. How was it after losing a quarterback like Ricky, to know that you're comfortable with having a guy to hand the reigns over to than having a QB battle wide open?**

COACH FERENTZ: What we had last year was unusual. It's a nice feeling going into a game with two guys. Not many NFL teams have that luxury, certainly, not many college teams do. Last year we felt pretty comfortable that we had both of those positions covered.

We have a month here to see where we're at, and hopefully those guys will respond. I think they will.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, I think realistically we probably will. Ryan Donahue, I'm not shocked, but I was a little surprised he didn't get drafted. We had Jason Baker 10 years ago or 11 years ago whatever it may be now, that is still punting.

So when you lose a guy, we've had good luck with punters all the way through. I think Eric Guthrie will do a great job. But when you lose an NFL punter, it's like losing a player at any position. It's a big dent, but we'll be okay.

Eric is one of our more improved guys on the entire roster. I think he's worked hard. Some of the other guys we've talked about, he's a very conscientious young guy. So he'll go out there and do well.

Same thing, he might be up-and-down early, but I think he'll settle down and go. There is another position where we've got to get a number two guy ready just in case.

**Q. Must be good with all the experience you have back there?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, we do. More than a year ago, for sure. It's almost like a flip. Last year we had a lot of experience coming back on the defensive line. This year it's the other way around. The offensive line I thought performed

pretty well. I thought they improved as the season went on. Key thing for them to do is keep doing what they did last year and improve every week. They should.

I think those guys have guys that want to be good, but they've got work to do. We've still got a lot of work to do. It will be fun to watch them go. The fact that we have defensive guys that have played, it should help our defensive guys that haven't played and that should bring them along a little quicker.

**Q. Coach, last year there were high expectations on this program talking National Championship contention. This year it's kind of shifted to some other programs. What are your thoughts in the pundits this year that seemed to have you under the radar a little bit more?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, I've been through that before. I don't worry about external stuff a lot because it's external. I think if you go back and track it, and somebody put notes together for me this morning. I read that we were picked 30th in one poll, 28th in one poll, 30th in another. I have no idea what polls.

But I think if you go back and look at history, preseason poles outside of maybe a '99, really haven't had much bearing, where we end up. So I don't worry too much about them. I'm worried about what we're doing over there that's going to count right now.

**Q. How do your goals shift now? Before it was all about winning the Big Ten title, now do you talk about winning the division first? How do you shift the goals with the guys?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, I think you want to win both. We've added one more thing. It used to be we were trying to play to win the Big Ten title and play 13 games. You know, I'm astute math guy. You want to play 14, get 13 and one more.

The good news is if you lose that 13th game, at least you're going to go to a good Bowl. I imagine both teams that play in a championship game are going to go to nice destinations for the most part.

But, yeah. We still play eight conference games. I heard one of the other coaches. I learned something last Friday during the interview

session. One of the coaches said the games in your division are weighed a little more than the other, which I didn't make it to calculus, so all I know is we want to win those games. We want to win them all.

Those first four games count too. That helps you go to warmer climates at the end of the year. They all count. They're all important, and we'd love to play in a championship game. We've never been in one of those, obviously.

**Q. Last year you had some troubles in the fourth quarter. Have you been able to pinpoint and look back at what those struggles were against those teams you lost to?**

COACH FERENTZ: My thoughts on that, and I mentioned it last week, I think sometimes it's easy to oversimplify what it was. Sometimes it's as simple as the last drive or the last two minutes of the game. Last four minutes in some cases. There are other times, many other times where it's how you played earlier in the game, first half or first three quarters.

I can think of a couple of games where we really squandered some opportunities, both recently. I can think of a game in '05 where we had three straight offensive plays in the third quarter where we just didn't execute any of the three. They were all basic things that we did first day of practice.

Then had to kick a field goal attempt, attempt a field goal instead of being down inside the 10, we're out there, missed the field goal and then lose in the last 20 seconds of the game. So that's kind of how I look at it. Yeah, maybe we could have stopped that team in the last two minute drive, but the door was wide open in the third quarter, and we screwed that up.

There are a lot of things that go into it. To your point, we've spent a lot of time looking at things. Hopefully we'll be smarter, better, and more competitive in those situations. If we're not, we're just not moving forward, and that's our goal.

**Q. Do you anticipate any restrictions on Norm Parker health-wise or is he healthy and ready to go?**

COACH FERENTZ: He went through a very difficult circumstance last year, obviously. Norm has a prosthetic now, that's a matter of fact. He's dealing with it a lot better now than eight months ago, which is great. It was good having him back in December, which is good on all fronts. The biggest thing I've said there is try to encourage

him to examine his methodology in season, the way he goes about things.

But it's tough. We all have our routines. We all get entrenched in the way we do things. We don't need as much from him right now as we did 12 years ago, but we need his wisdom, his guidance, his leadership. That's what we're looking for.

At some point he's going to have to learn how to shut the door, neighboring a nap maybe and relax a little bit. But none of us can work like we did 20 years ago, I think. Most of us can't, I know I can't. We've just got to adjust a little bit. Hopefully he'll do that, take care of his diet and doing all the things pably all of us should be doing.

**Q. Considering the way the season went last year, and as tumultuous as things were in the off-season, are guys more keyed up and focused coming into this game?**

COACH FERENTZ: I don't know about that and all the adjectives. But you know the whole idea is to learn from the past whether it was good, bad or indifferent, and hopefully it will be better as we move forward. We look at those things as teaching opportunities.

We talk about them a lot. We say what could we have done better? What did we do well? Why do we have success? Why did we fail? And we try to move forward. That's been our approach for 12 years. We're going into 13, and we'll continue to operate the same way.

**Q. Do you address social media with your players every year now?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, and on a more frequent basis now. I like to Twitter them all the time to remind them not to do dumb things and what have you. But it's a big part of life, and you don't have to look too far anymore to see examples. We have tons of great teaching examples.

We have addressed it. We'll continue to address it. Basically the message to our players is whatever they choose to put on social networks or however they choose to use them, basically if they're out in public.

A good example this summer, a guy thought he was doing an innocuous interview on a phone camera, and it ended up being national news. It's different than it was 20 years ago. Our players have to assume they're in the public eye

pretty much at all times and have to act accordingly.

**Q. Did you get a Facebook page yourself?**

COACH FERENTZ: I'm working on it. Maybe during the bye week, it will give me something to do.

**Q. As all-encompassing as the world of college football has become, what is your average work week like during the season?**

COACH FERENTZ: You just do what you have to do to get your job done. Same as our players to do, our coaches. That's pretty much what we're going to do.

**Q. Can you guess how many hours you work?**

COACH FERENTZ: It's kind of like when you run, about 30 years ago I used to play football or whatever, 35 I guess longer. Never count sprints. If you're a runner, you just don't count them. You just do it.

**Q. You seem pretty easy going on the sidelines. Do you think your players respond to that?**

COACH FERENTZ: You'd have to ask them. I don't know. Usually there is a reason.

**Q. Did the division alter any kind of recruiting patterns or anything?**

COACH FERENTZ: I'm not following you totally there, maybe.

**Q. With the new divisional layout, the teams that are in your division, do you recruit differently to pose those teams as opposed to the entire league or do you continue to do what you do?**

COACH FERENTZ: I'm not sure I'm getting the point. But the biggest thing I see changing now is I would anticipate Nebraska moving more. They haven't done an awful lot in Big Ten areas, but I expect to see them show up a little bit more maybe in some of our regions from Iowa on east. So we expect them to be in the competition with us a little bit more. Otherwise I don't know how it's going to affect us.

**Q. (Indiscernible) after practice, laughing about something that happened in practice with your son or something like that?**



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COACH FERENTZ: Occasionally. We're pretty much -- he does his deal and I do mine. Every now and then I might steal a moment, but it's probably not as frequent as you might think, yeah. He probably doesn't always think it's funny, either, because I get to watch everything he does now. In high school, I couldn't do that, but now I've got pretty much everything on what he's doing, so it's fun. He probably doesn't think that's fun.

**Q. What about Riley Reiff thinking about the NFL?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, that's a new phenomenon too. Ten years ago I don't think everybody had our juniors going to the NFL, but now that's like a big topic too. He's got to learn to deal with it, as do some other good juniors around the country.

It was a big change last January. I told our guys, our staff, we had a bunch of juniors in here for a visit before our students returned back to campus for the first day of spring semester. We had a fairly significant group of juniors in this facility here, and we hosted them on a Sunday afternoon, and at the same time I was actively recruiting three players on our own roster to stay on the team.

I can't remember doing that. I just can't remember doing that, but that is a sign of the times. Just like the social media networks and all that stuff. They probably go hand in hand.

You know, that's his decision to make. Right now he needs to worry about getting better, and I know that's what he's thinking about and playing well this year. If there's a decision to make, he'll make it. But I'm going to ask him. I don't even have to tell him. I know how Riley is. He's not worried about that stuff.

**Q. Can you talk about the NFL draft and players that come from your team to the NFL? Surprise isn't the right word, but the rate that they come from your team to the NFL, it's good for the head coach?**

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, we're proud of that. First thing we want them to do is graduate. We made that point again last night. Everybody's sitting in the room last evening, and we'll have probably another 10 players join us here when school starts. Every guy on the team has the opportunity to graduate. They should graduate. Really if they don't, it's because they choose not to.



Not every guy's going to play in the NFL. Be nice if they did, but that's fantasy football there. First things first, we want them to get their degrees. If they have a chance to play football, it's a dream for everybody, I'm sure, that plays collegiate football to try to play in the NFL.

So I'm really happy for their opportunities. If we've helped them along the way, that's a great thing. We feel happy about that too. Most of them would tell you that their experience here has helped move them along.

But we're not in the business of trying to make pro football players. Just like if I was a high school coach, I wouldn't be worried about producing scholarship players. You want to do your best to produce good high school football players and guys that are doing things right in all areas. Same thing in college, we want guys that are good college players and can compete.

It's coincidental what we do offensively, special teams, defensively, it fits into what NFL teams do. But that wasn't why we chose to do things that way.

But I know they enjoy it, the scouts and personnel people enjoy it when they come in, because they get to watch our players do things that they'll have to do in the NFL instead of trying to project them. The kind of throws they make, routes they run, running backs running not necessarily out of a shotgun option type attack, that type of thing. Our guys are getting trained that way.

On defense, we play defense that's compatible to what a lot of folks do, so that may help them a little bit. At the end of the day, the credit goes to them. They're the guys that work hard, and it takes a lot of hard work to get there and takes even more work to stay there. That's a pretty competitive place.

**Q. In the NFL, one of the first preseason games is Chiefs-Bucs. Do you think Adrian Clayborne will get a chance to sack Ricky Stanzi?**

COACH FERENTZ: He'll get a chance, probably, that would be my guess. I hadn't thought about that one. You're way ahead of me there. I'm sure he'll be trying. I'm sure Ricky will be trying to get the ball out of there. It's great for both of them.

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