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5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

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San Diego State Football Press Conference Feb. 24, 2022

Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening statement:

"We're excited spring ball starts on Monday. (It's) phase two of the program. We've had a really good phase one. The effort that our guys and what they've done in the weight room from pushing themselves individually and pushing themselves as a group, I'm happy with what we've done so far (including) our 6 a.m. runs on Tuesday and Thursday. (The) meetings have gone well. Walk throughs have gone well. The one thing about this football team as we start phase two it's a very, very, very young football team. You look at the offensive line you have two veterans back who have played a lot of football with Alama (Uluave) and Brandon Crenshaw-Dickson. Those other guys are all going to be guys who have taken some snaps, but not many. The way that they've progressed so far has been good and we'll see where we're at."

On Jalen Mayden moving from quarterback to safety:

"We have made that move. (We're) excited about it, just watching him do some things from a physical standpoint. I think it's going to be something that could really good for us and really good for him."

On having six former players being invited to the NFL Combine in March:

"Obviously we're really proud of the guys who have the opportunity and are going to the combine. We give our input when asked. (Assistant Athletic Director - Strength & Conditioning) Adam Hall probably speaks more than anybody to those scouts that come in. He kind of organizes everything that we do that way. He does a nice job. When we have Pro Day we'll have some input with (the scouts) when they come in."

"I would think if I'm a guy that has those aspirations and those dreams to go play at the next level, when you are getting recruited and (see) San Diego State has six guys going to the combine, I would think that would maybe fit in the decisions somewhere. You can go to San Diego State and, because they've proven it and they've done it, you could go to the combine."

On defensive line coach Jordan Thomas taking a job with the Cleveland Browns:

"We knew it a little bit sooner than anybody else obviously. I think it's a great step for Jordan. I'm real excited for him. I think he'll do a great job of learning. He was a sponge when he was here and we're really excited about it."

On the importance of having Mike Goff work with young offensive linemen this spring camp:

"I've been doing this a long time, and I've seen guys who have been really good college players and then they go into the National Football League and they come back and they want to get into coaching. They want to get into coaching and they're not very good. And I've been around enough to watch guys from the development phases to drill work and what they do. Everything that goes into developing a football player - an offensive lineman, a defensive lineman. The one thing I can tell you Mike does is he's very thorough. He's very good with the fundamentals. He has a great demeanor. I don't know much, but I know if I was a young man and I had an opportunity to be tutored and taught how to play offensive line from a guy who has done it at its highest level, and did it for many years at the highest level I'd be deeply involved in the decision"

making of going to San Diego State because of Mike. He is really a good teacher and he does it with a really good demeanor. Sometimes you yell at guys a little bit and you've got to kiss them on the cheek, and he does that also."

On any players to hold out of spring football because of injuries:

"Noah Avinger and Dallas Branch both had shoulder surgery. They will be non-contact guys but they'll be able to do a lot as far as everything else. They just won't have contact. They've run most of the winter conditioning phase one stuff. Right now they're the only two guys that we're significantly worried about."

On if the success you have in the fall is predicated on what happened in the spring:

"I think it's a couple of things. I really liked how last year's team approached phase one, the winter conditioning part and the competitive edge that they built as a team. Then we were a little older, which helps. Spring went well. Phase two went well. Both sides of the ball had maturity. This will be different. I really believe that. It can be different in a good way. We're just going to be a little immature. We don't have probably the depth that you like and the depth that we'll have in the fall. I think there's four more offensive linemen coming in that will be really important in the development. I like the work ethic. I like the leadership that we have so far. We've got to fundamentally play fast and physical. We always have a standard of performance that we talk about. As coaches we'll become what we tolerate. If we're not going to push their butts and get them going then we'll have a sloppy, very immature football team next season and we can't have that."

On the quarterback competition:

"I always believe that competition has to be there. We're not just going to hand the guy the job. If you remember Will (Haskell) through last year he was the second quarterback for a while in some situations. He throws a nice ball. He's learning the offense. Obviously game experience Braxton (Burmeister) has quite a bit but I think it's always got to be competitive. And I don't treat this too different than who's going to be the offensive center. It's got to be competitive. If we're not competing every day and if we're not getting better every day, then we are failing these kids on this football team."

On if he'll still have a role helping out with the defensive line:

"I was around a lot since I've been back as the head coach. I'll have a role. I'll keep my hand in it. It keeps me grounded when you get a little dirty. Cameron (Thomas) used to run me over now and then. It's all good for you."

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