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An Interview With:

## KANSAS STATE COACH BILL SNYDER

PETER IRWIN: We're now joined at the podium by Coach Bill Snyder from Kansas State.

Coach, you want to make an opening statement? You generally don't, but if you choose to do so, we'd love to have you do it.

COACH SNYDER: I don't. Welcome to all of you. We appreciate having you here. I'm about to lose my voice.

PETER IRWIN: We'll take questions from the floor.

**Q. Did you make a decision on your knee, what you're going to do about it, whether you're going to have surgery or not?**

COACH SNYDER: No, we prolonged it, and it's gotten too late. So we're going to have to put it off until after the season. So I'm still not sure whether we will or won't. Depends on whether I decide to go back to playing golf or not.

**Q. Feels like everybody knows a lot about your running back Daniel Thomas, but who really impressed you this spring off your defense?**

COACH SNYDER: Off of our defense? Well, we have a young man with us today, Tysyn Hartman, who's gone through some injuries. I was pleased with him being back on the practice field and pleased with the progress that he made during the course of the spring, and he's a transformed quarterback/safety. That's maybe a little easier transition than a lot of people might think, but still a difficult one.

I was happy with how well he did in a lot of different ways. I think he contributed dramatically in reference to leadership, I think he's developing into that capacity, which is extremely important.

I think a year ago, one of the needs of our program that I probably emphasized while I was here was the development of quality leadership throughout our program. Tysyn has certainly contributed to that.

**Q. Bill, there's been a lot in the news lately about sports agents and kids. What do you all do at Kansas State to deal with your kids about that? How big of a concern is that to you?**

COACH SNYDER: Well, it's always been a major concern. We have sessions with our youngsters. We bring some people in to visit with our youngsters. You know, we try to encourage the young people and their families -- I think you have to communicate with the families as well.

It's our preference, what we ask of our players and families, is that when contacted by outside sources that they share with them that at the end of the season that they would certainly be willing to visit with them; if they persist in the calls that they make that they would exclude them from the possibility of serving in a representative fashion that individual.

We put together a panel, myself, a member of athletic department, and someone from appropriate fields, business fields, law fields, to meet with prospective agents that youngsters might be interested in so their families can come to campus and sit down and, quote/unquote, interview prospective representatives. The program, we run checks with the NFL and the players association and some other areas to determine background on individuals that show an interest in our youngsters.

But nevertheless, it's still -- I mean, that doesn't necessarily stop the onslaught, and programs can still exist. I don't believe that it always takes place exactly as I would like. Is it an issue? I think it's a major issue in college athletics.

**Q. Coach, I was wondering if you could just talk about the quarterbacks really quick and then also, although Daniel is going to face**

**a lot of defenses, I was wondering if you could also talk about the wide receivers and the capacity they could serve this offense this season.**

COACH SNYDER: Well, the quarterback situation that you ask about -- and I know you know the answer already. We came out of the spring with three young guys that were viable contenders for the number one quarterback spot. Is that good or bad? You could make a case either way.

We'll go into the fall with three young guys competing for the number one position. I can't tell you that I have an answer in regards to who that individual might be. The positive aspect of that is that all three of them will diligently compete, and consequently I think that makes themselves and each other better. I honestly believe that. I also understand the downside.

But, nevertheless, it is what it is. We just do not have a clear-cut number one right now. The first snap that the quarterback will take with our number ones will be Carson Coffman. Came out of the spring not necessarily as the number one, but that individual will take the first rep, and then Collin Klein and Samuel Lamur, and all three of them, I think, will compete diligently. I think all three of them were better at the end of the spring than they were at the beginning. I'd like to think that they are making improvements as the summer progresses. That will be determined when we begin on the 4th of August.

And we'll hopefully make improvement day in and day out, and we'll make a selection as soon as it's clear cut in our minds.

**Q. And on the wide receivers?**

COACH SNYDER: You know, I think there's a lot of people -- we're a very broad based offense, always have been. That's been our intent from day one. We've always attempted to be as balanced an offense as we possibly can. Some days that's -- we've been able to do so. Sometimes we haven't. It is important for us to have significant skill level in a variety of different positions in order not to be an offense that is reliant on solely one individual such as you mentioned, our running back Daniel.

We have to be able to spread the ball around. We have to find a variety of different ways to do it, which is ingrained in our offense. So our wide receivers become a major factor in that regard.

We're inexperienced at that position. I think somebody told me the other day that we returned five catches outside of Daniel at the wide receiver position. I don't know if that's accurate or not, but someone shared that with me.

So inexperience is a factor, but I've also been pleased with the progress we made during the course of the spring. I think it has to continue in the fall. There's certainly a lot of improvement to be made. I think we'll be a bigger, more physical receiver corps than what we were a year ago, but experience is still a factor.

**Q. Just wondering, I know you've done a lot of junior college recruiting over the years. How much have you done in Mississippi vis-a-vis Daniel Thomas, and did he have any transition issues going from the South to the Midwest?**

COACH SNYDER: Daniel is, as I mentioned, a very pleasant young person and very team oriented, and he's very easy to communicate with, and he gets along with everyone.

So I don't think -- now, I'm not speaking for Daniel, but I don't think there are any transition issues that were apparent. You'd certainly have to ask him about that, but I think he was so well received when he came to Kansas State, to Manhattan, Kansas, received well by his teammates, received well by the people that surround him, support staff and coaches. So I think if there were any transition problems they were very minimal.

**Q. Have you done a lot of Mississippi recruiting in JUCOs there?**

COACH SNYDER: Not a great deal, but in the past 20-some-odd years, we recruited community colleges, and that's been a source of young people for our program, and they come from all over the country, both coasts certainly, the Midwest. We have quite a few community colleges, football-playing community colleges in the state of Kansas as well.

**Q. Bill, are you getting any help from your colleagues on your desire to have a championship game? Nobody seems very excited about it except you.**

COACH SNYDER: Well, I haven't -- in all honesty, I haven't visited with any of them about it. Yes, I am a proponent of the championship game.

You know, I don't exactly know how to play out. I can understand both sides of the fence. I just know, speaking on behalf of myself and our program, I think it's been very beneficial to Kansas State University.

I see a lot of schools in our conference that it's been a great benefit too. I like the concept. I think it's great for our conference.

You see other conferences now that are moving in that direction that didn't have a championship thing. I think they see the value of it. It's a little harder in the situation that we're in right now, and I can understand both sides of the discussion, but, you know, it's my personal feelings that I enjoy that. It's been good for Kansas State. I appreciate it and always have. I thought it was a great conference as well.

**Q. Coach, your thoughts on playing two Thursday night games. Seems kind of unusual. Also, can you talk about playing Nebraska, I believe, for the final time in a while at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.**

COACH SNYDER: Thursday night ball games, it's part of the TV-driven direction that college football has gone. I think it's great for the viewing audience. I can appreciate it in that respect.

I think for Kansas State, you know, considering where we're located and the distance that people have to come, it's not always my preference to do that. We have working-class people coming from western Kansas. It's pretty hard for them to make a Thursday night game and get back for Friday workday. So weekends are probably a preference in that respect.

PETER IRWIN: Coach, thank you.

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