



ROCK CHALK JAYHAWK
QUOTES
// 2019 KANSAS FOOTBALL

HEAD COACH LES MILES // AUGUST 16, 2019

Opening statement...

"I like the direction of our team. We have had two major scrimmages in two small situation scrimmages and it has been a good tough team, been a good hard camp up until now and a lot of really competitive practices. Those of you that have visited us have seen the Jayhawk drill and it is one that our guys have enjoyed and looked forward to, if you can look forward to defeating a teammate in hand-to-hand combat. I like where we are at. The newcomers, Mason Fairchild at tight end is a guy who is going to play significant football for us. (DaJon) Terry, nose tackle, same 6'4", 330 pounds, but a really talented guy. Gavin Potter has moved from inside linebacker to outside linebacker and has made the transition extremely well, has a real knack for play. Steven Parker, outside linebacker, young guy that is really doing excellent work. Marcus Harris, defensive tackle that joined us, is also a guy that is playing a lot of football. I have never handed out scholarships to walk-ons in a loud, public way because there are probably ten, fifteen, twenty guys who are tremendously responsible and play for us on a day-to-day basis that don't have scholarships. I've always kept it between me and the young man who is going to get the scholarship, but this guy is different and special. He is a 4.0 student, he is tougher than nails, you recognize the name because of how he plays and everybody was for it. I talked with my staff and obviously did not tell the team until we walked in. When Sam Burt was announced, the team came out of their seats to the front of the room to congratulate him and just before the announcement and as it was displayed there was going to be some information forth coming, somebody said in the distance 'I hope it's a scholarship.' Then his team, in an outpouring of emotion, just loved on him. It was sweet. It was a wonderful experience and it was a first-time opportunity for me to do that in public."

On the quarterbacks...

"(Thomas) MacVittie and Carter Stanley are still the front runners. There is a (Manny) Miles lad that is there competing. Torry Locklin, Miles Fallin, Miles Kendrick are guys that all took snaps in what was yesterday's scrimmage. I made it very clear and very quickly that there would be no chance if you weren't 6'3" and above or if your last name or first name or any name was Miles that you would have a better chance than if in fact you didn't have a Miles associated to your name. MacVittie is a height piece, Stanley is a height piece, Manny Miles of course has a chance, Miles Kendrick certainly has a chance and Miles Fallin certainly has chance because we like Miles kids."

On what is waiting to see from the quarterbacks...

"I like how they are progressing. They are not perfect, but they are making all the throws. Everything just needs to be a little bit more consistent. I think they are doing the things they need to do. I've always waited until the end. Here is an example. Somebody gets nicked and you have just announced all of your confidence and this is the guy and let me pat him on the back one more time and suddenly he comes up a little lame and you're playing the guy that you did not give vote of encouragement. My opinion is these guys are real close. They both know they are close and we will let it play out."

On if anything has surprised him since he has taken the job...

"There is nothing that surprises me anymore with the number of years and three head coaching opportunities that I have had so I know what's coming and what to expect from my players and coaches. To answer you, I've anticipated where we would be and I was pleased. I think I got really good players, I think I have good men. I think the people that will take the field for Kansas will care for the guys who wear that same blue. I think it will be a challenge to win games and to win championship. I think we will be ready for the challenge."

On Gavin Potter...

"We do our own evaluation. We don't use anyone else's evaluation. We don't take anyone else's evaluation. We look at the guys and we see motility, two-time state champion in wrestling. In his film from high school, he knew how to play it. He made tackles. He was in. We recruited him and I'm an ex-grappler and I enjoyed hearing stories of what he went through. It was pretty easy. Nobody had to be sold. He was and is a really, really good player."

On goals he has accomplished and ones he hopes to accomplish...

"I think team toughness is one thing and we are continuing to push that. I think our guys understand that. They understand that when they take the field they have to be ready to play in difficult situations let alone be able to return the physicality that your opponent is willing to play with. As for second goals, our football team needs to improve. It needs to approve across three boundaries: offense, defense and special teams. We are doing that and I want to get our first game played and underway and see exactly where we are at. I like who we are, I like how we play in practice and I think we will fare well. The standard will be after the first game."

On if there has been a change with the players with the buzz going around about the team

"I think our players anticipated that there would be a new feeling here. I have asked them to be responsible to that and they have. It has been a wonderful piece. Now in terms of social media, the reception of Kansas football I didn't know what to expect. It seems that there is a very strong positive feeling here. I kind of like it."

On camp battles outside of the quarterbacks...

"I am looking at the secondary and the Hawk position where someone who is going to play significant football. It looks like Bryce Torneden is going to be moved a little bit towards a safety spot and Azur Kamara will be more of the Hawk. I am not certain how that is going to play out. But those are two really good players."

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On the offensive line...

"The good news is that Luke Meadows, the offensive line coach, has got a nice rotation. I hadn't seen it much before but all of our guys are almost interchangeable parts. It is really given us a lift. I think we are very comfortably too deep. Hakeem Adeniji in my opinion is one of the bright tackles in our conference at left tackle. Malik Clark is going to be a big, strong man so I mean there are some talented guys there. Our centers are going to be interchangeable parts with Api Mane and Andrew Tovi. Those two guys will probably both play in our games interchangeably. Chris Hughes at right guard is another big, strong athletic guy. Then at right tackle with Clyde McCauley and Kevin Feder, that group should play at a very high level. I have confidence in the coach and I think our players look forward to coming to practice. I think we will have a nice offensive line."

On his feelings with the newcomers...

"It is interesting. We have had two, 16-to-18 play, short situation scrimmages and two really lengthy scrimmages. One where you are giving your players say 45 snaps, times two. So let's just say half a game. During that time you get a feel for who those men are. The youth, when it isn't a deterrent, it is a real positive. I saw Steven Parker and Gavin Potter after practice. We had a slugfest of a practice. It was long and hot. It was before we figured out how to turn on the air conditioning at the indoor facility. And these two guys are playing one-on-one touch football that really looked more like tackle football, in shorts and being thrown to by one of the coaches' daughters. And I just watched those two guys play really well in scrimmage play and they are having fun playing. I think those two guys would be guys that you would like to put in the game because their self-interpretation in what's going to happen are going to be really good things."

On what he has seen from Torry Locklin so far...

"I think Torry is a guy that is youthful with a strong arm and athleticism. I think he will certainly, eventually play some significant snaps. I am not ready to say that he has progressed to an advanced position but I would not be afraid to play him in games."

On the role of a successful football team on a campus

"I can't imagine a quality college town without a great football team. I think you will find that this team will understand that and will want to be a part of the festivity that surrounds a quality football team. It is never going to be about the kind of day that it was and will always be about the kind of team that it was. So I think we understand that and are looking forward to being a part of it."

On the Jayhawk drill...

"I have been doing the Jayhawk drill at the places I was at really since the beginning. There are different pieces to it. There is a goal line tackle which is a really physical piece and then there is an offensive blocker and a defensive player that would shed him and be ready to tackle. Even if the tackle wasn't there. I think it is a fundamental drill and I think our guys look forward to it and it get our practices starting fast."

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR D.J. ELIOT

On his first impressions of the team...

"I think things are progressing very good. We have got a good group of guys, a good group of coaches. We have put together a good training camp with a good plan. We've put together some great practices. Players are playing hard and buying in. I think we are right on track."

On the transition between defenses...

"Anytime that you have a change in the system, even Clint [Bowen] would change his system now and again, so there is a learning curve. And so we have had that throughout the spring and throughout training camp. But I think the players are right on track and they are picking it up."

On if he's excited about some of the newcomers...

"I am very excited. Gavin Potter has done a good job and Steven Parker and even the defensive lineman that we have brought in, DaJon Terry, Malcolm Lee, Caleb Sampson and Marcus Harris, they have all shown signs of doing some great things and we are excited that they are here."

On what he has seen from the secondary...

"We have got a good group of secondary players. Our safeties are real physical. They will come down and hit you. Our corners are playing good and have a lot of confidence. Coach Jackson is doing a great job with them. It is our veteran group so they are a big part of our leadership on defense too with guys like Bryce Torneden and Mike Lee just to name a few. I think that those guys have done an excellent job of embracing the new system and leading the young guys."

On the relationships between the coaches and the freshmen...

"I recruited Gavin [Potter] so I had a pretty good relationship with him. I helped Coach Jones recruit Steven Parker so the relationship began throughout the recruiting process. So, we had them all summer which was good. When I was a player we reported the day before training camp. I didn't know anybody outside of my dad who drove me up there and dropped me off. Then the next day was rock-em sock-em. It was morning to night and then when you finished that it was school and then it was the season."

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I don't think I met a person until the second semester. And the good thing about the way that the NCAA has it set up now is the freshmen come in during the summer. There isn't any practice but they are lifting with the team, running with the team and they are taking only a few college classes so there is a lot of time throughout the summer as a coach to get to know your freshmen. And we were able to do that this summer."

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR LES KOENNING

On the wide receivers...

"They have made some plays for us. We are really excited about the group. There are a lot of guys out there that can make plays for us and that is what I think is exciting. When you get down limited to just one person it becomes a matchup deal, but I think we have them on both sides to spread the field."

On Hakeem Adeniji...

"Hakeem has been absolutely tremendous. Having the chance to be around him and showing his leadership. He has been through pressure situations. He has been there when the clock is rolling down and all the opportunities and it has been great for us. It really has. His leadership has been outstanding."

On the running back group...

"You notice them. When they get on the football field, you notice them a bunch. They are making people miss; they are catching the ball out of the backfield. It's pretty exciting. Sometimes when you think you're going with the second team and those backs show up, it makes the second team look like the first team."

LINEBACKER GAVIN POTTER

On where his confidence comes from...

"I'm just very confident in myself. I feel like if you're not confident in yourself, then who is really going to be confident for you?"

On what he likes about the program...

"I love everything about it. When you are around a lot of people that have the same goal as you, that love to win. You can tell coach Miles loves to win. He hired a staff that loves to win. I love to win. It's easy to get a long with everyone, everyone has good energy and everyone wants to win. It's great."

On buying into what coach Miles has offered...

"It's a real quick buy-in. You can just feel how much he wants it and I know how much I want it and how much everybody else wants it, so you can just feel that spread through the locker room."

SAFETY BRYCE TORNEDEN

On if he like that the team has to be physical to win football games...

"I'd say every team in the Big 12, if you want to win games you have to be physical, so I don't think it is too different just because of what we run."

On how he has worked on his vocal leadership on this team...

"I think it comes into play when doing the little things. Put others in front of yourself and I think guys look up to that. They take after that. I think through that people look up to you and look to you for decisions when people need to speak up."

On camp so far...

"I think camp is going very well. We have had long practices. We have been getting after it. I think that is the biggest thing. The results are going to show just how hard we have been working for our fan base."

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SAFETY BRYCE TORNEDEN

On the attitude around practice

"We kind of feed off of one another during practice and days like this we are always together. So, we are kind of like a family and just like being with each other, pushing each other and having fun."

On if there is a sense of urgency with all the changes...

"Most definitely. All the players are buying into what coach Miles is trying to do here. He is for us, all the coaches and players are buying in and everyone wants to sit and learn from him."

On the factors that need to happen in order to be successful this season...

"All three phases of the ball doing their jobs. Special teams doing their jobs, defense coming up with turnovers and the offense scoring touchdowns. Just execution and doing the right thing will be good."

RUNNING BACK KHALIL HERBERT

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TIGHT END JACK LUAVASA

On what he wanted to improve upon in the offseason...

"Route running was one part of my game that I wanted to get better at. That was a lot during the offseason after workouts, coming over here with some of the guys and trying to learn from the receivers and improve. I do a lot of studying on NFL tight ends. I will be on YouTube just watching clips of guys like Delanie Walker, Travis Kelce, and George Kittle. I watch a lot of what those guys do on my off days and just try to learn and soak up as much information as I can."

On what he has learned from watching the pros...

"The art of their route running. For example, when you are running a post it isn't just how you draw it up on the board, it is depending upon the coverage and where the safety and corners are located. So that is what I have tried to take from them. Obviously they make it look easy, but it isn't as easy as it looks."

On if his quarterback background has helped with that...

"Yeah for sure. Even now, when I catch myself watching any football game instead of watching for the excitement of it I look at how people are moving around and why they called this or why a person is running that route. I just try to learn."