

October 17, 2013



An Interview with:

COACH KEN BONE DAVONTÉ LACY

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. Up first will be Washington State Coach Ken Bone and junior guard DaVonté Lacy.

We'll have coach make an opening statement.

COACH BONE: Welcome. DaVonté and I are glad to be here. Kind of a long trip down from Pullman, but it's that time of year to talk about our program and where things are at. And right now as a coach I'm extremely excited about this year's team.

We have got a group of guys that a number of them are back from last year. And we have a couple guys that were in our program last season but did not play, Jordan Railey and Que Johnson. And it's nice to get them back out on the court.

And then we have some young freshmen joining us. So I like the mix of guys. We have had a good summer and fall, love the work ethic, the attitude and the coachability that these guys bring.

And another special ingredient that I think we have is a new coach. We're going to miss Ben Johnson who moved back to Australia, but we added Rod Jensen, who spent a lot of time at Boise State as an assistant coach and then a head coach, and has had a couple other stops along the way. But he's brought a new ingredient to our program and a very up-tempo, aggressive style of defense, which I think the players are excited about.

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and take questions.

Q. You mentioned you're moving to this aggressive attacking defense, but we have heard about a number of rule changes that

would seem to limit how aggressive the defense can be. Is that something you're going to have to really adjust to and keep in mind?

COACH BONE: I think we will, but what I'm talking about is, the last few years, we have played fairly passive. Obviously it's a defense that we subscribe to, but I don't think what we are trying to do now will be a whole lot different than other teams that get out and play aggressive.

So it's going to be an adjustment across the board in the NCAA in regards to how to guard the ball especially.

So when I talk about aggressiveness, I'm talking about denial defense, on the ball pressure, but hopefully not using our hands a whole lot and fouling. Right, DaVonté?

DAVONTÉ LACY: Right.

Q. DaVonté, the media has picked you guys to finish last in the Conference this season. How do you respond to that?

DAVONTÉ LACY: I feel like everybody's entitled to their opinion. It's just something else that we have to listen to, but we don't have to subscribe to it. We can run with it and use that as a stepping stone, as like a chip on our shoulder.

But I don't really pay attention to it. It doesn't really affect me at all.

Q. How much better do you feel the league is this year? Or do you feel it's better than the last couple years when the Pac-12 kind of took a beating nationally?

COACH BONE: Yeah, maybe we deserved to take a little bit of a beating a few years ago. But those years are gone. Those are definitely behind us. I think last year, with five teams getting into the NCAA Tournament, and I think it was close to six, and then two of those teams in Arizona and Oregon making it to the Sweet 16, I would be surprised if we don't have more teams in the NCAA Tournament this next year, like six or seven. And I also wouldn't be surprised at all if somebody goes further than the Sweet 16.

I think our league is very good and is just getting better.

Q. Why?

COACH BONE: Well, for one thing, there's been a number of coaches that have been in place. Obviously UCLA and USC have had a change, but I think that when coaches have been in programs for a number of years there's some stability there, and I think that's contributed to the success of a lot of the programs. And then there's a number of new kids coming in to the league that are extremely good.

Q. Can you talk about just your overall perimeter strength on offense and the guys that are coming in to help this year.

COACH BONE: Sure. Well, back from last year we have DaVonté Lacy, who averaged around 10 or 11 points a game. Along with Royce Woolridge, who was thrown into a unique situation last year right about this time all of a sudden to become a point guard, which he had never played before in his life.

He had that position for awhile, and then we gave it to Mike Ladd, who was a senior last season. Then at the end of the year, when Mike was injured, Royce was put back in that role and did a pretty good job.

So with those two guys back who have a lot of experience, along with Dexter Kernich-Drew who is a 6'6" athletic kid who can really shoot the ball, and then we have added Ike Iroegbu, who is out of Oak Hill Academy, originally from Sacramento, but 6', 6'1", extremely athletic, strong. He's going to be a very good player in this league. He's going to be really good.

And then Que Johnson, who came to us last year, was not eligible to play the games but was on campus going to school, and now fortunately he was just in his first practice two days ago, because of a stress fracture. So he has had his ups and downs, unfortunately, with some injuries. Last summer it was his knees, and then most recently a stress fracture. But he was back out there. And I think DaVonté would attest to it, he was thrown out there and he was pretty good immediately. And I like that group of five guards.

Q. You mentioned new players, good new players coming into the league. Can you mention a few in particular that you expect are going to make a big impact on the league?

COACH BONE: Oh, I would think Aaron Gordon will do pretty well. And then there's so many guys. I really don't want to leave anyone out. There's a lot of very good freshmen coming into the Conference.

Q. DaVonté, Pac-12, seems like, guard-wise it's pretty heavy this year across the board. Can you talk about a few guards other than yourself from around the league that impress you and that you expect things from this year?

DAVONTÉ LACY: A few guards, obviously all the people that are here. We got Roberto Nelson from Oregon State. Nick Johnson from Arizona, Jahii from Arizona State, C.J. from Washington, Spencer Dinwiddie.

I mean, the list goes on and on. I think we're known as a guard-oriented Conference, so I think we're staying strong in that mode where we're developing good guards and pretty NBA-ready guards coming out.

Q. You guys were in most of your games late in the game last year but struggled to finish. Who are you turning to this year to be your closer?

COACH BONE: We're hoping that -- I'm hoping that we have better poise down the stretch. Again, it was a difficult situation. We had a point guard for three years that I think was going into his senior year and was looking like he would have a really nice senior season. And with his departure, we were not prepared to throw some other guys just out there.

Now, during the course of the year, you're hoping that improves, and I think our guys did improve. But bottom line is we did not win some close games and a lot of that is on me as the head coach. Hopefully I'm a better coach this year than last year.

THE MODERATOR: All right. That will do it. Thanks.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports