

Toledo Football News Conference Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015

Athletic Director Mike O'Brien:

“I appreciate you coming in on a Sunday. First and foremost, obviously we are talking about the departure of Matt Campbell and I want to thank him for what he did in his four years as head coach and in the three years prior to that. Matt was here for seven years—he was a head coach, led us to three bowl games, two bowl wins, and we are headed to another one, we just don’t know where yet. We wish him, his wife Erica and their kids nothing but the best at Iowa State. I know he will do well, he is a wonderful guy and a terrific coach.

“We have announced that our defensive coordinator John Heacock will serve as our interim head coach in this process as far as the bowl season. You know the background of John; he’s had 31 years in this business. He has improved our defense tremendously. John has years of history in our state. He was at Youngstown for several years as an assistant and as a head coach, he was also at three Big Ten schools. John is clearly the right guy at the right time. I want to thank John for his willingness to take the baton and lead our rockets into their bowl game; I can already see his leadership.

“While we are talking to about John, that brings up the assistant coaches. In my conversation with Matt, the assistant coaches will be coaching our bowl game. To put it simply every coach will be there other than Matt Campbell.

“As far as the search, the national search as already begun. I have a bias but I really think this is a great job. It is a special place; we have terrific leadership with our president Dr. Sharon Gaber. We are in the great city of Toledo in Northwest Ohio, we can recruit to this place. The facilities are excellent and needless to say you can win here.

“So we move on. I will not be able to give you a time table as far as when our search will be complete because who knows how that process will take place. We want the process to move relatively fast but we want to make certain that we get it right. This hasn’t been any different than any other search for us. We are very cognizant of making certain that we make the right fit, which is always the most important thing to me. I’m talking about the fit for our program, one that stresses academics and doing the right thing socially—that’s our culture here at the University of Toledo. We want a fit for our department, our university and our community.

“You might want to ask about my thoughts relative to head coaches or assistant coaches but it too early to tell. Our last two caches started as assistant coaches. We are just going to see what is out there. We have no preference what side of the ball they’re from, whether its offense or defense. We just want someone who believes in what were doing. We really think that this is a very attractive situation. I know that you all have your jobs to do, but there will obviously not be any press conferences or updates throughout this search. The next press conference we will have is when we name our next head football coach.”

Interim Head Coach John Heacock:

“I’m excited about this opportunity. We will have the guys riled up and ready for the bowl game. When you ask me the question can I be the head coach, absolutely. I know more now of what it takes then when I was a head coach. You learn what you can and cannot do and what is important in a program.”

Sophomore running back Terry Swanson:

“Coach Heacock knows the team. Not just the defense, but the whole team. He has the experience and I feel like we won’t miss a beat.”

“I feel like the faster a coach is picked the better, but you have to pick the correct recipient for that. I feel like they will make the best decision for this team.”

Senior quarterback Phillip Ely:

“What a great opportunity for Coach Campbell. I’m so happy for him. I’ll never regret coming here.”

“It takes a strong man to come in the team room and have a meeting with your players and explain why, how, and where this came from. He did it like a champ, and we love him for it. He’s not hanging us out to dry. He wants us to finish this season off right.”