

**February 2, 2011**



An Interview With:

## **COACH BRIAN KELLY**

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with Coach Kelly. He will introduce the recruiting class.

BRIAN KELLY: Good afternoon. Today culminates a year of recruiting efforts by our staff. And certainly when a plan comes together like it has for us, today is a great day for us.

I know there are a lot of coaches that will be talking about what a great class it is for them. I don't know what their plan was, but I can tell you our plan for this class came together very nicely for us. And let me make it clear -- it takes nine assistant coaches to put together a recruiting class of what we consider this magnitude.

It requires a great deal of effort. Certainly there's an evaluation and a profile that has to be met, but recruiting at the University of Notre Dame requires a great deal of effort.

And our assistant coaches, along with our recruiting office, along with our staff here, our support staff, across campus, our Athletic Director, **Jack Swarbrick**, who is involved in our recruiting process; our Director of Admissions, **Bob Mundy**, Tom Bishop, all have to come together and really commit themselves to this process.

So I just want to underscore, I know everybody's going to talk about how great their class was. I think the thing I want to underscore is the effort involved in recruiting here requires your entire staff to be involved in it.

**Chuck Martin** took up the lead as our coordinator in the recruiting efforts. He'll get a chance to talk a little bit more in specifics after I'm complete with the class here.

But evaluation is one thing, but it was the plan that we had. I think I took questions last year about where are we moving forward. And I think I made it pretty clear that the defensive end position, the edge of our defense was really our number one focus.

I think we hit that as well as balance within the rest of the class. Certainly we'll need to continue to build depth in the defensive back

position. We think we've landed some superb linemen, skilled players, and you'll get a chance to see them.

I think the other thing is when you're talking about our plan and the evaluation process for us, we're a little bit more broad based relative to the positions. I know everybody in there that follows Notre Dame football has already got each one of these players pegged at a particular position.

Everybody's a GM and everybody's a director of player personnel. I can tell you we're a little bit more broad in the approach relative to once you fit that profile of size and weight, once you fit that profile relative to your academics and character, we're a little bit more open-ended relative to the position. So let's not get caught on that today. You'll see that we've listed our players either in the skill, big skill or power category, and we truly recruit that way.

We look for players that are committed to being here at Notre Dame to help us win a championship, not because I gotta play this position, I have to be here.

If that's the case, we may have moved past that player in the recruiting process. So I think that's important to point out. So when I get to the video, they are playing a particular position but they've been recruited as a skilled player, as a big skill player, or in that power category.

Not all these players are going to play the particular positions that they may have played in high school. So keep that in mind as well.

So we'll get right to our 2011 class. And we'll begin with **George Atkinson, III**.

George is an extremely talented young man. He can play a number of positions. In the Army All-American game he played on defense. Here you can see him running out of the slot position. Great speed.

I think if you were going to separate him from maybe some of the other players in our class, long at 6'2". And extremely versatile. You can see he's a punt returner as well.

So he's going to be competing for time on all of our kick teams as well. But great speed. Livermore, California, up by the San Francisco

area. You see him in motion. Out here, a guy that can catch the screens as well. And obviously with the ball in his hands, he's extremely dynamic as a football player.

Our second recruit, **Josh Atkinson**. Josh also from Livermore, you can see him -- Livermore, California. Brother of George Atkinson. You can see him in press coverage here, plays the ball in the air very well.

Great speed. 10.6 100 guy. He plays very physical. Great tackler. You can see here in the open field, very short tackler. Plays very, very aggressively and obviously one of the things I might point out, George Atkinson, his dad, obviously, was a very prominent player with the Super Bowl teams of the Oakland Raiders. And I think we all know how he played the game. Josh brings that to the table as well. Plays very physical on the defensive side of the ball and has great speed.

Again, you can see very limited time on the offensive side of the ball, but certainly can do that well. Watch his physical presence here. Very strong for his size. And, again, a young man that we think will bolster our defensive back field immediately.

**Kyle Brindza**. Kyle, we believe, to be the most talented kicker in the country. His versatility in a sense he can do all the jobs. He can kick off. Obviously extra points and field goals, and he's an outstanding punter. So he gives us such versatility coming in that he can take all of those positions and compete for all of those positions.

Out of Plymouth, Canton High School. Set the state record with 18-made field goals, including 6 of 9 from 50 yards or more.

And he was single-handedly the man that got his football team to the State Finals in Michigan. He made winning kicks in a couple of the games in the playoffs. He's played in all those conditions. In other words, he's played in big games. He's had to make the big kick. He's been involved in those situations, and again his versatility is really the thing that we felt made him the best kicker in the country.

He's been to all the camps and all the clinics. Again, his tape is pretty easy to evaluate. Quick in getting the ball up. Again, great strength of leg. You'll be able to see him kicking off here. Even though this is from the 40, he'll back it up. He's kicking it, as you can see, almost 15 yards out of the back of the end zone. It's really crazy. I'd like to say that we've doctored the tape here. But watch the hang time on his punts.

**Mike Elston** is very excited about having Kyle. I'm excited about having him as well. He

does a lot of jobs for you. Great young man. And he's somebody that plays high school football, not just as a kicker. He contributed. I mean, he's a big physical kid. 6'1", 219. When he gets off the bus and everybody knows he's the kicker we're going to scare a lot of teams because our kicker looks pretty good. Outstanding player for us.

Our next player, **Jalen Brown** out of Irving, MacArthur High School. Couple of things to point out here. 6'1". Really long. We love his length at the corner position. Especially at 6'1". We believe he's the guy that's just going to continue to develop and grow and be stronger. He's a 10.8 100 guy right now. And he really has not engaged in the weight room yet.

So a couple of things that are unique. We believe that this guy is destined for great things. And if you want to put a tag on anybody in a class, here's a steal in our opinion. 6'1" out of a great high school in Texas. Great competition. Kind of flew under the radar a little bit for us. **Kerry Cooks** did a great job recruiting him, getting him to Notre Dame. We're really excited about this young man.

You can see him playing the wide field here. His ability to tackle in space, plays very physical as he gets to the point of contact. Again, he can come up on you. He can shed blocks.

And, again, I'd like to point out again, here's a young man that will fit very well in our two-deep coverage looks. And again the things that we're looking for in those two deep coverage looks. He's got to tackle and play physical and certainly a guy that has to have the ability to go get the football. He certainly does that. He's a 10.8 guy. See on the block, scoop and score. And the competition he's playing against is very, very good in Texas.

From Ohio, Dublin, Ohio, Dublin, Coffman High School, pretty good success here at the University of Notre Dame with players from Dublin Coffman. I think you know who they are. This is **Brad Carrico**. Brad was one of our first commits. Set the recruiting in motion for us. He's been committed to Notre Dame for a long time.

Great young man. He's already here as an early enrollee, as is Kyle Brindza, both those guys were early enrollees for us. They're roommates as well, I believe. Isn't that correct? They're roommates. I think we've a quad, four of those guys rooming together.

So, again, setting the class in motion. Brad was an early enrollee for us. He's a power player for us. He's somebody that can play on either side of the ball and has been recruited as such.

He's 6'5" and a half, 287 pounds. And again comes from a great high school and great legacy there for Notre Dame. You see a lot of his clips here. Playing on the defensive side of the ball. He's got the right color jerseys on. Green. Moves well for 6'5", 287. Good, physical player. Again at the power position for us gives us great flexibility.

Our next recruit, **Ben Councell**, out of Asheville, North Carolina, A.C. Reynolds High School. Ben Councell is another one of those players that we felt was under the radar, and then he had an opportunity to play with some all-stars in an All-Star game, and I think at that point he got everybody's attention.

He had our attention from the very beginning. We felt like he fit exactly what we're looking for. Again, I know you hear it from a lot of coaches, but if you look at our board, he was at the top of our board from the very beginning of the recruiting process. He didn't all of a sudden show up on our board after he had a great senior year or he played in the All-Star game and had great film. This is a young man that we felt was going to be a great fit for us.

He's going to be in the big skill category which gives us a great deal of flexibility, can play at the outside linebacker position for us. 6'5", 220 pounds. From our standpoint, this is a young man, when Coach Longo gets a hold of him in terms of his physical development we're excited where he goes.

Great motor. Here he is, standing up, runs, extremely athletic at 6'5". He's 6'5". You hear about signing day, what's your height and weight. He's all of 6'5". We could probably cheat and get him a little taller for you. But he is what we say he is relative to his size.

Here he is with his hand down. Shows the ability to shed a blocker, and arrives at the play in a bad mood, which we really like. Again, running down on the backside here. Somebody that can play on the edge of our defense and increase our athleticism immediately.

**DaVaris Daniels**, out of Vernon Hills, Illinois. Played in the Under Armour All-American game. Offensive player for us, even though he's listed at skill. He's somebody that we'll focus particularly at the wide receiver position for us.

Incredible upside relative to his athletic ability. He's got great pedigree. His dad is 15 years, Phillip Daniels, now in the NFL. Phillip said to me he's hoping to have the first father-son combination in the NFL.

We'll hope that Phil is still in the NFL. We just hope DaVaris is here for four years. A little bit

on both ends there. That's the kind of family system. Very competitive. The family is a wonderful family and DaVaris is a young man we think from an offensive standpoint has incredible skills.

You'll get a chance to see that in some of the clips we have here. We put together a basketball clip. This is not for Mike Brey's viewing. This is more about to get a sense of a 6'2", 6'2" and a half player and his physical ability.

Here he is in the Under Armour All-American game again. Long. Very good ball skills. And I think the thing that stands out is his size and his ability to make people miss for his size. It's pretty clear to see his raw athletic ability at a good 6'2". You can see him run out here. You also see him make a number of people miss and catching the football in traffic as well.

One, two, he'll have three guys make a miss, and the kind of speed to break open a football game. Long, can go up and get the football. Led Vernon Hills this year to state playoff game wins. Hasn't happened a lot.

You can see here, he's a return man as well. Extremely versatile football player. Getting a little look at him at a running back position as well. Him returning the punt. This one's amazing here. Watch this. That's against Georgia. We hope it's against Georgia. But DaVaris Daniels, an outstanding young man and really excited about him.

Here's another young man that, **Matthias Farley** outside of Charlotte Christian High School, small school. They turned out a lot of BCS players. If you go back look at Charlotte Christian in terms of what that program has done relative to turning out BCS players is relatively amazing for such a small school. New school.

Extremely gifted young man. Incredible family. Wonderful family. But, more importantly, he's all of six foot and he's about 195 pounds. I mean, he's put together. He looks like a college football player.

If there's one guy in the skill group that physically, when he walks in here, he looks like a college football player. He has that presence about him. Great young man. With great speed. And, again, he's a young man that can play extremely versatile. Can play at the corner position, the safety position. He can play wide receiver. We'll kind of sort that out as we move forward. See him here on defense. And you can see got great ball skills. Here he's tracking the ball. I think that's -- after the speed element, which was pretty clear, we loved his ball skills. They're

outstanding.

You'll get a chance to see it on both sides as well. Do we have offensive clips on this as well? Again, physical player. You can see him lower his pads. Again, I just would say that physically he's probably in the top percentile relative to his position, relative to his physicalness. Watch him attack this. Good tackler. Again, sets the edge on the defense here. You see how aggressive he is.

I think the thing I'd like to point out is that I believe Mike Elston, are you here, Mike? What, two years, Chuck, two years of playing football. He's been at this two years. So we'll get a young man that is just starting to learn how to play the game.

Again, physical player. Get a couple of clips here from an offensive standpoint. Watch him attack the football. Go up and get it. Get another look here. Soft hands. Very, very nice athlete. One more clip in the slot here. Catching the football in space. And a great burst.

Another one of our early enrollees, **Everett Golson**, already on campus, out of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Skilled player. Certainly a young man that we had looked at from the very beginning.

He was a player that, again, we felt was a great fit for what we want to do offensively. I think you'll see that. He's also a great young man. Great because I got a chance to see him interact within his school and the respect that the principal and the teachers all had for Everett, the way he handled himself. He's just going to be a great representative of Notre Dame, both on and off the field. He's also pretty prolific in throwing the football.

I think the thing I'd like to point out before we get going, when you look at Everett Golson, think of his as a point guard. He's always got his head up. Always looking to distribute. Always looking for that pass. Not necessarily the next shot, but he's got to keep his head up. What you'll see about Everett he plays the game of football the same way. Eyes always down field. Always looking to throw the football and make that play.

Where we tried to distinguish the quarterback position is we didn't want a guy that at first sight of any problems would drop his eyes and run. Here's a guy that keeps his eyes up and is always looking downfield to make a play. That's extending the play. He extends the play and delivers the football as well as anybody that we had watched. And I think you'll see that in the way he plays the game.

Strong arm. I think you'll find that. The ability to make people miss. I think you'll find that right here. This poor guy right there, may have broke his ankle. Certainly has that ability to make you miss. And watch his athletic ability. Watch him put his hand down on the ground right there. And has the speed, obviously.

And, again, these were just a few of the clips. Most of his clips were about finding a receiver down the field. You'll see one here, rolls to his right, and the strength of his arm to throw a level one ball outside the numbers is pretty unique for a quarterback, for his size, to have that strength of arm. Again, you'll see him here, buy some time and look where he puts that ball with great touch. He throws all the balls necessary to be successful. Great touch on the ball. Lays it in. And then he'll find somebody here in a moment. You'll see how he can put it anywhere. And this is a great example of that.

Makes somebody miss. Stay alive, and he fits this ball 50 yards down the field between two defenders. Very gifted young man.

**Jarrett Grace**, out of Cincinnati, Ohio, Colerain High School. Great high school program in Cincinnati. Skilled player. 6'3", 235, play an inside position for us. I think he's a combination of things we were looking for. Really understands Notre Dame. Understands the academics. Wants to be here, to be part of a championship program, and he's a big, physical presence inside in our 3-4 defense.

Runs downhill. And, again, I think you know our defensive structure. Those guys that play inside for us have to take guards on them. So they've got to be big, strong and physical. Be able to leverage offensive linemen out and cancel out gaps. He's certainly somebody that we see that can do that. Playing against very good competition again, he's been like this kind of player, not just in his senior year, but obviously I was at Cincinnati, got a chance to see him for two years. He played like this for three years at a very good program.

Again, all of his clips are from the inside backer position. Plays with great leverage. Very patient. Very good football player.

Next, from the state of Ohio as well, **Eilar Hardy**. Eilar is from Pickerington High School. Very good program. Here's a young man that, really, when you talk about the skilled position, he arguably helped his football team this year on offense as much, or more, maybe even more, as an offensive player. He's certainly somebody that can play on either side of the ball.

We see him fitting a specific need for us

early on on the defensive side of the ball, but he's played cornerback. He's played a number of different positions. You'll see him at the safety position.

We really think he's a dynamic football player. And, again, good six-footer. Good, long player at that position. Those are hard to find. See him at the safety position here. His ability to go and get the football here, turn it around into a score.

Again, you can see with the arrow, flat foot in the middle of the field, attacks the football. Doesn't just wait for something to happen, he goes and makes it happen.

As I said, he was very important to their run in the playoffs. Again, you can see his ability to make an impact on the offensive side of the ball and special teams.

Again, middle of the field, safety. Coming down and attacking the football. We love the way he goes and gets the ball. He's going to go make a play. He's not waiting for a play to happen. He's going to go make a play. See him coming off the edge here. Physical. Stick his nose in there. Brings all the qualities necessary for very good defensive back.

Disciplined off of a reverse. Again coming off the edge again. Getting to the quarterback here. Extremely versatile. Very good program. Again, a young man that we loved his character and the way he handled himself from the very beginning. There he is at the offensive position as well.

**Matt Hegarty**, I think it's been pretty well chronicled in terms of recruiting, here's a young man from Aztec, New Mexico. Participated in the U.S. Army game. He's also at U.S.A. versus the World right now. Just extremely athletic in that position. It starts there. Can move his feet very well.

We saw him move and felt like he was our target right away at the offensive line position. And you'll be able to see that with his athleticism. He's a left tackle here. See him pull. As you know, we like to move our linemen. The film that sold us is his ability to move in space and then arrive physically, square up, with good body position and finish off.

He will finish his blocks, periods. He finishes things off. You'll see it from a number of offensive linemen. The most consistent theme will be their athleticism and their ability to finish.

Left tackle again. Pulling. Watch him finish here. Just stays with it all the way through. Left tackle. Ability to set. And, again, here he's

pulling. You can see how well he moves. Watch him stutter his feet here. Square back up.

He's going against, you know, a pretty small guy but he's athletic. Here's where you really start pulling your hair out as an offensive line coach, is that you put your guy in a good position and then he gets to the second level and he can't control his body. He can't control his 280 pounds in space. And then a smaller player can make him look silly. I think this is a good illustration of him getting his weight back under control and finishing this block.

And, again, his ability to obviously play in space and finish.

Also from the state of Ohio, **Chase Hounshell**, a power player for us. 6'5", 255 pounds, out of Lake Catholic, Kirtland, Ohio. He's somebody that gives us, again, great versatility, great motor. Continues to play right to the whistle. And, again, you can't have enough of these kinds of profiled players.

Here you see him inside. He's a very tough and aggressive kid. He takes great care of himself. He's physically in great shape. Loves to work out. Nutrition is key to him. He just has all those components that we're looking for in our defensive linemen. Very conscious of his body and taking care of himself and plays the game from sideline to sideline and never takes a play off.

There you see Chase again coming around on the stunt. Physically, very lean right now at 255 pounds. Brother plays at Central Florida. Obviously knows the game, been around the game. Chase, again here on the defensive side of the ball. Great penetration, very strong, physical player at the point of attack. Coming from the left side now.

**Ben Koyack**, out of Oil City High School, tight end position. Big skilled player for us. Played in the 2010 Under Armour All-American game. We had him on our board as No. 1 tight end in the country. Whatever other people had, they had him, they had him anywhere from 1 to 10 or 15. I really don't know.

We loved Ben Koyack from the very beginning. Great size. If you're going to compare him to anybody, Tyler Eifert, has the ability to split out as a wide receiver, can lock in, put his hand on the ground and base a five technique or a nine technique.

He's got all the skills necessary to be a great, great fit within our offensive structure. Here's Ben in terms of being on the line of scrimmage. He can get vertically down the field and his ball skills are outstanding. Very soft

hands. Naturally catches the football. Doesn't fight it at all. And, again, he can play physical at the line of scrimmage or you can even spread him out and use his size, which Oil City did a pretty good job of.

You can see they split him out here to the left and to the fade. Watch him go up and get the football. Again, he can line up as a tight end, get off the line of scrimmage and find his way into open spaces. Here's a nice block here. Playing physical. Brings all the components necessary. Great size. Speed, ball skills. He's the complete package at that position.

Again, split out here to the left. Double move. And he's got great body control that he can go up and get this football right on the sideline here.

**Aaron Lynch** is another one of our early enrollees, participated in the U.S. Army All-American game. And, again, as we talked about was the focus of our recruiting efforts was the defensive line position. And I think what you'll find about Aaron is just plays relentless.

I mean, he keeps coming. There will be a lot of things that we'll be able to develop. He's not even hit where he can be as a defensive lineman. He's just playing with raw athletic ability, being tenacious all the time. And he's always getting after it. And we'll be able to develop him in his skill at that position as well. In the Army All-American game against some pretty good competition. We'll work on this a little bit, though. Yeah, I don't know what that is.

He likes to play the game. There's no question about that. He's a very energetic young man. He's already in weight training. He's already been with Coach Longo and done a great job already.

Here he's standing up, quick swim move with his hands. He uses his hands very well. Again, when he finishes you off, he finishes it off. Knocks the pass down, obviously recognizing three steps, hand up, knocks it down. Again from our standpoint he has got great versatility for us. But clearly can get after the quarterback.

Another clip here, standing up. Coming off the edge and finishing it off. Here's some one-on-one. We put these in. This is against obviously some of the best offensive tackles coming out. We thought this was a good illustration of this young man is a high four-star player, and whatever that means, he's quality competition for Aaron is what we were trying to show you. So you can compare apples to apples.

For all you experts on offensive line play, that wouldn't be good offensive line play, if you get

thrown into the dummy like that. That wouldn't either. But I think what you see more than anything else is his ability to get off the ball and his ability, really, is such that it's going to be fun to work with this young man.

**Conor Hanratty** is an offensive line from New Canaan, Connecticut. He was an early commit for us. He's got a great last name. Terry Hanratty, you may have heard of him. He played here at Notre Dame. Pretty good player for us here at Notre Dame. Went on to a great career.

What we liked about Conor was young, first of all, at the position; was somebody that we believed over a period of time as we developed him he was going to be a really good football player for us. But we liked his tenacity. He really got after people.

And you'll see that in everything that he does, uses his hands very well and had an edge to him in the way he played. When I say an edge to him, he had that gnarly kind of demeanor at the offensive line.

And for a young guy, he's made incredible progress, even after the season in terms of weight training and conditioning and all the things that he's going to continue to work at. But you can see that he's just a guy that gets after you. And obviously from our standpoint we're looking for guys that can move their feet. He can move his feet but he also likes to finish things off.

At the right tackle position, again uses his hands very well. Strikes out. Right tackle again. Good hands. He's got very good hands. Gets a good piece right away. Good hand position. Can move his feet and stays after it. He's got a little nasty to him, which we really like. Again, uses his hands very well. Understands the pocket. You can see he's got a great sense of where the quarterback is. It's hard to teach some of the things he does right here. Just his ability to come back off of this and know that he's got to expand the width of the pocket as a right tackle. Does a good job expanding here so the quarterback can step up.

Those little nuances, sometimes it's hard to teach those things. He's got a great awareness of it already. Going to have to get stronger, going to have continue to work hard. Those are the things that we think we can teach him. He's got some of those unique, innate abilities. Watch him slap these hands down right away off the D linemen. Great technique of slapping hands and reengaging immediately.

We'll now move into **Nick Martin**. Nick is out of Bishop Chatard High School, won the state

championship, 6'4", 270 pounds.

And First Team Indiana. Again, the common theme here with the offensive linemen is their ability to move. And at 6'4", 270, he's got really good athletic ability, and he finishes off blocks. He's got a demeanor again. That offensive line demeanor for us is the way they play the game. And he plays it very, very well.

And his brother's not bad either, Zach Martin, here at Notre Dame. See him at right tackle. He's a brawler. His helmet pops off here. And he's going to finish the play. That's a pretty good clip right there, you gotta admit, with no helmet on.

He moves to the second level very well. Watch him here as he climbs up, gets a great piece and gets the referee. How's this? No? Okay. Anyway, the things that we're looking for here is his physical ability. You can see that. That's pretty clear. He's 6'4". Finishes blocks off. Stays on his feet and takes the defender down.

Got a lot of clips here. You can see at the right tackle position again. Works off the linebacker and stays, stays on his block. You know? Just finishes it off completely right there. Not a guy that's just going to hit you and kind of lose you. He's going to stay with you the whole way.

Great job getting off the football. You can see his athleticism.

**Cam McDaniel.** Cam, skilled position. Here's a young man that's got great durability. Played at the highest level in Texas. Carried the ball inside. This is not a guy that lined up at the slot and they threw screens to. This is a guy that was able to run. The real sell for us was his durability, toughness and his ability to play through some injury and also have a dynamic piece to him as well. He can catch the football. He can play in all of the special teams for us. And he's physical enough at 190 pounds that he can run inside. He's got an inside presence.

We needed somebody that could bang it up inside as well. And his durability and his ability to play through some nicks and a couple of injuries was a huge component for us. He's got good speed at the top end of competition.

You can see him running out of the shotgun, but he can run it downhill. Again, this is a huge component for us, his ability to run it downhill inside. And, again, he's a very good athlete as well. He's playing against very, very good competition. Long season. Spring ball. All those things. Understands the game very well.

You can see him tracking the football here. Plays with a great deal of confidence. He's

probably one of the more confident men in this class. He really has a great deal of confidence and plays that way.

Catch the football. Can run after the catch. And just a complete -- knows how to play the game. This is a football player. This guy's a football player. He was meant to play this game of football. And, like I said, he loves to compete. He loves the game. He'll bring an energy level which we're looking for as well.

**Anthony Rabasa,** big skill player for us, linebacker. Big skill. He's got some flexibility at 6'3" and a half, 233. He's out of Christopher Columbus High School out of Miami, Florida. I think he's playing in the U.S.A. versus the World All-Star game here today, I believe. And, again, another young man that we believe, when you look at his film, his motor, his ability to go every snap really was what we loved about him. And his first-step quickness here.

You can see it, it's pretty apparent as he comes off the edge against pretty good competition. You see him with his hand down quite a bit. He's a guy that can obviously stand up for us as well and gives us great flexibility. He's going to get bigger, he's going to get stronger.

First step is extremely explosive off the ball. Watch him bend the hoop here, drop the shoulder, can bend very well. Takes this arc nice and tight to the quarterback.

Hard to see him inside here, but you'll see his ability to get to the quarterback. Again, the left defensive end here. Another good illustration of his ability to redirect here and close.

Very gifted athlete. Anthony Rabasa out of Christopher Columbus High School in Miami, Florida.

**Tony Springmann.** Tony is out of Bishop Swenger High School, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Power guy for us. 6'6", 275. And he's all of that. He's one big young man. We have done very good at Bishop Swenger High School. To have now our third player in the program from that high school, I think, says a lot about the high school and the type of kid.

He's another young man who will fit in here very well at Notre Dame. But he's a power player for us. Again, gives us great versatility. You can see him here, the end position. Playing the defensive end position. Get off block and he can run.

Again, he's one big, young man. Great size. And I think that's a pretty common theme across the board that we've increased our size immediately on the defensive line. 6'5", 6'6" range

for a number of defensive linemen.

Standing up here, plays off the block. Does a nice job here controlling, throwing. And making a play. Left defensive end. Then again at the end position.

**Stephon Tuitt.** Stephon out of Monroe, Georgia. Again, another power player for us, 6'5", 270 pounds, played in the All-American game, is playing today in the U.S.A. versus the World. Here's a young man that's beginning to scratch the surface of what he can be as a defensive player. We're excited about what his upside is. He's a young man that's only going to get better and better as he develops physically.

He's all of 6'5". I don't know if he's done growing. He's 270 pounds right now. Moves extremely well. You'll get a chance to see that in his clips, Stephon Tuitt. Left defensive end here. Coming off the edge.

His ability to close. And pretty unique player. And as we said, you know, here's a young man that's going to get coached and he's going to develop once he steps on campus here.

Just learning how to play the game. He's even better when you don't block him. Like right here. We'll see another clip of Stephon and his athletic ability to chase plays down. I think this is it right here. Watch him chase him down here from the end position, 3-4 look right here, if you look at that, that's essentially the technique he would be playing to our field, and plays off from a 4, sheds a blocker, chases this thing down.

Ability to close. Here's another look at some one-on-one matchups. Here he's closing. Watch him chase this guy down. Great motor. You can see he's not going half speed here. Love his motor. Watch him finish this off. And this is probably one of the more impressive ones. Obviously he's on the backside of this play. Takes a great angle with pursuit.

Pretty good stuff there.

**Ishaq Williams** out of Brooklyn New York, Lincoln High School. He's our final early enrollee. And a big skill player for us, 6'5", 242 pounds, I think that's what he weighed in the other day at 6'5". A little over 6'5", 242 pounds. Again, a young man that has great versatility, played in the Army All-American game. Just a great young man. You see him here. It's not even a competition coming off the ball. He's just so quick. He can obviously do a lot of things for us. He can put his hand down like he is right here. And that's pretty good offensive tackle.

So some of the things you'll see here, not only is he 242 pounds, but he can run very, very well.

Right defensive end position. You're not going to run boot on him. Pretty athletic player that he's going to be able to redirect and make the play. This is Ishaq tracking the play down from behind. Again off the left defensive end position. Again athletic enough to take you down.

Top of the screen, first step, explosiveness. He's five yards in the back field. Almost took the hand off. And he can run when he catches it. You can see his speed for 6'5" and a half, 242 pounds, runs pretty good.

And the last of our 23 players, certainly not our least in terms of size, we have him as the biggest player on our roster, 6'7", 240 pounds out of Fullerton, Servite High School, California, **Troy Niklas**, big skill player for us. LA Times Lineman of the Year in 2010. And just a really physical specimen relative to what he can be and where he is right now. See him right there.

Pretty good hands. Don't throw it to him. Very good foot speed. Can just do all the jobs at a number of positions for us, great competition here against Dade High School. Loves to play. Plays basketball right now. You can see him string this play out and run it down. Another big physical presence, a guy that can run and get to the quarterback.

Playing down inside. Took his team to the finals. State of California. Great ability to shuffle down inside and then redirect out on a naked boot. With that size, you can chase down the quarterback.

That's a rundown of the 23 players. Obviously five of them early admits.

I think it's been talked about, but 18 of these players have signed national letters of intent. Five have come in as early enrollees. 14 states. And to get to those 14 states, it requires a committed staff. And I want to emphasize that again.

This business of recruiting is certainly not an exact science. But let me tell you what has to happen. You have to have guys that are willing to grind it out. It's hard work.

You know, this is work. You have to work at recruiting. There's been a number of stories about what happened in this recruiting effort or what happened in that. Let me tell you it's about working at it and our staff did a great job of working at it. They were diligent. We would not take no for an answer, especially when we had yes at the beginning. But, more importantly, it was staying after it. And understanding that in recruiting, especially at the University of Notre Dame, you're going into everybody else's backyard. And they do

not want you to take their kids, whether it be in the south or in the east or the west or the Midwest, BCS programs, that being their base, they don't give up easy.

So it requires coaches that are working at it. I think we did some numbers. I think in just two months' time, you know, I put on over 15,000 miles in terms of air travel. 54 or 55 hours in the air. It just requires a lot of time. And you can't have six guys recruiting. You can't have well I'm going to have six real good position coaches and three professional recruiters, all nine at Notre Dame have to recruit. And I think I'm see that all nine of our coaches played a very important part in putting this class together. With that, we'll open it up to questions.

**Q. You mentioned a lot of these guys have versatility. Some guys were projected as defensive ends. When do you start sifting through that? How many of these guys do you really want at defensive end ultimately?**

BRIAN KELLY: I just want the very best players. And I think that will all sort itself out very early in the process. I don't think it's going to be two, three years down the road. I think it sorts itself out very quickly, and I know that we've got a great understanding of our players, even in this one year. More than anything else, we know where our guys will best fit our program.

So I'm very confident in a very short period of time a lot of this will kind of take care of itself. But it's great to have -- look, if your assets are on the defensive line, that's a good place to start and that's where it will start.

**Q. Now that you have the whole class together, you mentioned you were going to move some people around, I think one of your guys already announced this move --**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, that was interesting.

**Q. Wondered if you could talk about that move, are there any others on the way now that you know what you have in this class?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know my style. I'm going to try to get the best players on the field, first of all. And now that we're a year into it, we're so far along. We don't have to concentrate on how their locker room looks and what laundry loop to take out, which we did last year at this time. We can now concentrate on where our players best fit in helping themselves as well as our football team.

So I'm certain there's going to be some more moves. I'm not ready to announce those. We've got a new tweeting ban, so we'll make sure

that none of those get out. But as you know, we did make one move. And Bennett will obviously be moved to the cornerback position. But I'm certain there's going to be more along the way.

When we get those formalized we'll certainly announce them.

**Q. Just a little follow-up on Bennett. Why that move? What makes him a good fit there?**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, three scholarship corners would be one reason why. Obviously there's a need at that position. Secondly, I think we all saw his ability in special teams to tackle. Very solid tackler. Has great speed. Good ball skills. He's a tough kid. So when you're talking about the criteria necessary -- and he's played in games, he's played. So if we have an eye towards 2012, here's a young man now that's going to have a couple of players playing, experience playing in big games, and he has the criteria necessary physically to excel at the position.

**Q. Golson's an intriguing guy on a number of levels, but on his quarterbacking level coming in early, what are your hopes and expectations of him going into 2011? Do you want him to compete for the starting spot? Is he a package guy? How do you look at it?**

BRIAN KELLY: That's a good question. I think as we get our hands on this, at the quarterback position, it's pretty clear that Tommy Reese and Everett Golson are two different quarterbacks relative to the style. So I think what you'll see you'll see Tommy Reese and most likely Dayne Crist and the other quarterbacks fit into that category.

Then on the other side of the ledger you'll have Everett Golson. And within our offensive structure, we can go full out spread, you know, with Everett Golson. Or we can modify it based upon the quarterback's strengths with the other quarterbacks that we have.

So what we're going to try to do is really allow him to be Everett Golson. You know, allow him to get his skill set on the field. So I think that's what you'll see in the spring is we're going to allow him to be who he is.

**Q. Talk about the advantages you feel like running the 3-4 presents you in recruiting, where Ben Cancell may have been seen as a tweener for a lot of 4-3 programs. For you guys, he's a perfect fit so you can move on him early. Do you find running 3-4 is an advantage**

**in terms of identifying particular profile guys?**

BRIAN KELLY: I think this has been talked about a lot. There's such a competitive run for defensive linemen throughout the country. So obviously three down versus four down allows you now to take those tweeners and add them to your defense.

So the 3-4 was not a defense that I jumped in to gain a recruiting advantage as much as it was to get great flexibility in defending offenses.

Having said that, we all know that getting a lot of defensive linemen at any one school is a difficult chore. And so I think both of those came into play here. Here's somebody that fits in the 3-4 and just happens to be one of those guys that we targeted early on.

So I think both of those things in play. Not having four down linemen to worry about and having four linebackers that help us in the recruiting process.

**Q. You mentioned kind of the work that goes into recruiting here, did it surprise you how many miles your staff had to log to pull this class together and just could you quantify just how much different the perspective is here from some of your past stops where far away might be a border over?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, I don't even know if it's just me on the last stop. But if you take a look at the major BCS programs, you know, they're recruiting five or six states. That's a lot. So regardless of where I was, just look at the nation in terms of how they recruit compared to the 14 states. I think Stanford's the only school that even comes close to recruiting that many states.

And it's a lot of work. I think what I've learned more than anything else is how much work our staff has to put in. Our assistant coaches in terms of, I'm fortunate that a lot of times I don't have to fly commercial. But our staff has to fly commercial. They've got to get in and out of airports and you've got to have a great network of support, which we do, in getting our coaches into geographical areas.

That's why there's a lot of cross-over with our staff. It's not just one guy recruiting an area, because we have to be able to get other coaches in that area as well, because it's so difficult for us to saturate a particular geographical area where we can put five guys in an area.

We can't do that. We've got to go from Brooklyn to the East Bay of San Francisco. And so cross-recruiting with all of your staff. And that's why I emphasized earlier you gotta have nine guys that can recruit.

**Q. One guy where you had four guys in his living room at once was Stephon Tuitt. Can you just take us inside what that week was like when you have them, you don't have them, and then you have them again 24 hours later?**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, when you believe that the young man understands what Notre Dame's about and the family understands what Notre Dame's about and he's been confused in the process by professional recruiters that have been doing it for 20 years, you feel like listen let's eliminate the confusion in the process.

So having that presence there was really, for us, making a statement and making sure that what we were talking about and what he saw when he came to Notre Dame, what his family saw, was really the truth of the matter.

And sometimes you have to overcommunicate that message. And we had four coaches there to make certain that that message was clear.

**Q. This quote was attributed to you, I think it was kind of paraphrased during the Sun Bowl. You can manufacture offense but you have to recruit defense. I don't know if you actually said that or not.**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, you can't fake it on defense. You can fake it a little bit on offense. But defensively, you know, you gotta win the one-on-one match-ups. You've got to win those match-ups. Sometimes you cannot block the defensive end and option him. Sometimes you can do things with misdirection.

But on defense, it's about players making plays, and you can't hide there. And so the recruiting efforts start with the defensive line, and they work out from there. And you can't fake it on defense. You've got to be able to -- you've got to be able to recruit the players.

**Q. As you said, back to those battles, you said before we're not going to beg anyone to come to Notre Dame, how do you balance that not begging anybody with keeping those lines of communication open?**

BRIAN KELLY: I didn't say we didn't beg. We won't go down on both knees. There's a difference between the two.

You know, I think you really have to be able to continue to sell the message of Notre Dame. It's real clear. Number one, you would come to Notre Dame for a degree. And what that does for you -- that's number one.

So the player has to have a connection there. If they have no value of a degree from Notre Dame, move to the next guy. Number two, he's coming to play for Notre Dame and win championships at Notre Dame. That's gotta be clear, that he's coming here and he's going to be part of a team at the University of Notre Dame.

And, three, he wants to be developed, physically, socially, spiritually, in his skill. And those are the three things that we stayed with as our bullet points. We did not waiver from those three things. So if we didn't get a connection from you on one of those three things, we're moving to the next guy.

But, by and large, we got a great connection with all of our players. So when some of the players lost sight of that, we would have to go back in and talk about those three things. We didn't promise playing time. We didn't promise ten national championships. We didn't promise anything. We told them, this is what we're about, and this is what you'll get if you come to Notre Dame.

**Q. Last year you said defensive ends, what we really need to focus on next year, went out and got some of the best defensive ends in the country. What's next year? What's the focus for next year?**

BRIAN KELLY: I think each year you evaluate what your needs are. I think we have to get some depth at the back end of our defense. We have to continue to build depth there. That's absolutely crucial. I think if you look at the running back position, that's one that stands out for us. We're always going to take a quarterback. That's always in the mix.

And probably playmakers, you're looking at playmakers on the offensive side of the ball as the criteria. Who is the guy that can potentially change the game on offense, and then from a depth position, we have to gain more depth in the back end of our defense.

**Q. It seems the two items that are always up for debate most, why isn't there a playoff and why isn't there an early signing period for players and everything? What is your own thought given that how much you have to work and you even get somebody like an Everett Golson who originally commits to Carolina and if there had been an early signing period, you wouldn't have had the opportunity to sign him, what is your own view on that?**

BRIAN KELLY: There's going to be wins and losses on that front every year. I think what it

does is it protects the young man from, as I mentioned before, nine experienced recruiters who can really change the argument pro to con very easily. In other words, I believe in the message that I was getting from X school, now I'm getting it from Y.

Those young men are 17 years old, 18 years old, and they're getting bombarded with professional recruitment for months on end. And I think the early signing period allows that to end at a period where the young man can make a decision and go. That's why I'm in favor of it. Because I think it becomes absolutely almost possible for a young man to change -- it's hard. You're going to change your mind. Or you're just going to say, listen, I'm not going to say anything until the last day. And that's hard to do as well. You know that.

Part of the process is those kids get a lot of phone calls from you folks. So that's why I'm in favor of an early signing period, from that perspective. Yeah, there's going to be some wins and losses relative maybe you don't get an Everett Golson but you get somebody else. And as far as the playoff goes, I'm a BCS guy.

**Q. It said that it's the college presidents perhaps that are opposed to the playoffs the most. What's the opposition to an early signing period? Where is that coming from?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, I think it's -- you can make an argument that it puts more time in the summer on the assistant coaches. But it shouldn't be the focus on time for the assistant coaches as much as it is how much it puts on the student-athlete. That young man in high school and trying to make a decision.

So you can make the cases -- I think maybe the case is made that the process now would pick up even more steam in the down months, so to speak, the Junes, the Julys, Augusts, where those assistant coaches generally had taken some time off or you had your own camps. So I think that's been a strong argument.

I think the other argument is there's been some cherry picking by the larger conferences. And that's served them pretty well. And they've got a strong vote when it comes to making that legislation change. So I think those are maybe some of the things.

**Q. One more item on Everett. Have you ever as a coach used separate packages in a game, in a two-quarterback type system. Let's**

say like years ago when Urban Meyer used Chris Leak and special packages, Tim Tebow, goal line situations, is that something you could envision yourself doing and have you ever done that?

BRIAN KELLY: I have. But not to the level where we would split the game. It's been in situations where goal line, I used to bring in another quarterback to run a goal line offense. Or as a change-up, but I've never gone into a season and had, okay, you're going to run the first and the third quarter and you're going to be in the second and fourth quarter. I haven't gone into that level. And I hope I don't have to.

**Q. You mentioned the expanded travel that you've had to deal with at this stop. Could you just talk a little bit of the challenge maybe that you experienced during the season in terms of preparation from the game, and Coach Elston had to be in North Carolina or Coach Alford had to be in Florida, and how actually -- did you kind of learn as you went along through the season?**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, I think part of it was a learning process. In other words, do you use up -- think about it for a second. Let's take a young man like the Atkinsons, for example, do you use up your one official visit during the season? Right? And then have that great lag time in terms of Notre Dame and visiting Notre Dame over a few months.

At the same time, they're getting bombarded by every Pac-10 school, you know, about hey, visit us, visit us. And they took their one visit early in the year. Now there's three months, two months, excuse me, where they're getting hammered, hey, take another visit. That was a long time ago. But yet you want them to see a game-day experience.

The weather's good, too. So they're very -- they have to be tactical decisions during the season. And I needed to go through a season to see that. Because it also becomes sometimes, I don't want to use the word "disruptive," but you lose your focus a little bit when you're hosting recruits and you're getting ready to play whomever, Stanford, Michigan, Purdue, whatever.

So it's a fine balance. We have to -- here's what I know: We have to recruit during the regular season. At what level I think is a case-by-case decision based on the things that I laid out.

**Q. You mentioned Ben Cuccell might have been the guy at the top of your board. Could you talk maybe about a couple of guys**

**that might have been at the top of your board while you were at Cincinnati and when you transitioned were still top guys like maybe a Brad Carrico?**

BRIAN KELLY: Sure. I would say three guys we offered at Cincinnati: Carrico, Eilar Hardy were three guys and Jarrett Grace. Obviously we had a knowledge base relative to those kinds of players. And we knew that they were outstanding young men, because we got a chance to evaluate them prior to coming to Notre Dame. So I think those guys, those three in particular had a leg up from that standpoint. We already had a relationship with them.

**Q. Coach, you mentioned Golson coming in, being able to work in the spring. Just the early enrollee process in general, especially with this group and the talent you have there, how much it helps with guys like Lynch and Williams and being able to make them ready maybe by September?**

BRIAN KELLY: Certainly the football component is one. But the assimilation to being a Notre Dame student is really the biggest piece. These young men get this opportunity to really understand Notre Dame and the rigors of the classroom, the community, being in the dorms, finding the dining hall, understanding all those things before they have to play in the fall.

So the football element is big. But the assimilation into being a Notre Dame student is really where this is about. Plus the fact is they're getting a head start on their degree. And they're getting a jump on the biggest component. So I would lean towards the assimilation into being a Notre Dame student first and then certainly the football element is important as well.

**Q. And you talk about Tuitt and the process of getting him. What was this morning like when you find out the fax machine in Austin is not working because of power outage?**

BRIAN KELLY: I don't know that there was much concern other than Chuck Martin was a little bit disconcerted when I asked him about why we didn't have Tuitt's letter yet. He was mumbling about something with e-mail and scanning and of course I didn't know what he meant by that.

But I think at first we kind of looked at each other and knew it was fine, because we had prior to that we had known the steps leading into how this was going to be a little bit of an interesting process in getting it all together. So there wasn't

oh my goodness, you know, he's not going to sign.

It's just I think wrapped up the difficult recruiting process at times. And we got it done.

**Q. Finally for me, to get a guy like Niklas on the last day on signing day, I don't know when he exactly told you, maybe he did tell you over the weekend, but how much does that add to get a big-time guy like that at the very end?**

BRIAN KELLY: I think it's our West Coast presence. And Mike Denbrock did a terrific job with Troy, in particular, all of our coaches. We hit that area pretty hard. We got to over 25 schools. I think we kicked up some dust on the West Coast, obviously with the Atkinson brothers, certainly, in San Francisco and now down in LA at Servite High School was huge for us. And continuing that presence on the West Coast as we move forward, I think this continues to build on our presence in the West Coast.

**Q. You talked about recruits from 14 different states, and Notre Dame has always recruited from across the country. But from a logistical standpoint does it make more sense for you to tighten it up a bit more to a more Midwest and more Midwestern or Northeastern range?**

BRIAN KELLY: Absolutely. If the demographics met the amount of potential BCS players, if we could just stay in the Midwest, Tim, I'm all for that. The fact of the matter is when you break it down, the demographics speak differently.

They speak towards the Texas and the Georgias and Floridas, and certainly we have to be in those areas. Does that mean that we can't get the best guys out of the Midwest? Absolutely, no, we should. We should be involved in the very best players in the Midwest. But the reality of recruiting is you know those areas have shrunk in terms of numbers relative to BCS players and they're moving into those other areas I just mentioned.

Yeah, we would love to keep it regional. We have to be where the players are.

**Q. I think I count 10 of the 23 listed at 6'5" or larger. Can you explain why that's important, why you feel you need to seek players of that stature?**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, I think obviously long levers, more power, certainly the ability to cover more space. To use some of the things necessary from a skills standpoint, longer is going to give you a better chance to succeed at the jobs that you're asked to do.

Certainly from an offensive line standpoint, I think we all know that the tackle is being longer, allows us that opportunity. If there's going to be any moving of personnel, you have to keep in mind, can they play on either side of the ball. If you're 6'2" as a defensive player and you can't play on defense, you may have a hard time playing on the offensive line.

So that profile starts to expand relative to the way we recruit because when we put you in that power category you have to have the ability to play on either side of the ball.

**Q. You mentioned big skill guys you'll sift through it, make a decision down the road. But in terms of receiver, can you give us an idea like Atkinson and Daniels, do you have a specific receiver spot in mind for those guys?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, that's an evolving package for us right now, quite frankly. As I said, we have to sort out the quarterback position first and then we know we've got one guy who has a position. That's Michael Floyd. Then I think everything else becomes a very competitive situation.

So he's not going to be the starting W. I can tell you that. He's going to play one of those other two positions. And both of those guys will have a chance to compete right away.

**Q. Fifth year, is that settled? Is Matt Romine a possibility at all?**

BRIAN KELLY: Is fifth-year settled? It's not settled.

**Q. Is he a possibility?**

BRIAN KELLY: Is he a possibility? He's not a possibility. He's not a possibility. How did I do?

I'd like to help you a little bit but I've already been slapped once on the fifth year thing. I don't like getting slapped twice. So I'm going to do my job.

**Q. With the flexibility in your recruiting model across the profiles, you know you occasionally you have to move away from a prospect that might not be open to that flexibility of moving into college. With a wider recruiting net, you referenced you used to recruit 300 miles, now do you note more players that aren't open to that, or you're recruiting more people occasionally and they're not going to be open to it?**

BRIAN KELLY: I would say that it's less in

terms of I don't want to play that position or -- once we're able to communicate what we're doing and how we're doing it, instead of listening to somebody else who knows more sometimes about our system than we do, which is absolutely ridiculous, as long as we get an opportunity to show you what our plans are for you and continue that message, we're fine.

Most of these young men, they want to be in the best position to help the team win. And obviously each one of the young men that we have on this roster, they have dreams, too, about getting a degree and playing in the NFL. And that's fine. I want those kind of guys.

So I think it's less about, no, I'm only this, and when we do get that, that sends up a bit of a red flag for us. And that doesn't mean we're going to drop them. But there is a bit of a red flag if somebody is so, hey, I'm just this. That concerns us sometimes.

**Q. Obviously you had to recruit a little bit for need as you noted at defensive end and power and skilled cornerback. With the wider net do you see the possibilities growing for big skill in the future? I assume there's more big skill athletes available to you than there used to be?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, there are. There's certainly the Ishaq Williamses of the world that can certainly play any position at 6'5", 245 pounds. There's more of those guys available. It allows you to fit them in. Anthony Rabasa played with his hand down but he could play up. So our defensive structure allows us to cast that net, as you speak of.

And I think those are two great illustrations of that.

**Q. This is kind of a broad question about the group. When you look at all 23, can you just kind of gauge your overall satisfaction with the group. Not a lot of surprises today but if you were to see that list say a few months ago, say these are our guys, how would you feel about that as a group?**

BRIAN KELLY: I really would like to say that the plan came together. We had a plan. And that's clear. I think I spoke at this press conference last year and said, listen, 2011 our focus is the edge of our defense. It's defensive linemen. It's speed. It's length.

And you know we hit that. So I would say more than anything else is the plan came together. We had a plan. And it's nice when a plan comes together the way it did with this recruiting class.

Now, the next step and that is, okay, they haven't played a down in Notre Dame yet. The next part is what we believe we're really good at. And that is developing these young men.

**Q. Is that plan something you didn't quite have the luxury of last year, just given the way the time frame and all that?**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, if I said I had a plan last year, I lied. So just write that down. We were scrambling to hold the class together that was recruited by the previous staff, really.

And then we grabbed a couple of guys we thought were guys that could help us out and they have. So really it was about putting it together. As I said, at this time last year, we had pictures up in our locker room that showed our guys how their lockers needed to look.

We're so far past that going to year two now that we're really concentrating on getting better. And that's a good feeling.

**Q. At this point is there one or two guys who might be able to single out and say we really think we can get them on the field early next year and expect something from them?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, I think -- anytime you have the depth with the defensive line, you would think the number of players that can play that position, somebody may break through in that position.

But, again, it's so hard. The guys that are going to be here, the five guys that are here, they got a shot, too, because we're going to get a chance to evaluate them against Zach Martin, you know, Taylor Devin, guys that have played quality competition, they're going to give us probably the best model of who can play.

But, again, I would say that there's a lot of defensive players that are going to get a chance to compete.

**Q. You talked a little bit about Tuitt's recruitment and how that ended. Lynch's process seemed to have some ups and downs, too. Could you talk about that a little bit?**

BRIAN KELLY: I would probably point back to all of the factors in recruiting at Notre Dame. The early visit. We came up so early in the process. And it was such a great length of time in between the visit.

I get one shot at them off campus. I get that one visit. That's it, when I'm off campus, during a recruiting period. We couldn't use that up

because he was an early enrollee. So I didn't get that face-to-face visit with him other than when he came on campus. Being in a hotbed for recruiting. They knew their competition.

In other words, when he committed to us, everybody in the country knew who they had to work against. They didn't have to work against Auburn or Florida, or Miami. They just had to beat Notre Dame, because he committed to Notre Dame.

So all of those dynamics came into play. And 17 years old. Got a great family. His mom was able to do a great job of bringing him back to the message and what was unique about Notre Dame.

And so all the things that I mentioned earlier in this recruiting process came into play with Aaron. And our staff just kept at it, and we got back to where why he made this decision to come to Notre Dame in the first place and we're happy he's here.

**Q. On Ishaq Williams, the whole Bob Diaco up at 4:30?**

BRIAN KELLY: I think this is starting to sound like a mini series. The Bob Diaco mini series. It goes to what I talked about. There are other instances I could point out. Mike Elston sitting in the car in front of his house after he played in the state championship game.

I don't know if Mike's here, but I think Mike was in his car for four and a half hours waiting for him.

And those things that don't get talked about. Bob did a great job in the recruiting process, but Mike Elston was involved. Chuck Martin was involved. All of our coaches were involved in this process. And it just takes a lot of time and effort in the process and it's worked out pretty good for us.

**Q. Over the last two months you had such a great run there, did you get a sense of momentum swinging one way or the other as you picked up win after win after win, or is it a bigger picture than that and kids don't focus on two straight wins?**

BRIAN KELLY: Kids focus on wins. I mean, that's definitely part of the equation here. So winning helps in this process. Does that mean you're going to lose all your commits? No. But I think those that are the high profile, high prized recruits out there, are getting inundated with, hey, look, you can come to us and we're winning games or you can go there and you lose.

So you have to obviously confront that as a reality in the recruiting process. So winning games certainly helps you. There's more to it than that. But certainly that plays, if it's a decision between Notre Dame and Florida and Florida State, you better win some football games, too.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everyone.

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