

WITH HEAD COACH JOE JORDANO



How do you feel about the fall and where your team now stands?

I was pleased with the progress of our team this fall. We had a few injuries that I am concerned about, but the majority of the fall was injury-free and productive. Our objectives this fall were clear and my staff and I felt very good about how we took to the style of play and the focus and intensity of the team was solid. We need to continue to improve in all areas – get stronger and quicker.

What is the most important factor now with three months before official practices begin?

The most important factor, I believe, is to utilize every day to improve in some aspect of the game. It is imperative that we stay healthy, get stronger and do well academically. We need every member of this team to be in a position to contribute this spring. The only way to get there is to do quality work now.

Who has emerged as the team leader?

There have been several players that have emerged as leaders. Quite frankly, the majority of our team members have solid leadership qualities. This is a team that has experienced some transition with our coaching staff and it has not missed a beat. They have continued to follow the process that has been established for them and have excelled during this time.

What is the focus for the winter period?

We want to finish strong this fall. As I said before, make every day count. Once we return after the holiday's there is minimal time to prepare for the season. It is critical that we leave campus at semester in a great physical and mental state of mind and be ultra focused when we return. I really can't wait to get started.



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WITH **JOE LEONARD**

AND **JOHN SCHULTZ**

PITT
baseball

How did the fall season go and how did it compare to last year?

[Joe] I felt this fall went extremely well, everyone competed and worked hard. I think this team has a lot of fun playing together.

[John] I thought we were more prepared and energized this year. Everyone competed at a high level and there was even a little rivalry between our two scrimmage teams. At the end, Coach Jordano told us that it was his most fun fall season in 15 years.

What were Coach Jordano's points of emphasis?

[Joe] We need to forget about last year and focus on the season ahead of us. Hard work and going out and competing were big points for us to work towards.

[John] Coach was clear on point that we can't repeat last season. On the field we need energy everyday because we have to hustle every play. We have to be fundamentally solid. We're a scrappy kind of team, we're not going to overpower other teams offensively or defensively, we will work harder than any other team out there to win a Big East Championship. Also, I think something often overlooked is that Coach Jordano emphasizes that we have to conduct ourselves in a socially responsible manner and continue to excel academically.

What is your focus for the remainder of the off-season?

[Joe] My focus is to get stronger and faster each day in the weight room. As a team I believe we all need to keep up with hitting and other fundamentals as well as continuing to grow together as one unit.

[John] I think we all have the same off-season goals; stay healthy, continue to work hard in the weight room to get faster and stronger and continue to work hard and excel in the classroom.

Your thoughts on the new players?

[Joe] They are going to play a key role this season. Some will see more playing time than others, but everyone has something to contribute

[John] I believe each guy was brought in to fill a specific roll on the team. They've been a good addition to our team so far and will make a positive impact on our starting lineup in the spring.

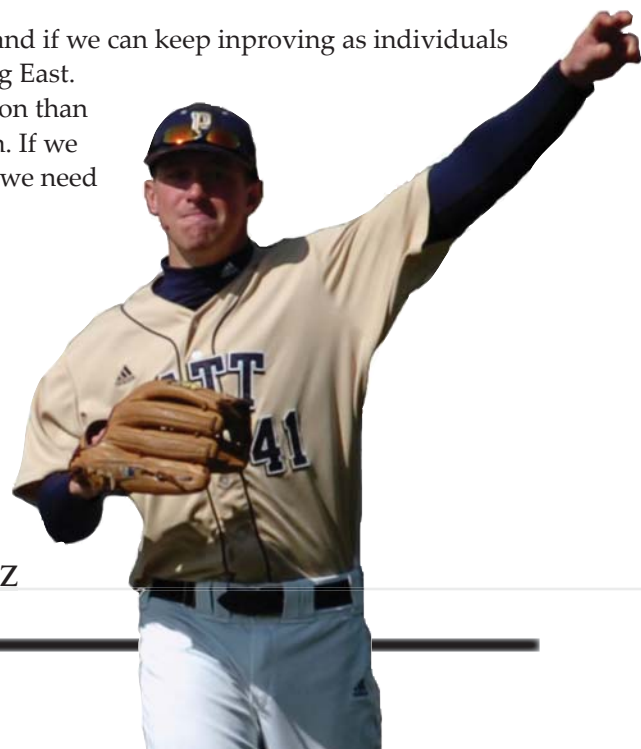
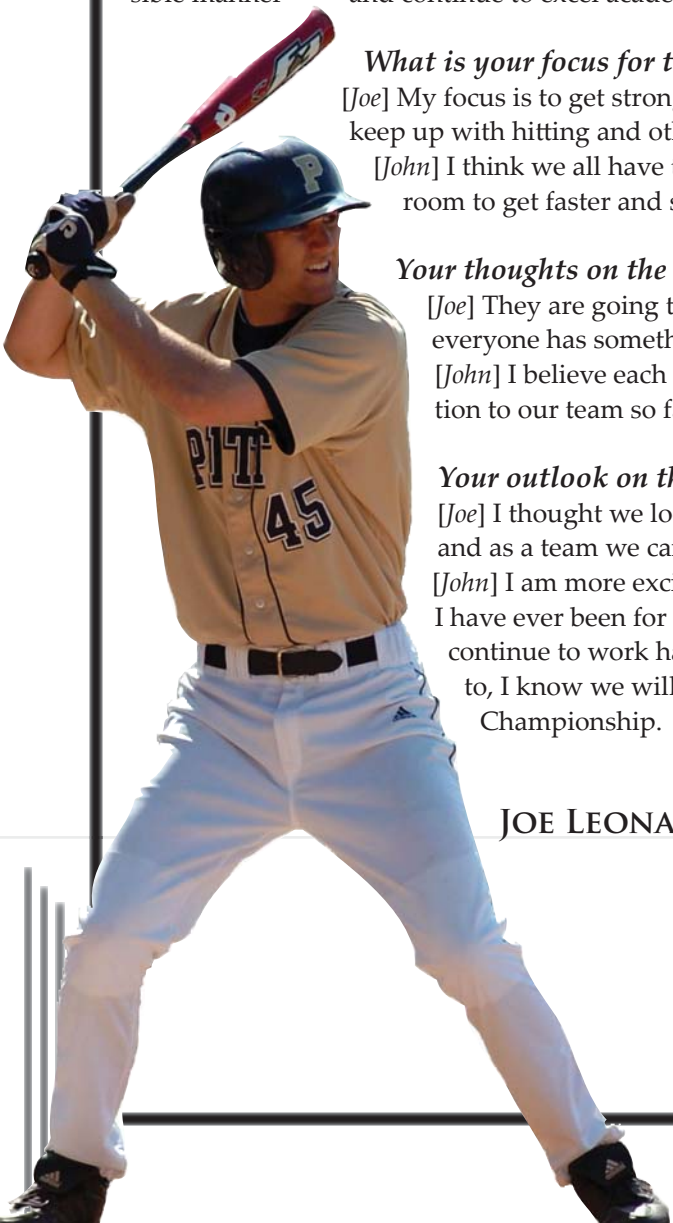
Your outlook on the 2009 season?

[Joe] I thought we looked very good in the fall and if we can keep improving as individuals and as a team we can be the best team in the Big East.

[John] I am more excited for this upcoming season than I have ever been for any other preceding season. If we continue to work hard and do the little things we need to, I know we will compete for the Big East Championship.

JOE LEONARD

JOHN SCHULTZ



WITH HEAD COACH JOE JORDANO



Where is the team at now in terms of the schedule you entered the fall with?

I am pleased with our progress. My staff and I have kept our goals simple and clear. Each player understands what is expected of him each day. That is what we are focused on – how we play/practice everyday. To this point, we have done a solid job.

Has anyone emerged as the leader of the team?

Leadership comes in many forms. I believe that there are several individuals that have stepped their game up and are leading by example. The most important aspect of the fall, is to teach and mandate that regardless of the type of day the player is having, he has to perform at our level of expectation. No exceptions. So the fall gives us an opportunity to see players compete, and play the game our way. If they want to be an everyday player, there is NO exception to this level of play.

How is the health of everyone, especially those who missed part of last season due to injury?

We have been hit with a few tough injuries. Gary Bucuren had knee surgery and is expected to be back in time for the season. Rick Breymer has not thrown this fall, but is just resting and this past week, our team got hit with the flu bug and we had several players out. For the most part, we have been okay. Health is an extremely critical part of our equation. We cannot have another year like last. No team can recover from that.

When does fall ball end and what is in store for the team come winter?

We will begin our World Series this Sunday and it will continue through October 19th. We will have a Full Fall Review on Monday the 20th and we will call it a fall at that point. Then we will have individual meetings and begin the second phase of our strength/conditioning program, as well as, individual work with our players. This will take us to the end of the semester. It has gone very quickly. We have a lot of work to do in the off-season and our entire program looks forward to that time. Opening Day is only 132 days away. We cannot wait.



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AT THE PLATE

WITH **HEAD COACH**
Joe Jordano

PITT
baseball

Do you see any of the freshmen additions coming in and contributing immediately?

I believe that all of our incoming team members, both JC transfers and freshman, will have a significant impact on our program. I like their character and skills and am anxious to get to work pulling these guys together.

What are the teams' goals during the fall part of the schedule?

Our objectives in the fall are simple. 1 - See what we have and what the strengths and weaknesses are not only individually but as a team. This will enable us to develop a solid off-season plan. 2 - Teach the way we play the game. There has to be a clear definition of how we play each pitch - it is our top priority that every player understands it and executes it on every pitch. 3 - Establish a solid process of execution. It is critical that we focus on the process of becoming better baseball players and a better team, by doing it the right way everyday. 4 - Compete. I want our team to compete everyday. Never take anything for granted and brace each day as an opportunity to become a better player and a better team.

What needs to be done to improve on the 2008 season?

Based on the tradition we have established over the past decade, the 2008 season was very disappointing in many areas. Firstly, we did not play everyday with passion.

Secondly, we were thin. Too many injuries to key personnel.

Thirdly, we were young - starting as many as 5-7 freshmen & sophomores on a given day. With that said, I believe my staff and I have put together a very solid plan for this fall. We have many new faces and our younger players from last season are a year older. We must be diligent in our approach and take advantage of every opportunity to get better.

Barring any injuries, where do you see the '09 team?

I expect us to compete for a Big East Championship as I do every season.

Who will be expected to provide leadership this season?

We need leadership. This is an invaluable asset for any team. There are plenty of individuals that are capable of leading, I will do all I can to empower those individuals. Leadership is included in our formula for success. I look forward to seeing it evolve.



Joe Jordano

