

Pitt Head Coach Todd Graham  
Spring Football – Day 7

### **Opening Statement:**

“A lot of guys are beat up and banged up from the scrimmage – 14 or 15 guys that weren’t able to practice today. Half of those guys are limited from injury from the fall – surgery and things like that. The guys are responding well though: the new is wearing off. We were outside for the first time today. Guys are working hard.

“Probably the biggest area that I feel good about is our run defense and running the football. We have a lot of installing left to do. We’ve been very simple on defense and now we need to start installing a lot from here on out. We didn’t have very many guys at linebacker. We looked at **Chris Jacobson** at center a little bit. We’re trying to feel around and get the right make-up at the front. That’s probably the biggest area that we need to develop and get some consistency with – the center position. **Jack Lippert** went to the defense position – he played that in high school and wanted to do that, so we gave him the opportunity.

“The tempo is nowhere where it needs to be – I challenge the guys with that everyday. We’re going to get the high-octane one way or another. It was a positive day out there and the guys did a good job.”

### **On Bryan Murphy:**

“We have him at the defensive end, outside linebacker position. We have **Brandon Lindsey** that is not practicing. You’ll see that during the season too – where we’re moving guys around. We wanted to look at Murphy a little bit over there, and mix things up a little bit. Whether it will stay that way or not. I’m very impressed with Murphy. He’s a guy that, no question, really exemplifies what we’re trying to find in football players here. He’s not the quickest guy, but he’s tough, hard-nosed and physical. He believes and buys into everything that we’re doing. We’re trying to find the best fit for him. We’re trying to find the right mix for all these guys, it makes us multiple. We really haven’t done much so we’re a one-front team right now. Come Thursday we’ll put in our stack, our 3-4, standing up like that. We’ll get a little more of that working. We’ll be a team that runs very multiple front-wise.”

### **On Chris Jacobson at center:**

“I like what I saw out of Jacobson today. I’m very high on him – I like his attitude. He’s coming off a knee injury, so he’s not a 100% and he’s been very impressive still. I think with his injury it’s very hard for him to bend – he’s a 6’7” guy. He’s fired up with anything we ask him to do. I’m very impressed with him, **Lucas Nix** and **Jordan Gibbs**.

“I feel great about our offensive line and our depth, **Khaynin Mosley-Smith**, we have a lot of different guys. The center position is the one we need to secure up. When you run no-huddle and you signal in, the center becomes somewhat of a quarterback guy. We’ll see how it goes – whether its **Brandon Sacco**, Jacobson, or **Greg Gaskins** we need someone to step up. Operating that offense, if there is a bad snap it’s a big problem. It needs to be perfect.”

### **On the offensive line:**

“The guys that are really competing are Gibbs and **Juantez Hollins** – he’s competing. Jacobson at guard or center, Sacco and Gaskins at right tackle and then **Lucas Nix** who can play tackle or guard. Those tackles are critical with what they’re doing, so those edges are important to protect. **Matt Rotheram** has been injured so that has set us back there.”

#### **On the injured players:**

“Brandon Lindsey is going through all the individual stuff and then group stuff separate. He could probably go, but I don’t want to push it. I’m trying to be careful – there is no need to push him in there right away. **Todd Thomas** might be able to do some drills later this week. **Greg Williams** should be able to factor in later. Lindsey is getting good work though; we see that he can be special at the ‘Panther’ position with what we’re doing. **Antwuan Reed** we’re being cautious with. Those guys are still practicing and going out there. **Arthur Doakes** factors in there as well. There are a lot of guys not out there and that gives you a lot of encouragement.

#### **On outstanding players:**

“**Ray Graham** has been the guy that when you look out there and think that he’s a game-breaker. His ability to catch the football is what is going to be very special with us. I’ve been very impressed with **Tino Sunseri**. We have challenged him, pushed and competed at that position and he has done that. He comes to work everyday. He’s very smart; he studies and brings it out on the field.

“Our offensive and defensive line too. Our defensive line is an area that we can be pretty good at.”

#### **On going into the blue and gold game”**

“I would like to get more people practicing. We need to get better fundamentally. We need to establish the parameters of how we’re going to work, being efficient, tempo and discipline without getting silly penalties. We need to continue to build trust and relationships, that’s something that is always a challenge. We’re working hard on relationships and fundamentals. I would like to come out of spring football with a lot more fundamentals.”