

December 14, 2011



An Interview With:

COACH TODD GRAHAM

MICHAEL CROW: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Michael Crow. I'm president of Arizona State University. I'd like to thank you for spending a few minutes with us while we have an opportunity to introduce Arizona State University's new football coach, Todd Graham. I'd like to recognize three of the regents, Regent Chair Fred DuVal, Regent Ernest Calderon and Regent Bob McLendon. The regents are the governing board for the University, and they're obviously very interested in the success of the University and the success of Arizona State University athletics, so I'd like to thank the regents for being here today and for their support.

Let me put Arizona State University football into perspective. We have the same objective with ASU football that we have with Arizona State University, and that is our goal is to be among the best in everything that we do. Our goal academically is to be an institution where all of our programs are achieving at the highest level in the academic sense, whatever the school happens to be. Our students are advancing to success and graduating; our institution is impactful and linked to the community; our institution is a pride for the community; it generates support and excitement in the community at all levels and through all programs.

We have the same expectation for ASU athletics and specifically within ASU athletics the same expectation for ASU football. And let me be very clear: We hear occasionally from folks that are out there that seem to wonder whether we have a commitment to football and football success. Our commitment is so devoted to football and its success that we have set a very high

expectation. In the Pac-12 conference our goal is, in football, to strive to win the Southern Division and compete in the championship game every single season, strive to compete to be in the Rose Bowl every single season, which has only happened twice in the last 30 plus years of the institution. That is our goal, that is our expectation, and to do it with young men who are students pursuing their degrees for graduation from this institution, to do it in a way in which we meet all of the expectations of our sister institutions as represented through the NCAA, and to do it with honor and dignity on the football field and off the football field with our players.

That means then when one searches for a coach, one has to find an individual that can accomplish many things simultaneously, a coach that has the ability to teach as a master teacher. Beyond teacher, there's this notion of coaching football itself, which goes well beyond teaching. A person who knows the Xs and Os, who knows how to inspire young men, who knows how to build leaders among young men, who knows how to win and who knows how to lose, particularly in losing to make certain that when the other team leaves the field, they say, I don't know who those guys were and I don't know how we won, but that was one heck of a football team, where every football game is a heck of a football game.

And so our search has been carried out over the last couple of weeks. It has been very different than has been reported by the press. It's been very focused on finding the right talent, very focused on bringing that right talent here. Our team has been led by vice president for university athletics Lisa Love and director of Sun Devil athletics as well as Steve Patterson, our managing director of the Sun Devil sports group and the chief operating officer for Sun Devil athletics.

So it's a great day for us in that we believe that we've found a coach that can help us move to the next level. Now, let me also commend and

thank the efforts of Coach Erickson and his staff for their effort in advancing Sun Devil football to a higher level of performance. We made progress, we made a lot of progress. We'd like to make more progress, and Lisa Love, Vice President Lisa Love, will introduce our new coach, and he can talk a little bit about how we're going to make that progress.

LISA LOVE: First thing I'd like to do is I'd like to get our new coach suited up. There you go, Coach.

COACH GRAHAM: I want to have my family come up. This is my wife Penny Graham, this is my son Michael, and this is my son Bo. We also have Natalie, Hank, Haylee and Dakota, who couldn't make it on this short of a call, and they're such a big support for me. I'm a family guy. This has been just an overwhelming for our family to get the opportunity to be here, and as we landed today, what made it worthwhile. It was very difficult to -- the last few hours, obviously, but when we cleared the clouds, to see my little one up on the window ecstatic to be in Phoenix, to see tears coming down my wife's eyes to be in a place we've always dreamed of living and see my son Bo with jubilation on his face, it made it worth it, and I know I made a decision that was best for my family.

I'm so grateful to President Crow and to Lisa, to Steve, for this great opportunity. I want to introduce Penny's parents, Gene and Pam Wakefield, Michael's grandpa and grandma that are here that actually live here in Arizona. This is the first job that I've ever taken that has benefitted my wife. (Laughter.)

So we're awful excited, and I'm so grateful. Love you guys.

LISA LOVE: I'm going to say a few words about you, Coach. With the charge from Michael Crow, Steve Patterson embarked on a rather elaborate national search that required grandiose patience and a tremendous amount of resilience, and contrary to some of the reports, it's important that you know that Steve and I were in lockstep, actually in perfect harmony every step of the way in reporting at each turn, every outcome to our president Michael Crow, so it was very diligent. It was particularly relentless.

I know at some times it was trying to our public because they wanted it done yesterday, but I'm reminded of a great children's tale, "The Tortoise and the Hare," and I think at the end of that the tortoise did pretty darned good, and although I'm not comparing the Sun Devils to turtles, in this case I have to say, our patience, our

diligence and our ability to fly either above the turbulence or below the turbulence and at times turn the volume down just a little bit while still listening benefitted us significantly with the outcome in presenting our next head football coach to president Crow and to the Arizona State University community. We were steadfast in seeking the qualities that Michael beautifully just spoke to. We did not relent.

We feel very strongly that we have a fine corps of a football team returning, and we wanted to put those hands on the steering wheel that had significant experience and that had made changes for the better and shown upward trajectory in programs that would benefit us as we want to move into that Rose Bowl caliber football program.

And ultimately, after that length of search, all roads pointed to Todd Graham. It dodged and weaved and came about in different ways, but learning positively of his desire with his family to live and be in Arizona ultimately created the key tipping point that we knew everything was going to match up beautifully.

You've read by now what he did at Rice in taking Rice to its first Bowl game in 40 years. You've read by now about his rapid ascension from linebackers coach to defensive coordinator to head coach and then to head coach at Tulsa and what happened at Tulsa, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and that at every turn, the environment he was in lifted off, and he embodies the characteristics that we're looking for as a teacher and as a developer of young men, and I believe the Arizona State football program is going to launch under his watch.

Please welcome our head football coach, Todd Graham.

COACH GRAHAM: I'm going to try real hard, I'm pretty passionate, and probably my greatest attribute is my passion and my enthusiasm, and I don't do a lot of sitting down, so I'm going to get on the edge of my seat here and just tell you how grateful I am to be here today, and I hope I don't knock anything off this table. First of all, I can't tell you how exciting it is to be a part of a dynamic leadership, meeting President Crow meeting Lisa and Steve. I want to be a part of a team that is innovative, unique, progressive and exciting and relationship oriented. And I've found all those things here, and I'm so excited to be here.

It's such an honor for me to be sitting here

and taking over the program that the legend Frank Kush built. I can't tell you how humbling that is for me. I'm a traditionalist, have a tremendous respect for this game. I have a tremendous respect for the past and for what he did as a coach here is just absolutely phenomenal. I'm hoping that I can accomplish half of what he's done and we'll be doing great.

It also would be remiss for me not to talk about Coach Erickson and the 2011 Sun Devils. I have a tremendous respect, actually have watched the film early in the season and seen some of the great wins early and the promise that this team has and the job that he's done here. He's going to be a Hall of Fame coach, and I just want to honor him and give him respect and tell him what an honor and a privilege it is for me to follow him as the head football coach.

I want to first start and talk about my players from Pitt. The last few hours have been extremely gut wrenching for me, obviously for my family. I love those guys. I'm very proud of the growth that they had this year, both on the field, off the field, in the classroom and in the community. I'm very proud of them. You never want to leave a program, and I never dreamed that I would have to leave a program under these circumstances.

The timing of these processes are extremely rapid, and it did not allow for me to address the team, and that is very hurtful. I've never had to endure that, and I really regret that. I really regret that I didn't have the opportunity to do that. I reached out to them in the only way that I knew how, the only means that I had at my disposal because I absolutely did not want them to hear about this on the news. I wanted them to know first. The only other alternative I had was not to communicate at all, and that was just unacceptable to me.

I plan on my return to Pittsburgh to reach out to them and to communicate to them. Obviously my staff that's there has communicated, as well, and those young men, I just want them to know that I love them. Coaching and teaching is a passion to me, and that's something that's very, very important before I talk about anything else, that I want my players from Pitt to know that I love them and I'm proud of them.

This is a dream come true for me. Talking about Frank Kush, as a young coach, I think I was around 29 years old, I walked the halls here. I got a chance to be introduced to Coach Kush in his office, and I looked out and I marveled over Sun Devil Stadium and Frank Kush Field. I actually

walked down the hallways and just amazed by the graphics and how it was done. It was just absolutely a dream place.

My wife and I have vacationed here yearly, have some of our best friends here, Mike and Pat Case, and gone to Desert Mountain every year. Actually this summer we're planning to -- this is where we wanted to end up. We wanted to -- when we would retire, this is where we wanted to be. It's awful ironic that we had that opportunity.

No retiring (laughing). It's win or get retired. So no retiring. But this is a dream come true for us as far as a destination, a recruit, wow, to recruit to Phoenix, to recruit to Tempe, to Arizona State University, that's exciting for me.

But being a young coach, actually everywhere I've been, I've actually taken the graphics off the wall that I actually took from here that are in buildings like Tulsa around the country. But this was an opportunity, too, from a competitive standpoint. I'm extremely competitive, extremely passionate, and this was the only opportunity that I can tell you that my family would endure what we just did and go through was Arizona State University.

I'm excited. I'm excited where this program is. I'm excited about the future. You know, I got an opportunity to meet Brock today, and I'm excited in what he can do and this offense. I got to meet some of the other players, as well. I can't wait to start building relationships with those guys, can't wait to start creating memories and winning championships and restore this program to the '87 Rose Bowl champions over Michigan. Actually when I flew in, when I landed, the first phone call that I got was from John Cooper, and John was sharing with me and rattling off names, and he's been somewhat of a mentor to me, and he said, they've done it before there, Coach, and you need to do it again, and that's what we intend on doing.

I want to reach out to our former players. I played this game, I love this game. I wish I could still play it. They cut me, so I have to coach it.

But I hold it sacred that you put that helmet on your head. I wouldn't have a job, I wouldn't have an opportunity if not for the people that have come before me, past coaches and the players. I know what it is to play four years. I started 47 consecutive games in college, and the price you pay to play this great game, and though I'm slow getting out of that bed in the morning, I can tell you

that I'd do it all over again for twice the admittance, I can tell you that. But I want to reach out to our former players. I need you on the sideline. I need you in the locker room. I intend on communicating with you. One of the things I do is I send out communications once a month. I want to carry on the great traditions, and I want to know them, and the only way I can do that is communicate and build a relationship with you, and I want to restore this program, and this program will be about winning championships, and we'll do it in a way that will honor and respect you.

How will we play defense? How about let's play it like Pat Tillman and Terrell Suggs played it. That's how we're going to do it.

How are we going to play offense? How about we spin that ball like Jake Plummer and Danny White? I grew up in Dallas watching Danny White play. And how about we be as tough as Randall McDaniel? That's it. That's all we want to do. And I want them to know that it is an honor and a privilege for me. I want them to know that I know the price that they've paid, and I am going to be calling upon them. I need their help and I need their support, and I will work hard to earn your trust and your respect.

To the recruits: I think hopefully by tomorrow I'm going to be able to call them. I can't wait to talk to you. I can't wait to share with you our high octane football and our style. I can't wait to start talking to you about character and discipline that we run our program with, and I can't wait to talk to you ASAP, so sit tight, I will be calling as soon as I possibly can.

We want the best and the brightest, starts right here in Arizona, and I want to speak to the high school coaches. I spent half my coaching career being a teacher and a coach. I started off over 25 years ago coaching and teaching seventh grade. I consider myself a teacher, and I want the coaches to know that I'll take care of their young people, and we'll treat them with great respect, and we will help and develop them as young men of character. My goal for our players is to be championship citizens, to be championship fathers, to understand about perseverance and to be championship husbands that understand about integrity.

That's what our program is all about, and the Sun Devil way is what you'll hear me talking about a lot, and that speaks to our goals as a program. Our goals as a program is that we are going to first and foremost bring out the best in every single person's character that's involved in

our program. I believe that that is the key component to winning and winning every day. I'm not interested in winning on Saturday and losing on other days. I want to win every day in every way. We will compete in the classroom as we compete on the field. Can you imagine a football team that did that?

On the field we're going to be passionate and disciplined. Discipline is the key to winning football games. It's very simple: You've got 11 guys to do what they're coached to do right the first time you ask them to do it. Our program is going to be about discipline. We're going to be involved in the community. The greatest joy that I've had in my life is to learn to be a giver. I grew up in a family that I had a mom, my dad left, and she raised five kids with a ninth-grade education, and we were blessed. She never let us become victims. We were victors, not victims. I want our players to understand that family and character and bringing out the best and being a giver, that's what I call unique character, is giving every day.

But I've been able to now take care of that mom. It's been the greatest joy in my life, and now I realize when she was giving to me and I was receiving, she was receiving far more than she was giving me, and that's something that we'll teach our players, and that's what I'm looking for. I'm looking for guys that have great character, that have a passion for this game. There's only one way that we're going to play it, and that's with great passion.

We're going to play this game the way it's meant to be played, and that's the old fashioned way, in a very physical nature.

I want to shout out to our fans, all the Sun Devil faithful out there. I need your support. I need you to what I call speaking victory, start speaking victory every day. I don't shy away from high expectations. I know exactly what I'm inheriting and the opportunity that's here, but I need your support. I'm going to work hard to earn your respect and your trust, as well, and we will work hard to put a product on that field that you can be proud of, and I guarantee you that we'll every play until the end of the whistle.

To the community: I can't wait to get out there. One handshake at a time is what we talk about, and meet you. I think perception is reality, and we start the perception today that we're going to build a championship program. We're going to win Pac-12 championships, we are going to win Rose Bowl championships and ultimately the

National Championship. I'm going to have -- our kids are going to be the hardest working, best prepared, most disciplined team in the country. I'm going to ask more from them than anywhere in the country from a work ethic standpoint. I'm not going to do that and have anything less than winning every day and every game as our goal.

What's it going to look like? What's our offense going to look like? What's our defense going to look like? Well, obviously our offense is going to be high octane, it's going to be quick striking, explosive. Our whole deal is about explosive plays. I like to see a ball thrown down the field. People want to come and they want to watch games and I don't want you sitting in your seat. I want you standing up, and how you do that is you have explosive plays, that's offense, defense. How do we do it? We attack, put it in the left lane, hammer down, and we don't let up. That's what our program is going to be about.

I'm so honored and thrilled to be your coach. I want to thank you for the opportunity. I am every single person out there that's a Sun Devil. I'm your coach, and I'm so proud to be here, and starting right now, I'm a Sun Devil. God bless you.

Q. Can you give us an indication of when this started with ASU?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, obviously the process was very quick and I obviously knew the job was open when Coach Erickson resigned, but it was very quick and very rapid, and it was something that I had no intention at any other job, but this was one that my wife and I, as the things that I stated earlier, was a dream situation for us. It was very, very heart wrenching, but like I said, when we cleared those clouds today and I seen my family, I did what was best for my family. I made a great decision for my family, and this is a tremendous opportunity, and I'm very, very grateful to be here.

Q. For the record, your goal for this program is ultimately a National Championship?

COACH GRAHAM: Our goals are to win championships, period. Like I said earlier, I'm not going to ask kids to work harder than anybody in the country and have anything less than that. That's not just winning championships on the field, it's winning every day, seven days a week. That's the goal. Why not? Why would we have any goal less than that?

Q. Why weren't you able to talk to your players specifically?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, obviously this transpired this morning in a rapid pace, and it was last night and this morning, and there wasn't an opportunity to have a team meeting and be able to meet with them.

Now, these processes move very quickly and very rapidly, and that's the tough thing about this business and about coaching. I've had experience with that before, and if there was anyway possible, again, that's -- I never want to do that, and that's the greatest regret you can have, and it's the most horrible feeling that you have. But again, I reached out in the only way that I knew how because I absolutely was not going to just have them see this on the news.

Q. Can you speak to your recruiting plans? You don't have any experience on the West Coast. Did you bring any staff members with you? Can you speak to some of that stuff?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, we've recruited, had a lot of players when I was at the University of Tulsa from California Arizona, we'd recruit the junior colleges here, as well, had some junior college players go to Tulsa, as well. Obviously the South and the Southwest is where I'm comfortable, and that's where my relationships are in coaching. Our staff will be made up of -- obviously I've been very blessed to develop some great relationships with men of character, so obviously some of them will be following me here. But we will have coaches with West Coast ties and with great experience in this conference.

Q. Because of your track record, how do you convince Sun Devil Nation, future recruits, the football team, everyone affiliated with ASU that you're here for the long haul?

COACH GRAHAM: I think the only way to respond to that is just being here. Obviously it was, like I said earlier in the remarks, that this is a dream opportunity for our family. It's obviously the first decision I've ever made that has actually benefitted my wife and benefitted our family. You know, I think that the only way you can do it is, like I said, I'm going to work hard to earn their trust, and I think trust is earned, so that's all I can do.

Q. On meeting with Osweiler and the entire team:

COACH GRAHAM: I have not. I'm looking forward to that. Obviously I don't want to be disruptive; they're getting ready to go play a football game and don't want to be disrespectful and distracting from that at all. I've seen Brock passing in the hallway today along with a few other players, and I can't wait to meet him. Excited to watch them compete in the Bowl game, and can't wait to get started building those relationships.

Q. Can you talk about the offensive transition and how quickly you think it could be?

COACH GRAHAM: It's exciting. Obviously the film that I've watched from the season, especially early in the season, to have some dynamic speed at receiver and to be poised, I think, not just on offense but with where this program is right now to -- I think it makes the transition one that's smooth where you can expand instead of having to condense. So I'm excited about the level of player that we have already here and the things that have already been built and we intend on building and expanding upon them.

Q. I know you're familiar with the coach down at U of A, what's your take on the rivalry between University of Arizona and you guys?

COACH GRAHAM: Obviously the Territorial Cup is one that we intend on winning every year. That's an expectation.

MICHAEL CROW: We want to build a building that it can just be housed in. (Laughter.)

COACH GRAHAM: Yeah, and I do have a relationship with Coach Rodriguez, and one of the things that I can tell you, I am an old-fashioned traditional coach and I believe in great sportsmanship, but we fully intend on competing and winning that game every year as well as competing and winning the state of Arizona in recruiting. But I have tremendous respect for their program, as well.

Q. Dr. Crow, was it essential that your coach have head coaching experience at the college level?

MICHAEL CROW: What I can say is that, and we've tried to communicate this to folks that were giving us lots of input, that we were first after a sitting head coach who had been able to manage as the -- in a sense the chief executive of a football program, the entire package, and Coach was the

person that we focused on, and he met all of the requirements and conditions as well as the special characteristics that we were looking for.

Q. Can you talk about the inaccurate reports on June Jones?

MICHAEL CROW: Probably the best way for me to answer that is we made one offer and it was accepted, and you're seeing the result of that process. We talked with lots of individuals. We made one offer, and one offer was accepted.

Q. When you get settled in, what's the first thing you do to get this program going in the Todd Graham way?

COACH GRAHAM: One word: Relationships. Start building relationships. That's a key component. Hit the ground running. That's with existing players, future players, former players, fans, community, that's what it's all about. So that'll be my focus, hit the ground running, start building relationships and getting the ball rolling.

Q. How have you seen the transition to a 3-4 with the current personnel?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, if you watch what we do, we're multiple. We were more 4-3 this year with our personnel. We had great defensive tackles, and we'll be very adaptive. We're very multiple in what we do. The bottom line is we attack. We want speed as the -- that's the first thing that we're looking for is speed and toughness on defense, and we want to be explosive. So we will adapt to the skills and talents of the players that we have, and then we'll also -- obviously in the recruiting ranks be looking for speed in difference maker, play makers. We're really not penciled into being a 3-4. We actually were more 4-3 this last year.

Q. Can you tell us what you already know about the recruiting class, the commitments and prospects, and what you'll do to convince them that this program is right for them?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, obviously we've got a great class put together and we're excited about that and I can't wait to start talking to them and work hard to know that they made the decision to come to the right place. This is a tremendous place of destination and unbelievable place to get an education, excellence in every single thing

around here, and obviously we think we have a lot to offer, an exciting brand of football for them, and can't wait to start telling them. That's one of my favorite things. I love to recruit. You've got to be in this business. I think it's the lifeblood of your program. It's one of the things, if you want to say the one thing that I do is personnel and the number one job that I have is recruiting. I don't sit in my office, and I'm a Facebooking machine and I'm building relationships with kids, and I think that they'll be excited to hear our brand of football and excited to meet the staff that we put together.

Q. Who really influenced you and molded you as a head coach?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, I'll tell you, growing up, my hero was Tom Landry. Growing up in the Dallas community, Tom was -- when you think about integrity, I think about Tom Landry and how he -- his work ethic and his leadership, and even though my style and my -- you've got to be generally who you are -- is different, Tom Landry was one that I patterned myself after. Coach Gene Stallings is another that I patterned myself after.

And probably the coach that I patterned myself after the most is a guy by the name of Buddy Copeland. You guys are probably thinking who that is, and he was my seventh grade football coach. He changed my life in every way that you could possibly change someone's life. He wasn't a Hall of Fame coach. He never won a Super Bowl or a National Championship. He just coached seventh and eighth grade football for 39 years, and from the time I met Buddy Copeland, I knew I wanted to be a coach, and I knew if I could get one player to look at me the way I looked at Buddy Copeland that this career would be worth it, so Buddy Copeland would be -- if you watch me coach on the field, it's Buddy Copeland.

Q. Where does your high octane offense come from?

COACH GRAHAM: Wow. It's kind of formulated, like we call it the run and gun, the high okay Tate, and really, high octane does not really describe our offense. The high octane, you know, slogan speaks to how we do everything we do. It's how we walk in the building, it's how we practice, it's how we do everything that we do. It's how we play offense, defense, and that's with a passion. This game was meant to be played that way, and that's what high octane speaks to. The origin of it, I don't know. We've been using it a while, and everybody borrows it from each other.

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But I can tell you that our whole brand of football is about -- goes back to training. It's mentally and physically wearing out the opponent, and it starts with the mental aspect of it, and you've got to be able to operate 100 miles an hour, but it doesn't do you any good if you're making mistakes, so you've got to be disciplined. And we're wanting to play 80-plus snaps a game and we're wanting the opponent to get 65, and that's why we're high octane on every phase of the game, and that's what we're trying to do, and it gives you a great advantage.

I think that's one of the things, it doesn't matter what offense you run, I don't care what type of offense I ran, we would be no-huddle and we would be high octane.

Q. There are a number of big-name coaches in this conference. What do you do when you walk in to a room to recruit?

COACH GRAHAM: I think you start building a relationship. Someone asked me before about how do you compete against Joe Paterno or Nick Saban and those guys. Hey, you just be generally who you are. We have a great city. We have a great product in our education as well as our football program. This is the best opportunity I've ever had to recruit to, and I'm excited to do that. I think people -- players know. Players know if you're genuine, they know if you care about them. I can tell you how we're going to treat our players, with tremendous respect. We're not going to talk about character and then disrespect and demean and demoralize our players. They're going to come here, and we'll have fun. Our style of play is exciting, and I think kids do, I think kids sign with coaches, I really do. I think they connect with them. I think you've just got to be generally who you are.

And that's kind of like in my office, with my players they come knock on the door and they walk in. How do I coach kids I don't know? It's not like meeting the President of the United States coming to make an appointment with me. I'm going to coach. I'm a hands-on coach. I'm hands on with the relationship, so that's our whole deal is building that relationship, and I think people want to be motivated and inspired, and we're going to inspire them, and we've got a lot of great things going on here to sell them.

Q. There was some scrutiny regarding

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this search, some negativity was brought out through the ASU Nation. Can you talk about how difficult this was for you personally and the satisfaction you now feel?

LISA LOVE: I feel tremendously satisfied. As a matter of fact, I think Steve Patterson and I had a very clear charge, and I said at the beginning we were in lockstep and never -- I know that there was a lot of scrutiny, and I know there was a growing amount of impatience, and there were a lot of folks out there trying to hire a head football coach this year. Speculation was rampant.

But when you are in the huddle, you are completely and absolutely focused on the task at hand, and you have just got to be very good at a filter, turn the volume down and focus on delivery. And the ultimate commitment that we stayed on every single day, sprinting through every and any airport, he in flats, me in pumps, regardless of what the circumstances were, we never lived in distraction I guess is what I'm trying to say. We just didn't live there. We lived in the space of delivering a great football coach to Arizona State. Patience and being relentless proved golden.

MICHAEL CROW: Let me add that in any relationship, relationships have their most difficult moments when expectations are not met, and in the relationship between the University and the football program and the Sun Devil Nation, we had unbelievable expectations. At one point we were 6 and 2, at one point we were making tremendous progress, but the progress seemed to be waning for a bit, so what we had was unbelievable unmet expectations and the frustrations that come from that.

So the things we heard from fans filtering it all down was we want a great football program, please find a great football coach. Here's the kinds of characteristics that we're looking for, and what we heard more than anything else in the hundreds or thousands of messages that we received, which even those that came with I don't know if it was poisoned ink around it or what it was, but those that came with great passion, what we heard was find us a coach who is committed to high energy, what I would call total, all-in, completely focused football who can also connect to our community and help meet our expectations. So what we have is that we have failed to meet expectations, which is why the coaching change was made. And in this coach we're looking now to stay on the track to meet expectations.

There's no satisfaction on our part at the University level or at the athletic department level

about where we are in football. This is not a second-tier football place. This is a first-tier football place school, and unmet expectations led to great frustration, great energy, some negative energy. The negative energy is what it is, so we filtered from that and found a coach that we think will drive us forward into the first tier in a way where we stay in the first tier all the time, never falling out of the first tier.

Q. When you look at Coach Graham, the one red flag is that he's moved around a little bit. What did he say to you to assure you that he will be here?

LISA LOVE: I love the fact that Penny's parents are sitting right here and they drove up the road. I love the fact that Todd has family here. I love the fact that Desert Mountain was a place where they were investing and prepared to invest in property and believed him. I believed him. I can tell you that I saw that on job movement, but I believed him. And I think that he speaks sincerely about wanting to coach Arizona State, and quite frankly, I think he's been through quite a lot in 24 hours in order to coach Arizona State, and I don't think this is the only place that he could have gone, but this is the place that he said I will go through this to coach the Sun Devils, and I believed him.

Q. At what point did Coach Graham become a candidate, how long ago?

LISA LOVE: Well, if you don't mind, and I know this may be a little bit aggravating to you, but if you don't mind, on details of all of this, we'll probably keep it private. I think -- well, we will keep it private, we won't probably keep it private. I think that sources and discovery are protected and incredibly value. So are time frames, oddly enough, and although that sounds mysterious, a little bit like a Sherlock Holmes puzzle for all of you in the media, I think we're better served by maintaining that degree of privacy.

Details of search, interviews, meetings, numbers, who, what, when, where, how, we'll keep that in a vault in the office.

MICHAEL CROW: I just want to add one comment to that because I think it's really important for people to understand the status of the program relative to the coaches that are out there. Our door has been beaten down by people that want to be the coach of the Sun Devils, beaten down, a long, long line of fantastic coaches, each

of which had to be thought about and learned about, and this is a fantastic opportunity. How do we know that? This was a fantastic line of individuals to take a look at.

Q. Since you're big on Facebook, are we allowed to connect with you?

COACH GRAHAM: Well, unless you're a player or recruit, you're going to be out of luck. (Laughter.) That's the only ones I friend.

Q. What's your opinion on rustic facilities, lack of television, and if you had to make a decision to make Frank Kush happy or your wife happy, who would win?

COACH GRAHAM: Where's Frank? My wife is here, so I'm going to have to side with her. Like I said earlier, I'll let my earlier statements -- one of the things I have a great respect for is traditions, and we'll work hard to maintain the traditions at Arizona State University. I think that's very, very important. A lot of times traditions are lost through coaching changes and things like that. So I'd be very open to listen to that.

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