

FB: A Busy Media Day Friday at the Fiesta Bowl

Courtesy: OhioStateBuckeyes.com

Release: 01/02/2009

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – Friday was the official media day for the 38th Tostitos Fiesta Bowl with both teams making 30 key players and their respective head coaches available for the 30-minute interview sessions at the Camel Back Inn and Resort Spa.

But first, both teams woke up early Friday morning to attend and take part in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) Breakfast at the Marriott Desert Ridge. A huge, estimated crowd of 1,500 people packed a Desert Ridge ball room at 7:30 a.m. for a delicious and efficiently served breakfast that included scrambled eggs and bacon, breakfast potatoes, rolls and yogurt, and then to hear a series of speakers that included:

- Malcolm Jenkins delivering the invocation;
- James Laurinaitis and Marcus Freeman, and Colt McCoy and Chris Smith from Texas, talking about their FCA experiences;
- Comments from coaches Jim Tressel and Mack Brown; and
- A keynote speech from 14-year Arizona Cardinals comeback and eight-time pro-bowler Aeneas Williams.

Williams Wows Crowd

Aeneas Williams, an ordained pastor who lives in Creve Couer, Mo., spoke for what seemed like a quick 45 minutes in front of the large crowd. He spoke about growing up in New Orleans, walking on to Southern University's football team as a junior, overcoming obstacles and truly finding religion, as well as some of his battles on the NFL playing field. Four noteworthy quotes among a series of stories and personal experiences Williams shared included:

1. "Coach Tressel and Coach Brown chose you players to solve problems, not be a problem."
2. "I've learned when you solve problems for people, people listen to you."
3. "You can get out of any situation if you have the right motivation."
4. "I've studied Coach Tressel for a long time because I've always had a desire to study excellence."

Off to Media Day

Following the breakfast, three busses of Buckeyes headed to Pinnacle High School for film watching and game prep prior to practice, and another bus of 30 players and Coach Tressel headed to the Camel Back Inn and Resort Spa for the official Fiesta Bowl media day.

Lil' Change of Pace

Audio from today's media day takes on a different format than the audio files that OhioStateBuckeyes.com has been posting this week. The attached file is one 13-minute sound-bite featuring various Buckeyes with narration of media day by a roving representative from the web site. Click on the attached link to hear:

- Tyson Gentry talking about his days at Ohio State and his future plans;
- Donald Washington's thoughts/respect for the Texas passing game;
- Aaron Pettrey's visit from the Fiesta Bowl queen and her court;
- Rory Nicol's thoughts on being a senior playing his last collegiate game;
- Whether Dexter Larimore's creative talents as a ceramic artist are being inspired by the colors and sites of the great southwest;
- Plus additional interview clips with Chimdi Chekwa, Todd Denlinger, Donald Washington, Garcia Lane and much, much more!

A Visit from Fox

Some of the FOX Sports broadcasters who will be describing the action Monday stopped by the Ohio State practice Friday. Included in the group were play-by-play talent Matt Vasgersian, color commentator Tim Ryan and Ohio State sideline reporter Laura Okmin.

A Chance of Rain, They Said

For the second time in three days, the live voice on the other end of the wake-up call at the Fairmont Scottsdale said there would be a chance for rain today. Judging by the weather Friday in Phoenix (blue skies and temps in the mid 60s), perhaps the front desk should change the message to "there's a chance to see a cloud today." Stay tuned.

The Second Wave Has Arrived

Two more charters with Ohio State University representatives arrived at Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix today. President Gee has arrived along with the Board of Trustees, the band, cheerleaders and some additional administrators.

Saturday Team Schedule

No media opportunities are on the schedule for Saturday. The Buckeyes will conduct a closed practice at Pinnacle High School beginning at 1:15 p.m.

Fun for the Fans

Two fun events for the fans will take place Saturday: the Fort McDowell Fiesta Bowl Parade will take place at 11 a.m. in Central Phoenix and the Fiesta Bowl Gridiron Jam will take place between 4-10 p.m. in downtown Glendale.

###