

# Pac-12 Conference Football Media Days

Thursday, July 27 2017

## David Shaw Stanford Cardinal

DAVID SHAW: Hello, everybody. I'm joined today by fourth-year senior Harrison Phillips and Bryce Love, our defensive tackle and running back. Excited to bring these guys. Two of our guys that are going to be leaders on our football team this year. Both these guys are replacing great players, but at the same time, these guys are great players in their own rights and I think a lot of people will find that out this year.

Opening statement, we won ten games last year, and felt like a disappointment, felt like a down year to a certain degree. But we're proud of the fact that we've won as many games as we've won over the last few years. Ten games last year in particular. But at the same time, I think we can play better. We have a chance to be a better team than we were a year ago, a complete team, even though losing two of the better players in the nation last year.

We believe we've got some depth that we didn't have a year ago. We've got a lot more experience we didn't have a year ago. I think Keller Chryst stabilizing our quarterback position at the end of the year was a plus for us. The way we played on the offensive line at the end of the year was another plus for us. Excited about where those guys finished off.

Defensively, we come back with Harrison up front, who has a chance to be one of the better players in our conference and around the nation. Really good group of linebackers inside and outside with speed, athleticism, length and experience.

Defensive backfield, I'm excited about that position as any position we have on our team. We think these guys have a chance to be one of the better units in America.

At the same time I thought we had some really good gains made by our skill positions last year. I think JJ Arcega-Whiteside and Trenton Irwin coming along as receivers at the end of the year, Dalton Schultz making an impact, and hopefully his impact in the passing game will continue to be felt.

We believe we have some younger guys coming in as well that we believe can help in the passing game, so I think we're in good position right now. It's a difficult



conference. I think everybody has guys coming back. Everybody has new guys coming in. But they'll be very competitive this year.

### **Q. What has to go right for Stanford to get back to the championship on your watch?**

DAVID SHAW: If we can stay healthy, I think we have enough experience and we have enough depth. We have some young guys that we have to have come along. But at the same time we have to stay healthy and play at a high level. Because the thing that happens in our conference, and it happens every single year, you look at our run two years ago to go to the Rose Bowl, we were one of the better teams in the nation, and we played a really good Oregon team late and lost that game.

You look at Washington's run last year. They're one of the best teams in the nation. They played a really good USC team late. We played nine conference games. And every week we have a chance to get beaten. It's staying healthy and playing your best football every single week.

### **Q. How gridlock has this PAC-12 North been? Especially with Oregon, Washington, yourself and other teams like that?**

DAVID SHAW: Oh, it's insanity. It's crazy. But it's great. You know there are no bye weeks, there are no off weeks. No one talks about the Washington State program that they put together up there. It's not just the passing game with Coach Leach. They ran the ball well last year. They were physical up front last year. They played great defense last year both secondary-wise and up front. So you're going to have a tough game in the entire conference.

### **Q. Can you talk about the change of the elimination of two-a-day practices?**

DAVID SHAW: That would not have been my choice to eliminate two-a-day practices. I think it was an overreaction to a certain degree. I think we all want our guys to be healthy and make the best decisions for our guys, but there is a way to have two-a-day practices and be safe and be smart. I think if we put enough constraints around what those -- how long those two-a-day practices can be. Because the other thing we did by doing so, you can go back and say you can come to training camp a week early to make up for

the practices that you lost. Well, we also have athlete time-demand issues. So now we're going to take away another week away of their summer, another week of their training and those internships and summer school the guys are doing.

So to me those are conflicting things that we have to deal with. I do believe that we should continue to have those discussions and maybe go back to the point where we don't come in a week early and we're able to take the minimum number of opportunities to do two-a-days as long as you abide by these rules, which only so much tackling and only so much hitting, because the second practice of our two-a-days, our plan was to be non-padded.

So it's nothing to do with concussions or guys getting injured. But it's another opportunity to be on the field and teach and have skill development, because there is an element of a grind that training camp in a positive way can be for guys to prepare for the season that we're not able to have this year.

**Q. How is it have Willie Taggart in the PAC-12?**

DAVID SHAW: It's great. It's great. I called him right before and right after his interview. I've been so excited for him this entire process and so proud of him and so happy for him as a friend to see what he's able to do at Western Kentucky and down in Florida, to have this opportunity for he and his wife, Taneshia. I'm just ecstatic for him. And I'll just root against him for one game a year.

**Q. Your program has had a lot of success, how much pressure do you put on yourself to continue that success?**

DAVID SHAW: I am not a fan of pressure. I don't believe in pressure. I believe in expectations and hard work. If our hard work is smartly done, then we have a chance to reach whatever expectations we put it ourselves. So for me I don't think about the pressure. Usually pressure comes from other people's expectations. For us, we have a plan and we do whatever we can to work our plan.

**Q. There's not another Christian McCaffrey out there, is there?**

DAVID SHAW: If there was another Christian McCaffrey, I'll take him.

**Q. But Bryce Love, can you incorporate that into the offense and how do you do that with his skill set?**

DAVID SHAW: There's no question. Every time Bryce has touched the ball for last two years there is a collective pause that happens on our sideline and the other sideline and there is a gasp that you can actually

hear that anticipation because he is so explosive. He averages seven yards a carry for his career. So many long touchdowns, so many explosive plays.

He'll have an opportunity in the return game as well. Catching the ball, running the ball outside, running the ball between the tackles. Because he's not just a scatback, he's a running back.

I'm excited for his possibilities. But I'm also excited to have a lot of versatility in our game, not just with him but the other players on our team. I think Bryce is going to have a breakout year and be one of the better players in the nation.

**Q. Daniel Marx's role a little more of a featured back or how will you?**

DAVID SHAW: I'm excited to get Daniel back. Daniel has missed a lot of time in the last couple years. Daniel is an X-factor of an athlete. He can help you on special teams in a lot of different ways. He can help you as a lead fullback. He's a guy that can take two yards back from that fullback position and he can hand the ball off to him. He's that kind of an athlete. And we've had these plans for Daniel since we recruited him. Our plan is, and he's on course right now, to be healthy and to use his versatility.

The other thing I count on from him is his leadership. This is a smart young man. This is a tough young man. This is a consistent young man. This is a guy that our young players look up to because of the way that he operates.

So here's a guy that usually when you don't get a chance to play and you're injured, you kind of get lost in the muck and the mire, kind of away from everybody. It's not that way with Daniel. When he walks around, guys are still asking him questions and guys are still following him because he's one of those guys that you look up to.

Ten years from now he's going to be running something. Maybe the Stanford football program. You never know. But he's one of those guys that when you meet him and talk to him, this guy is a leader. I can't wait to see what he accomplishes on the field and off this year.

**Q. Can you talk about Clark Yarbrough's status on the team?**

DAVID SHAW: Clark has taken a medical retirement. Still at Stanford. Has a phenomenal internship that he's doing really well in. It was a tough decision medically for our people, but it was the right decision. He's still part of our family. He's still one of our guys. We'll touch base periodically. He's got a great family and a great base. He's going to do some great things

outside of football the rest of his life.

**Q. You mentioned Dalton Schultz being more involved in the passing game. How is evolved in your program?**

DAVID SHAW: Our plan for Dalton when we recruited him -- he was the No. 1 tight end in the nation coming out of high school. Our plan for him -- we've had so many guys that have had kind of a niche. Levine Toilolo was at the line wide receiver, Kobe Fleener was the long fast guy, and Zach Ertz was the route runner and great on third down and red zone.

And our desire for Dalton was to be that complete tight end, that complete NFL tight end. And that's what he's becoming. As we stabilize the offensive line and quarterback position, he's one of those guys I think is going to benefit and really have a breakout year this year. And won't just be statistically. I think just the different things that he can do, I think, will show more. He's one of those guys that you're going to see him play on Sundays.

**Q. Coach, what is your opinion of the new early signing period and recruiting, and how do you think that might affect the recruiting for the Cardinal?**

DAVID SHAW: I'm still personally not a huge fan of the early signing period. I think the earlier we make it, the more difficult everybody's job is going to be because there is a contingent of young people, recruits, that want to sign earlier, and I understand that, there are a lot of coaches that want them to sign earlier for their own reasons.

But I think what happens that we forget about, these are still 16-, 17-year-old kids. No one can tell me some of these guys still aren't going to change their minds between December and February. And when they change their minds, guess what, we're going to let them out of those letters of intent, because we've never held anybody to a letter of intent that really wants to get out, whether they have a legitimate reason or not.

So my thing has always been let's let the process be as long as it can be and let's give these guys and their families as much time as possible to make a decision and leave a late date to where they can sign.

Because, honestly, what's going to happen, my little crystal ball here, you're going to recruit and sign an offensive lineman. Great, he's committed, his family's committed. He wants to come. He wants to be there. The O-line coach may get a coordinator job someplace else, may become a head coach someplace else, now you might talk about changing the offense with a new coordinator and new line coach. Well, he may not want

to play in that new system, so now we've created a problem in December that we wouldn't have had in February because he wouldn't have signed to begin with.

So for me it's created more problems than I think many people are seeing that are going to happen. So for me, these are still young kids. This is not a legal document they sign on signing day. This is a general agreement that I think needs to happen as late as possible, because they're still kids and they still have the ability to change their minds.

**Q. Can you tell us a little bit about your quarterback situation and the competition there?**

DAVID SHAW: The big thing for us in quarterback-wise is Keller Chryst really stabilized this last year. Played extremely well, 50 points against Oregon, 40 points against Rice. Undefeated as a starter. Ten touchdowns, I believe two interceptions. Really, really just kind of started to come into his own until he got hurt in the bowl game.

So for me, when he's healthy, he's our guy. Hopefully he's healthy Game 1. If he's not, Ryan Burns started for us last year. Ryan Burns is a better quarterback than he was a year ago. He's really worked hard in the off-season. Had a really good spring training session and is really going to come into this year ready to go.

K.J. Costello, he's got all the tools. He learned a lot this past off-season. He had a really good spring ball.

So if Keller can't go, we've got two great options. And it may be one, may be the other, may be some combination of both. Biggest thing for me, though, is for Keller to get ready, and hopefully he'll be ready week one.

**Q. Is he 100 percent right now or where is he?**

DAVID SHAW: He's closer than maybe I thought he was going to be. We practiced our first practice on Monday. He'll be out there with everybody. He may not do everything, but he's going to go through the quarterback drills and go through one-on-ones, seven-on-seven. He can drop back full speed and throw the ball.

It's now all the other things that come with running and cutting, et cetera, that we're going to continue to build for him. But he's going to come back. He'll be practicing, and hopefully he'll be ready.

**Q. How competitive do you expect Sarell and Little to be on the offensive line, maybe even starting?**

DAVID SHAW: That's a great question that I can't answer just yet until we get into practice. There is a physical aspect that you have to make sure young guys

in particularly offensive line are ready for. These are bigger guys than they've ever blocked before, and it's a different world than they've been in before.

But at the same time, these are very, very talented young men. At the same time, there is a lot of thinking that has to happen. There are a lot of calls when teams stem and change and move and calls that have to be made, it's a learning process. We'll see what that learning curve is and whether these guys are able to contribute early or maybe later. We only know by getting on the grass and seeing how it goes.

**Q. In the off-season, pointing out how Stanford pretty much has USC's number with highlights from last years game, is there something you guys are doing that gives you an edge?**

DAVID SHAW: Kicking the ball off and crossing my fingers. It's a very, very talented team down there. Clay Helton I think has done a phenomenal job in the way that he's approached not just how they play but how they recruit and who they recruit. I think they've done an outstanding job. I think they have the best quarterback in the nation right now. And they're going to be a tough team to beat.

For us, it's not just about who we play, it's about us, it's about how we play and what we do to make sure that we try to play to our strengths. Yes, we analyze our opponents, but at the same time we have to be the best at what we do. I don't know if there's anything different particularly we do against USC or UCLA or Washington. The best thing is we try to make sure each game we give ourselves the best opportunity to win.

**Q. There were some untimely injuries last season. Was there anything during the season or off-season that you looked at in terms of trying to mitigate that?**

DAVID SHAW: The crazy thing, they were all different injuries. They were all very unique injuries, and honestly, we had been the healthiest team in the conference for seven years, eight years. It was almost like the pendulum just swung back in a big way and kind of kicked in a couple walls on us.

But, yeah, we had a hip issue, a shoulder issue, a knee issue, and a hand issue, all these little things. It would be one thing if they were all hamstrings. Okay, great. We know how to handle hamstrings. But it was like a little bit of everything.

It's part of playing the game of football. This is a contact, collision sport, and unique and crazy things happen. I really trust our staff, our strength and conditioning staff and training staff, to make sure we're

in the healthiest position as possible and flexible and explosive as we can be. But last year was one of those freak years on us.

**Q. Is there anything in terms of getting the next guys performing better, or is it tough to do if somebody gets hurt on a Tuesday and you're playing Thursday or Saturday?**

DAVID SHAW: Yeah, that's a tough thing to lose one of the better corner duos in America. To lose them before you play Washington was not my choice. But at the same time, when we had inexperience on the offensive line, but then you have injuries and inexperience, so you have a couple inexperienced guys playing being backed up by game experience guys, so whatever experience those guys had is they were growing, they get hurt, and now you put in another young guy, and we had to throw Nate Herbig into the wolves last year probably before he was ready. Now, he came around and played really well and ended up being our first freshman to start on the offensive line for us for any stretch of time.

But he was learning every single week. You're in week three and somebody makes a call, what's that call mean? Like, oh, my God, he doesn't know. But Coach Bloomgren did a phenomenal job with all those guys as they continued to learn. We got to a position the last month plus of the season, and we were as good up front as anybody. We were consistent, pass protection was good. Great in the running game. Which is why I think you saw Christian McCaffrey starting to go off late in the year, and Bryce Love had a great game against Notre Dame and in the bowl game. Keller Chryst started to play well. Those are all functions of the offensive line stabilizing itself.

**Q. The secondary historically hasn't maybe been the greatest strength for Stanford, but obviously that's changed the last couple years. What's different for you guys with that? Is it the way you're recruiting or coaching them, why is it a strength now?**

DAVID SHAW: It's a combination of a few things, honestly. I have to mention Duane Akina, who is our defensive back coach, who is widely regarded as the best in the nation at what he does. He's outstanding and phenomenal. He's attracted a lot of the guys that have come because of his ability to get the most out of the guys that he's coached.

At the same time, we've been able to recruit long, athletic, explosive guys. And I've got to get a little credit to Richard Sherman too. Richard being one of those guys that when you talk to him, he's loud, he's crazy, he's brilliant. He's been like, yes, this is a Stanford guy. This is a guy who is very opinionated but

very smart and has reasons for everything he says and does. But he's also long, explosive, and athletic. He's been kind of one of those beacons, like, you know what? I want to go to school where that guy went to school and have a career like him. You see a lot. You look at our corners now, they're 6'1", 6'2", longer guys like Richard that have a chance to play well at this level and the next.

**Q. Since he played so much receiver for you guys**

DAVID SHAW: Oh, yeah. It was my fault. I tried to keep him at receiver and not let him play defensive back. But he's had a phenomenal career.

**Q. Do you keep in contact with Jim Harbaugh? Have you talked about the summer?**

DAVID SHAW: We haven't talked this summer. I think we've both been pretty busy.

**Q. What are your expectations for Trenton Irwin at receiver this year?**

DAVID SHAW: I think Trent's going to have a breakout year. I think he's ready. The combination of him, the receiver production is a function of the quarterback and the offensive line. If we stabilize those two positions. Trenton is one of the best route runners in the nation. I'll put my stamp on that right now. I'm excited to see him have more opportunities to effect games this year.

**Q. How did Casey Tucker and A.T. Hall measure against some of the talented tackles that you have, and how much are you counting on those guys to really set the tone?**

DAVID SHAW: Well, A.T. especially, listed as a starter at right tackle for us right now. He had kind of an up-and-down year, but his up was really, really good. His upside, his length and athleticism, I mean, it's exciting. He's got a really good chance to be a really good tackle.

We moved David Bright to left tackle this year. Dave's got a chance to be really good. A fifth-year senior, one of our budding leaders on the football team.

Casey Tucker is going to have a chance to compete inside. He's one of those guys that had dealt with so many minor injuries. He'd miss a game, and then come back and play maybe 80 percent, not really capable of doing the things we know he can do. Now completely healthy. Had a really good spring, an exciting spring. He's got a legitimate shot to start and play for us at right guard.

**Q. Is Keller Chryst going to be limited at camp at all?**

DAVID SHAW: He will be limited early on. Keller has most way down the road for his recovery. I think we're

going to be really smart with him early on. But he's able to drop back full speed, he's able to throw, make every single throw. He's running full speed straight ahead. We'll see when we completely release him. Hopefully it will be before the first game. It may be close. But he's going to start by practicing with everybody, but we'll be cautious early on.

**Q. What have the Cal players or staff told you about the Australia game and just the travel and everything associated with it?**

DAVID SHAW: Oh, yeah, this has been -- so Matt Doyle, our football operations director, went to that game, and he experienced the whole thing with Cal. He saw them, saw what they did, didn't do. He's been in constant communication with all those people.

I've had multiple conversations with Sonny. I talked with Sonny when they first got back, Sonny Dykes. I talked with him midway through the year as we were planning this. I talked to him after the season briefly about the things he would have done differently, what did he do, what would he choose not to do.

So we put together a pretty good plan, I believe. The big difference for us, our guys are not going to be in school. So they'll be able to come back and truly rest and recuperate before we start that preparation for USC.

**Q. What are you most excited about that trip?**

DAVID SHAW: I want to see a kangaroo. Dead serious. I want to see a kangaroo. We're going to go to the zoo early on. There's a beach right by our hotel. We're going to get down to the beach. Keep our guys moving the first couple days, get them used to the time difference.

I'm excited to see the University of Sydney and the Opera House. There are all these things we're going to see the first three days that we're there, before we really buckle down and start getting ready to play a game.

**Q. One big topic this off-season has been coaching staffs. Is that something you weighed in on or have strong feelings about? Would you like to see limitations or regulations in that regard?**

DAVID SHAW: My view is the same view that I have on scheduling, which is, if we can have some kind of uniformity, that promotes equity. For me, I think when the guys that are coaching on the field -- that's all I care about. If we can put the same number of guys coaching on the field to where we don't feel like someone that has four more coaches than we do, five more coaches than we do, I think we all feel better that it's more of an even playing field. So we're all being

able to coach our guys the same.

That's the biggest thing for me. It's not how many people work in the athletic department or in the football department, have as many as you want, but when it comes to coaching the game and working in the media rooms, we should all have the same number.

**Q. Is it too loosely monitored right now?**

DAVID SHAW: Loosely monitored is a nice way to say it, yes.

**Q. Throughout your process as a coach, what type of advice did your father give you? He was a Stanford football coach also?**

DAVID SHAW: Yes, yes. I've gotten a lot of advice from my dad over the years. Early on in my career he just reminded me to be me and coach with my own personality. I don't think I completely understood it at the time, but this profession has so many strong personalities, so many unique personalities that there is a danger for young coaches in particular to try to emulate someone else's style.

I think all good coaches steal from other coaches and copy things, but it comes down to being a genuine person and being who you are. That is the best connection you have with your players, is if they believe you're just being yourself and not trying to be like someone else.

So thankfully I got that advice early on that I can be who I am and still be successful, even though I don't have the same personality or persona as Nick Saban or Dabo Swinney or Jimbo Fisher. But at the same time we'll all be successful just because we're just being who we are.