

February 3, 2010
National Signing Day Press Conference

MSU Head Coach Dan Mullen

Opening Comments...

“An exciting day and we are really excited about the class we signed today. I want to thank our staff and their hard work because they put in a tremendous amount of effort out on the road. They did a great job evaluating, recruiting and getting to know the families. I am excited about the talent we are bringing in from this class and even more excited about the character of these young men. They are great students and will be great representatives of Mississippi State University in the future. When I got hired here, I wanted to make a statement by recruiting the state of Mississippi very hard. We went out and recruited 16 players from Mississippi this year which is more than Southern Miss and the school up north combined. We have six dandy dozen members and the Mississippi Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year for the fourth-straight year who is also an All-American quarterback so we are very excited about this class. We are really happy how the young men in this state have decided to get behind us and we also want to thank the fans that have seen the exciting environment every Saturday in an electric stadium with a team and a program that is definitely on the rise. Finally, I want to thank all of our recruits, in and out of state, for deciding to come represent the state of Mississippi and Bulldogs everywhere on the football field and in the classroom. This is a group of young men who will make this a premier university and our state very proud for years to come.”

On recruiting Jay Hughes...

“When I interviewed Tony a year ago, he told me that his son would be one of the highest recruited kids in the state next year. I had no clue so the first thing we wanted to do was eliminate Tony from the recruiting process unless he was on the other side of the table as a father. Tony’s wife and Jay’s mother did a great job carrying Jay around the country to see several different schools last spring. I think because Tony as a father decided he wanted his son to come play for Mississippi State is a trust that he has as a coach in the program and the direction he thinks it is going.”

On the running back signees...

“We are excited because Vick Ballard who was the top running back in junior college last year is already on campus which is going to be good for the maturity of that group. We have a young running back group with Robert Elliot and now Vic Ballard who are our juniors and old men of the group. Nick Griffin led the state of Mississippi in rushing which is a huge addition along with Matthew Wells who is a young man who can do all things on the field so I think these guys will come in and make a contribution right away.”

On the offensive line signees...

“That was a huge priority for us from the beginning because we were down five offensive linemen from what we want to carry and we also have four seniors coming back this next year so we are looking at several offensive linemen to replace. Blaine Clausell coming in mid-semester was a huge help along with signing of Archie Muniz, Eric Lawson, Damien Robinson was a huge boost for our program in the position. This will be another priority for next year’s recruiting class as well.”

On Brandon Hill...

“Well I do not work for Scout or Rivals so I do not get to rank players but if I did then Brandon would be a much higher ranked player than he is. When you take a 6’3” 220 lbs senior on his visit, it is special. You combine that young man that comes from small town values with an excellent student of high character then you have someone with a very bright future. He will have many more stars when he leaves here than what he came with, which is what is most important to me.”

On the position that received the most focus...

“Let us start with the quarterback. People look back on another quarterback with the same name of Favre as we just got and wish that we would have signed him a long time ago. When you look for a quarterback, you want to find a winner. Dylan Favre came to our camp and our coaching staff said “if he was 6’3” then he would be perfect.” At that point, we searched for a quarterback that matches the criteria and Dylan managed to go out and set every state passing record, single handedly carried his team to a state championship, dominated the North-South All Star game, became a Parade All-American, the Mississippi Gatorade Player of the Year and took all doubt out of everyone’s minds about the type of winner he is when you put him on the field. That is the type of quarterback we look for and I know that 100 percent of his goal was how to get to Mississippi State and lead us to a championship. We definitely hit our goal by getting a championship quarterback.”