

Elliott Checks In On Luke

Written by Christian McCollum
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After working so hard to gain a commitment from [Cole Luke](#) , Notre Dame isn't about to let up on the Arizona cornerback back now.

Irish safeties coach Bob Elliott stopped by Hamilton High School in Chandler, Ariz., to check on Luke Monday as well as 2014 offensive lineman [Casey Tucker](#) , who is currently committed to USC.

“He was checking in, seeing Cole and talking to Casey and just saying hi to some other kids on the campus and that’s about it,” Hamilton head coach Steve Belles said.

“I think they’re doing their due diligence. You don’t want to lose a kid because you didn’t stay in touch, that’s for darn sure. I think it’s what any good school does. They make sure they keep guys on their own and make sure they’re solid with their commitment.”

And Luke is solid with his.

“I think he’s pretty relieved that that process is over,” said Belles, who played at Notre Dame in the late-1980s. “He felt good about it and now he’s just looking forward to his days at Notre Dame.”

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Belles has coached several Division-I players, but Luke will be the first to attend Belles' alma mater. Still, Belles hasn't taken much time to reflect on how special that is for him.

"Fortunately or unfortunately, his four years are going to be different than my four, five years," said Belles. "The place is the same, but everybody forms their own memories. What they remember or forget are two different things too."

"I think it's awesome that he's going there. The great thing for me is that I'll be able to watch him, I watch the games every week. That'll be cool for me. It made me think about some of my days when I was there, but I feel good that it was his decision more than anything else."

After winning three straight state titles, Hamilton lost to Desert Vista 45-19 in the state championship game last year. The Huskies exacted revenge this season, knocking off Desert Vista once in the regular season before eliminating the Thunder in the playoffs. Hamilton went on to claim another state title this past weekend with a 31-16 win over Mountain Pointe.

Luke sent out a tweet afterward saying the title was also for the players who came up short last season.

"We got beat pretty handily last year," said Belles. "I think he was just sounding off saying, 'This is for you guys, what you wanted to do last year, but it didn't happen.'"

"For him to make that comment, I'm assuming they were pretty tight. Cole would not have made that comment if he didn't like the guys. They were a good bunch of kids."

And now Belles and Luke will watch to see if their past and future teams, respectively, will be able to grab a title of their own in the BCS National Championship Game.

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“I tell you what and I hate to say it, but nobody remembers number two, so you’ve got to go out there and finish,” said Belles. “I can remember my fifth year at Notre Dame (in 1989), we were 12-1. We lost that one to Miami and everybody forgets that we ended up number two. We beat number one Colorado (in the Orange Bowl), but unfortunately, we lost over Thanksgiving to Miami and they ended up winning the Sugar Bowl and won the national championship.”

Belles understands what the current Irish players are go through with a long wait between their victory over USC and the title game in January.

“It’s too long to be honest with you,” he said. “As a competitor, I think most of the players would rather just play this Saturday. They’re going to be watching the SEC Championship this weekend and then they have a month before they play in the national championship game.

“If you’ve got some guys injured, it’s a blessing. If your guys are pretty healthy, gosh you would like to play the next week. There are pros and cons, but it’s what it’s been forever, so you just do what you can and work it off your schedule and don’t worry about it.”

Belles isn’t sure when Brian Kelly will be in to see Luke.

“I’m sure he’s got better things to worry about than just worrying about one of his recruits,” said Belles. “I think his focus is probably to watch this game Saturday and start working on a game plan; I think for both teams, knowing him.”