



## Q&A WITH BRONCOS HEAD COACH



**September 14th, 2011:** Once or twice a year we try to sit down with the Denver head coach and get a view into the team's current and future prospects. Hank Sienzant took over a Bronco team in 2009 that finished 5-11 and promised improvement. It was a long slog, but it looks like that promised improvement has finally arrived. After the Broncos won only once in their first 25 games under Sienzant, they've turned it around with a vengeance, winning seven of their last ten, including their last five in a row.

We figured it was time to sit down with coach Sienzant and get his take on things. This interview took place prior to the Houston Texans game in week four. Here is the transcript of the pertinent parts of that interview.

**Q: What's your take on this current Bronco team?**

A: I think we can scare some people this year. I don't want to count us out of anything, but expecting a Super Bowl win this year might be a little unrealistic.

**Q: Why do you think it's unrealistic? The Broncos are undefeated right now and have beaten three playoff teams from last year.**

A: Perhaps premature might be a better word. We're 3-0, but we have another thirteen games to go. A lot can happen between now and then. Remember that the Broncos started 2-0 in 2004, and finished 7-9. So while we like our start, we understand that it's a marathon, not a sprint - in the words of Bill Parcells. We need to follow up this start with a solid middle and a strong finish, else this 3-0 start won't mean much at the end of the season.

**Q: What do you like about the current squad?**

A: As they say, youth will be served. Our guys are playing with great enthusiasm, attacking our opponents on both sides of the ball. I think they can sense their destiny is in their hands now, whereas in the past it was too easy to fall into the 'here we go again' mentality that some teams get mired in. Getting new players while retaining the right veterans without that mentality was key to the turn-around, I think.

**Q: Where do you need to improve?**

A: Our depth across the board. We've got some good young players as front line players, but if they go down, our depth isn't what it should be or what I would like. Another good draft or two will get us to where we want to be. Some of that improvement in our depth may come from within - I'm not denigrating our current backups at all, but while some positions possess good depth, others do not.

**Q: Where is the depth lacking?**

A: Our offensive line, for starters. We lost Duke Robinson prior to the start of the season, for example, and wound up keeping only seven players on the O-line. Ideally we'd like to have nine or ten players there, but we didn't have enough talent on our preseason roster to justify keeping that many at the expense of some other positions where we had more depth. Don't get me wrong, we like the players we have, like [backups] Nick Cole and T.J.Lang a lot, but as we've seen, T.J. isn't ready, and when we lost both Cole and Eric Wood at guard over the past few weeks, we had to go outside the organization to field a solid offensive line. We think T.J. will be a good one in time, perhaps as early as next year, but he isn't there yet. And we need to add a few more players to the mix there next year so an injury or two doesn't short-circuit our overall team's progress. And it's not just the offensive line. Across the board, we can always get better at every position.

**Q: What do the Broncos need to do to challenge for a playoff spot?**

A: Win ten or more games. I'm not being flip, that's what it generally takes to get into the playoffs or get close. Do we have a team that can win ten games this year? I believe we do, but only time will tell.

**Q: Prediction time. Where do you think the Broncos will end up this year?**

A: I don't have a crystal ball. I don't know. I leave the predictions to you media types [laughs]. I just try to take the games one at a time and win the next one. Right now that's Houston.