

FINAL SCORE: UCLA 17, Arizona 7
November 1, 2014
Pasadena, Calif. – Rose Bowl

Postgame Quotes
UCLA head coach Jim Mora

opening statement

“It was another hard fought struggle. It was great to come into the Rose Bowl in front of 80,000-plus fans that keep showing up for us. That was definitely on our minds. You take a lot away from any game. The one thing that we have to do, as everyone knows, is to channel our passion and our energy and exuberance in a positive direction and play smarter so that we do not hurt ourselves. We just have to own it. It’s really the thing that’s holding us back right now. To get a win against the 12th-ranked team, down 7-3 at the half – the thing that is so impressive to me about these young men in there is their resilience, their grit and toughness and their will to win.

“We are 7-2 and it has not been easy. They keep fighting. That’s what we are supposed to do, but not everybody does it. Our punter Matt Mengel played outstanding for us. We ran the ball 59 times for a lot of yards. And then our defense was outstanding. That’s against a high-octane offense. I think that they were fourth or seventh in total offense – I know they were in the top 10. They scored on their first drive and did not score after. Today was the first game that I felt defensively like we did what we were supposed to do on every play. Don’t pop a gap, just do your job. Trust your teammate. We did that. You saw the results. That is what we have to continue to emphasize and work on and continue to grow. It was a big win for us, and it keeps us alive and that is what we are after.”

on quarterback Brett Hundley

“Brett is a winner. He had 189 yards [passing] which isn’t great, but he was 19 for 26 and that’s still a great completion percentage. He is a winner and a competitor. Even when it’s not perfect, he just gets it done. Some of those plays were dependent upon the read that he gets, where he hands it off or he tucks it and just goes. They were playing man, so he took off and ran. The one miscue was the fumble there at the end. He was doing the right thing by trying to stay in bounds. I’d like to teach him to slide. It was not obvious to me that it was a fumble. The best thing to do was to challenge it and to see what was going to happen.”

on accomplishing the team’s goals had UCLA lost to Arizona

“It would have been impossible, I would say. The way the Pac-12 is laid out – I mean this is a great football conference, a great conference period. It’s a great basketball conference, a great baseball conference. Champions are made in this conference. Champions are made at UCLA. But if we had not won this one tonight, it would have taken a lot of things to happen. Things still have to happen, but we still have to keep playing well.”

on Brett Hundley’s ability to run the ball

“I think that is very accurate, that we are better when he is a dual threat. And any team with that type of quarterback, it’s just so hard to defend. That is what makes the defense so hard is these dual threat quarterbacks. But, we have not changed anything in terms of our design. What has happened is that Brett is seeing the game more clearly. He absorbs information quicker. He has become fearless when he runs. We just have to make sure that he takes care of that football.”

on UCLA’s defense, containing the edges

“That was just doing your job. Doing it right and trusting the guy next to you. Trust is a big word and an important word when you play defense. And I think that we did that tonight. We talked all week about putting an edge out on that guy. Solomon is a tough player. He took a beating tonight. When he is at his best is when he’s out there running around. They dropped some, unfortunately. But he is a good player, and I like that kid.”

on linebacker Eric Kendricks

“He didn’t have to make every tackle tonight. I don’t think that he wasn’t playing well. He was playing well, but I just don’t know that the plays were coming to him. They [our defense] were excited but they were calm. Now, we have to build on that.”

on UCLA’s decision in the first half to punt on 4th and 1

“I heard some boos, but I have to try and make the best decision. The pace of the game. How is your defense playing? Is your punter able to pin it down there? So, all of those things. With an explosive offense like that, I just did not want to give them a short field.”

on UCLA’s defense stepping up against Arizona

“I’m always hesitant to use the word discipline. But these guys were just doing their job. They were being disciplined in their responsibility. When everyone is doing that and trusting each other, it can work. I think that they are getting it.”

Arizona head coach Rich Rodriguez

“Well the offense was poor – poorly called, poorly executed, poorly played, starting with the coaching staff. Poorly called, poorly played, poorly executed. I give them credit, they did a nice job they played hard, and we played hard, too. They played better than us. Thought our defense played well enough to win, for the most part. Hundley hurt us in running as much as throwing. We knew that was an issue. They had plenty of opportunities from our defense that we didn’t take advantage of. They ran it better than we did.”

on Arizona’s defense

“We don’t have a lot of depth, or as much as we want. We were down a few guys with injuries and penalties and stuff like that, so yeah, we probably got a little tired. They’ve had to play a lot of plays tonight. Unfortunately, if our offense had played better we wouldn’t have had to play as many plays on defense.”

on bouncing back from this game

“I’m not worried about it. I’m not worried about their feelings. We just didn’t play well. I thought we were a little loose at times. Practices were good but we were, for lack of a better word, too giggly. That makes me a little uneasy at times. We won’t be giggly this week in practice.”

on missed opportunities

“First, second, third, end of the game, on the five-yard line. When you play a good football game and get opportunities, you have to cash in. Got a field goal blocked, field goal missed, just not real good play.”

on kicker Casey Skowron

“On the last one, I don’t think Casey was blocking. Can you blame that on the kicker? Because some guy gets run over? I don’t blame that on the kicker.”