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TULSA VS. EAST CAROLINA • NOV. 5, 2016

POSTGAME QUOTES

TULSA HEAD COACH PHILIP MONTGOMERY

Opening Statement

COACH MONTGOMERY: Haven't got to really look at this sheet yet, but overall very, very proud of our football team. Defensively I thought we played tremendous really throughout the whole game. They had a couple drives in there that were just good drives, I mean, guys making plays.

I thought overall, especially in the first half, we got a bunch of three-and-outs I believe in there. Gave us the chance. We took the first two drives down and scored. Then we kind of stumbled around a little bit offensively. Defense was playing extremely well, we get back on track, get a field goal. The drive before half was big.

Going out, they take it down. We answer. I think at that point momentum was on our side. I thought defense played extremely well there.

Obviously we had too many penalties in there. We'll go back and look at the tape and see what we got. But like I said, this late in the season, you're playing really good people. That's a dag-gum good football team in East Carolina. Coach (Scottie) Montgomery is doing a great job over there. Got very, very talented athletes. Long, skilled guys running around.

I thought our football team really stepped up to the challenge tonight, played extremely well. Knowing that right now we're trying to climb that mountain, get to the top. Everything is still in front of us. All of our goals are in front of us. Big game next week. We're going to enjoy this win tonight and move on and get ready for Navy.

I'll take questions.

Q. What does it say about your team and the confidence level on the defensive side that you can win these type of games?

COACH MONTGOMERY: Our defense has played tremendous all year long. Been very proud of them. They stepped up to the challenge each and every time.

I thought it was a good overall team win, but our defense is playing extremely well now. They've got to continue that trend. We've got to continue the trend of getting better each and every week.

We saw a lot of looks from an offensive standpoint. They were changing up each and every play, each and every series. Our guys made good adjustments on the sidelines.

Going out there and being able to execute things at that rapid of a pace, I'm really, really proud of both sides.

Q. In the 22 games you've been here, you've scored 103 touchdowns offensively. 22 games before you got here, Tulsa scored 55 touchdowns. Did you really believe from the beginning that you had the personnel to be this productive?

COACH MONTGOMERY: Well, those guys have worked tremendously hard. I believe in what we're doing offensively. They believe in what we're doing offensively. Allowing guys to make plays, they're excited about getting on the practice field, they're excited about getting in the games. That enthusiasm is what has carried us through. We've had great senior leadership since I got here. Those guys have bought in since day one.

Every time you go to a place, you have an opportunity to kind of set the tone at the start. These guys really have bought in to our coaching staff and to what we're doing. That makes the total difference.

Schematically, yes, we're putting them in some good spots, but they still have to go out there and make those plays, make adjustments in games. Those guys are doing a tremendous job of that.

Q. Symbolic with Brewer and Flanders tonight. They had virtually carbon copy games. Is it fitting in that you don't really have an A running back and B running back, you got two A guys?

COACH MONTGOMERY: We really do. Ever since I've been here we've been running back by committee. We're going to give it to the hot hand. Those two guys I think were both hot tonight at different points in time during the game.

The great part about that is those five guys in front of them, plus Minter, are doing a great job of understanding the different looks we're getting, opening up holes.

But those guys are running the football with a tremendous amount of passion and pride. They get the ball in their hands, they've got a chance to get big yards. Both of them popped big runs tonight but also picked up those tough yards on short down, when you get in the red zone, all those things, those things you got to do as a running back.

Early I thought our pass protection was really key to us to be able to dink and dunk, do the things we wanted to do down the field.

Q. Can you describe the scene in the locker room? We got to hear a little bit of it up here.

COACH MONTGOMERY: The locker room is always great. Wins in college football are hard to come by. Each and every one of them is special. You cannot take that for granted. We're going to celebrate. We celebrate at a very high level (laughter).

It's fun. Everybody gets involved from me all the way down to tonight we even had some of the coaches' kids in the middle of it. It's a tremendous atmosphere.

But that's a special place. Those guys, you work all week, you gear up for this. To be able to

celebrate like that after a W, you've got to continue to keep that.

Q. 600-yard night offensively. One of the key sequences was what you did defensively on the goal line late in the game. Talk about that sequence.

COACH MONTGOMERY: I mean, defense made a couple of big stands down there in the red zone. That one late was huge. I mean, I think they were first-and-goal from about the three. To be able to hold them out on the first two downs, even putting Summers in as a wildcat, trying to go plus-one on us, I thought defensively we stepped up and played really well right there.

Then you end up with the big sack there, which was a great pressure. Guys just being relentless to the football. I think if there's one thing that's been characteristic of our defense this year is how they've, in times they needed to, really have been relentless and physical to the football. If we continue to do those things, we're going to be great on defense.

Q. Too early to look ahead to the next amazing opponent you have, Navy, the way they run the football?

COACH MONTGOMERY: I'm going to enjoy this one tonight. We know we've got an extremely tough opponent. I know they beat Notre Dame today. I got to watch part of it sitting in the hotel waiting for this kickoff. Their quarterback is playing at a really high level. They're executing at a high level.

They're putting a lot of points on the board right now. I think they only put 28 on the board today. Was it 28-27? But they've been putting 40. They're going to limit the possessions that you're going to get by what they do. We've got to do a good job of making sure we take advantage of each and every position and defensively, you know, our guys will get a good scheme together.

I thought really last year, especially early in the football game, we played really well defensively. We just didn't do anything offensively early. Then we kind of got a few things going here or there.

We ain't the same football team, I promise you, as we were last year. Our guys are going to enjoy this win tonight. We'll come in and get a good plan together. We'll go on the practice field, get ready to get that done, fly up there and play a tremendous game.

Thank you.

FastScripts Transcript by ASAP Sports

Rev #1 by #168 at 2016-11-06 04:23:00 GMT

SENIOR RUNNING BACK JAMES FLANDERS

On the how it feels to be at 1000 rushing yards and Brewer close behind

"I think that it feels great because when I did an interview with the radio they said that we hadn't had two running backs with 1,000 yards since 1982. I think that will be a great accomplishment for both of us."

On the offensive line

“The offensive line is great. Not good but great.”

On the locker room postgame

“It feels great after a win. We get turned up in there and Coach Montgomery was dancing his tail off too. This time he had his son dancing with him too and that was pretty funny too.”

On thoughts on playing Navy next week

“I think Navy is a great team but right now we need to focus on us, starting with practice on Tuesday. We will watch film on them on Tuesday. I just think that they are a great team.”

SENIOR QUARTERBACK DANE EVANS

On the value of having two great running backs

“It is incredible. Obviously, as a quarterback it makes it that much easier in the passing game like we have been saying and breaking a record since ’82, it is always cool breaking records like that. It just goes to show how good our offensive line is and Chris Minter, when he gets in there and helps block, I mean it really just shows how good both of our running backs are too. They both complement each other in different ways and it just makes my job a lot easier and I enjoy watching it.

“We are lucky. It just shows you how good of an offensive team we are because at some schools you know you have one running back and when the second comes in it is a little bit of drop off. Here, we can run all the exact same plays. There is no play that Flanders can run that Brewer cannot and there is no play that Brewer can run that Flanders cannot. It just helps us keep rolling like a machine.”

On whether or not he believed in the amount of success that they could have with Coach Montgomery the last two years

“Selfishly, I wanted to do this last year. I wanted to have 100 touchdowns in the first game but that is not going to happen. We know we need to grow and we are at a good spot right now with our offense. Just like we told everyone when Montgomery was hired, all we had to do was just buy into what he was teaching us and we will see the results. That is what we have been doing and I trust him with whatever play he wants to call, 100 percent.”

On the locker room postgame

“That is what we work for all week. We want that happy locker room opposed to the other one and like Flanders said, we get turned up in there. It was fun. It’s fun to watch those guys that are good dancers, and the guys that aren’t good dancers it’s even better. That is what we work for all week and that’s just something that we like to have fun with.”

On thoughts on playing Navy next week

“I have only seen what you all have seen on TV, like when they played USF a few weeks ago and I saw a little bit of the Notre Dame game but I was kind of jumping back and forth in the hotel. They are a great team and if there is a more disciplined team, I don’t know where they are

at, it is the Naval Academy. We'll have a good game plan come game time, and we're just excited for it."

On how far they have come as a team

"It's basically a 180. Two years ago when we played ECU in the last game they came in here and smacked us. We kind of returned the favor, Flanders and I have never beat ECU and they have beaten us 6 straight times. We talked about that all week; we wanted to do something that nobody here has ever done. No one on our staff and in our locker room has beaten ECU and we finally did. It was a big goal for us this week. I knew where we could be because of the guys we have had and the guys we have picked up, and it is nice to see we are finally where we should be. With all that being said I still don't think that we're satisfied with where we are because we still left a couple points out on the field tonight, throwing it and running. The defense is always getting better so that is always encouraging."

SENIOR LINEBACKER MATT LINSCOTT

On the emotions of the goal line stand, and the sack for the fourth down

"It's pretty special. I remember the play that got us inside. It was when they were trying to hustle us up. We were supposed to blitz and then we checked out of it right before the play snap. Craig (Suits) and I were able to hit the receiver right before he got into the end zone, which after that was the goal line stop. I was just proud of us. Like Coach Montgomery said, we were relentless. We kept fighting. We never gave up. We were never thinking, oh they will probably score here. Then the sack presented itself. They were trying to do a quick out on the other side and it gave me time to run the quarterback down for the big play. I'm proud of our defense. It was a great effort overall."

On the progress of the team

"I think it is just us buying into what the coaches want us to do. Even last year, I know the defense statistically wasn't as good, but we never thought of this as being a bad defense or anything. We just have to continue to buy into the process. On top of that, our offense and Coach Montgomery have really set these conditions and granted us the relentlessness to keep on fighting no matter what. As a defense, we have been getting these turnovers and these big plays late in the game that have helped really catapult these games and the wins."

EAST CAROLINA HEAD COACH SCOTTIE MONTGOMERY

On playing from behind

"It wasn't just from playing behind, that team was a good football team. I thought they executed well in a lot of the situations they had. We had some great opportunities to execute, especially in the first half, we just didn't execute. The penalties, I take that personally. Anybody that knows me knows that discipline is right at the forefront. I've never seen that many penalties in a game, whether that was us or them, I don't think I've ever seen a game where there was 23 penalties. Thirteen for us is the type of penalties we would have in a four-game [stretch]. We'll have to go back and take a look at a lot of it on tape. I thought they [Tulsa] was a really, really good football team and probably the best team that we've played this year. We're in a spot where we could've

played a lot better. I thought our execution in practice this week was really good and we didn't come out and deliver."

On Minshew throwing 40+ passes

"He threw it a lot just because we were playing from behind. You want to see the difference in the game, it was the line of scrimmage. Look at the rushing yards. We knew that they were going to be really good in their offensive front and offensive scheme. We just didn't match it at all. Our defense did a good job a couple of times at holding them and we came back with a three-and-out, a four-and-out, a five-and-out. We really didn't do a good job of playing together."

On decision to change quarterbacks

"The first thing, he [Nelson] didn't get very much practice time this week. He practiced on Friday, it was basically his only day. He had a bit of a shoulder issue. And then I just didn't think he was really sharp at certain times. There were some throws I didn't like and then there was some movement out of the pocket when I thought the pocket was okay. We just made a decision after that last drive to try to give Gardner [Minshew] an opportunity."

On Tulsa's scoring answers

"We were forcing ourselves to play man a little bit more than I wanted to play man, wanted to play some more zone but we had an issue in coverage a couple of times earlier. We tried to create more pressure but we were getting stuck on linemen. They did a really good job of blocking some of the one-on-ones that we tried to get on the edge but couldn't get there. Just poor discipline in the secondary a couple of times that gave up big plays."

WIDE RECEIVER ZAY ZONES

Thoughts on tonight

"It was a tough loss. You've got to give credit to Tulsa. They're a good football team, really potent high-powered offensive. We knew that coming in. The defense did a good job of trying to contain those guys, we just didn't get it done as a team and didn't execute enough and they did."

On play of Gardner Minshew

"Gardner is a great asset to our team, we know what he brings to the table. Good see him get in there and make some good, competitive throws and try to lead our offense. Tulsa just did a good job of executing and we didn't get it done. We weren't efficient tonight."

On playing from behind

"You never want to trail these guys because they're so good on offense and led by a great coaching staff. But anything is possible, it's college football. We had opportunities and we didn't capitalize on them. We made too many mistakes and too many penalties tonight."