



POSTGAME QUOTES

K-State 59, Baylor 25 | Nov. 11, 2023

CHRIS KLIEMAN, KANSAS STATE HEAD COACH

Opening statement...

"Great performance from our guys today. Phenomenal performance under a difficult situation and circumstances as far as a heart wrenching loss last week. We hear the outside noise of, what do we have to play for. We met with the guys on Monday and talked about how we have a lot to play for and the opportunity to play for each other. We have the opportunity to play in 'The Bill' and an opportunity to continue to do something pretty special and write a legacy and finish the story of the 2023 season. Our guys came to play today, and I don't know if anybody was worried or questioned but our guys came to play. We beat a good Baylor team. Baylor does a great job of different things, trick plays, fake things on specials. They're always gonna fight. They were down by 30 against UCF at UCF and found a way to win. They were gonna give everything they had to try to win this game, but our guys just kept denying them. I thought offensively, it was great to see Will [Howard] have another special game and a number of guys step up for us offensively, catching the ball, running the ball. Defensively, we made some plays. We had two defensive touchdowns which is huge. We had a special teams touchdown basically, which is huge. Then we had four stops on fourth down. This is part of what you have to do when you play Baylor. You have to be able to play four downs. We had one interception. We got through fumble recoveries, and we had four stops on fourth down to get eight turnovers, it's hard to beat you."

On Will Howard becoming K-State's career leader in touchdown passes...

"Resolve, toughness, character, he gets battled through. He's playing at such a high level right now. I'm excited for him as he's having a great season. He and I have had a lot of conversations this week and I couldn't be more proud of the guy. He knows how much I love him. He knows how I feel about it. For him to have that record says an awful lot about what kind of player he is."

On needing turnovers from the defense and now getting touchdowns...

"Cody Stufflebean, what a big time play. Stufflebean is always playing in the rotation and is always in there getting as many plays as [Brendan] Mott and Nate [Matlack]. What a great pass rush that makes a big time hit in a critical time where we had not really slowed them down yet. Then Des [Purnell] picked it up and took it in and scored. That was a huge play. Then we gave up a touchdown on a trick play. They did a nice job, they got the trick play and then we ran a coverage that we typically don't run in that situation. We trapped the flat and Keenan Garber made a big pick and got it in for a touchdown. Those were two huge things, and, to get 59 points, man, it came from offensive and defensive teams."

WILL HOWARD, SENIOR QUARTERBACK

On breaking the record for most touchdown passes in K-State history...

"It's an unbelievable honor, and I couldn't do it without all the guys in that locker room that have caught passes for me, blocked for me, the defense, all my team. I truly wouldn't have been able to do this without all my guys, so I'm blessed. I'm grateful. You know, it still really hasn't sunk in yet. To be able to say that, I'm the all time [touchdowns leader] like that. That's crazy to think about, especially with all the stuff that I've had to deal with here. So I'm just so blessed, and I'm so privileged to be in the position that I am. To have this platform means the world, and I'm floored, it couldn't mean more."

On if he got the chance to speak to Michael Bishop...

"No. I actually got to talk to him briefly before the Texas game. He was in our locker room. I haven't talked to him much before, but to be able to say, with guys like that, that I have more career touchdowns, it's crazy man. I know he was only here for like two years or something, so I have an unfair advantage there. But no, it means a lot. And with all the greats that have come through here, it's a blessing and I'm so thankful."





On throwing Christian Moore his first career touchdown...

"That was awesome. I was lobbying for that play because I wanted to get him out in the flat and get him a touchdown, because my guy. He hadn't gotten into the endzone yet, and he puts in a ton of work and a ton of time and he deserves it. So I told him we'll split custody on the game ball."

On if breaking the touchdown record seems surreal considering what he's had to overcome...

"Completely. [If] you would have told an 18 year old Will Howard that just threw three picks against West Virginia [that] he'd be standing here today, talking to you guys, it's crazy. And I couldn't be more thankful and I just keep saying blessed. I gotta give all the credit to my guys, because I'm telling you with all this stuff that I've been through here, and all the stuff that I've continued to go through, I really wouldn't be here if it wasn't still for those guys in that locker room, and for the guys that fought for me and stuck up for me when things weren't always good. It means the world, and I'm just so grateful for this opportunity. And I didn't even know this was a possibility until like, last week somebody told me I was three [touchdowns] away I was like, 'oh shoot, that's cool.' So we're just out here trying to win games and score touchdowns, and if things like this happen, it's really cool. But no, I'm beyond blessed and honored."

KT LEVESTON, SENIOR OFFENSIVE TACKLE

On finding a rhythm after struggling last week...

"Guys came out here and really gave it their all. And when we play together as a team, we're unstoppable and we show the world that we're just an unbeatable team once we're playing together."

On the importance of the KU game...

"Oh, yeah, KU is always a big game. Being a dude from Texas, when I first got up here, I didn't necessarily understand the background of the rivalry, but a lot of these guys on the team showed me the importance of this rivalry, and now I love it. I mean, it's an awesome game, and probably one of the most exciting games every year."

On if he's jealous that Cooper Beebe got to play on the defensive line...

"Oh no, I let Cooper [Beebe] shine on the D-Line, and I get to go out there and shine on field goal blocking, and it's just such a fun thing, and we're always talking about it. I asked him, 'oh, how did you do out there?' And he's like, 'I knocked that center into the running back' and he'll ask me, 'how'd you do out there on the field goal block?' And I'll say 'I get to blow that tackle up with Usa [Seumalu].' So I have a little bit of fun out there."

On if it felt good to get the run game going again this week...

"Yeah, it's always an O-Lineman's dream that we keep running the ball. We had a really good game plan in the run game and in the pass game, so getting to see DJ [Giddens] and Treshaun [Ward] get out there and do their thing, and getting to see Will [Howard] just spin it in the air, it's fun when we're clicking on all cylinders."

CODY STUFFLEBEAN, JUNIOR DEFENSIVE END

On his strip sack that led to a Desmond Purnell touchdown...

"Coach [Joe] Klanderman called a great blitz, and luckily they slid away from me, and I just came free and got home."

On how it feels to be a part of a defense that scored two touchdowns...

"It's cool, especially being a Kansas kid, and [playing with] a whole bunch of other Kansas kids. So I would definitely tell people to come to K-State if you're a Kansas kid because we're doing great things here, and I love playing for Coach Klieman, and I'm pretty sure everybody else does too here."

On going from the scout team to making plays on the field...

"I'd say just believing in the process. Like Coach Klieman always says, just really believe in the process, don't be a results driven person, and great things will come your way."





KOBE SAVAGE, SENIOR SAFETY

On defensive touchdowns as a morale boost...

"It was really big getting that momentum for the whole team, and getting the fans here. Being able to get that good win here at home and again, it was just a momentum booster for the whole team. I feel like just having Desmond [Purnell] get the scoop and score fumble, and then Keagan [Johnson] getting that pick six. I feel like it was definitely that momentum."

On waiting for defensive scoring...

"We've been preaching on it all year. It's just that mind on the ball mentality. Just being able to capitalize this game and be more aggressive in coverage and on the hits and tackles, which is just making plays."

On success playing at home this season...

"I felt like just that home field advantage. The crowd has a really good job of being in tune with us, cheering us on and getting that momentum for us. The crowd was there for us at home. I feel like it gives us a lot of advantages."

On the previous injury against Baylor last season...

"It was cool being able to play a full game against them. They're a really good Baylor team and a really good Big 12, on the road, team. They kept trying to go after us, throwing the kitchen sink at us. It was really cool, being able to finish that game."

DESMOND PURNELL, SOPHOMORE LINEBACKER

On the scoop and score fumble...

"Coach called a blitz, and I was around the blitz. I saw stuff going there to make a play, and heard the crowd cheer. It was kind of muffled so I didn't really know if the ball was live or not, but I heard the crowd turn and just got my hands on the score."

On the linebacking core...

"I'd say that we were very good. We had a lot of adjustments we had to get through, so just going after that and being as one and just getting after it."

On scoring one of two defensive touchdowns this game...

"It was great getting out there and scoring a touchdown. It was my second one. I mean it's always great trying to find the end zone. We don't really get to do that that much. It was a really great game out there."

On his second career touchdown...

"That's always the goal is to try to make plays, and help out this team to try and get us a win. It's an emphasis on us, trying to get [the ball] turned over for some time when we get out there, so it's really good."

DAVE ARANDA, BAYLOR HEAD COACH

Opening statement...

"It's good to see you guys. I'm just way frustrated and upset. My comments to the team were, 'This is bottom, you can't get any worse than this. With the score and just the feeling you have. These are games you remember for a long time, so you feel gutted and I feel like that now, I know our guys do. Going into it, my thoughts and I hoped that all the things that we've been through this season with the negatives, the almost, could have been's, the should have been's, and all of that, was hopeful. There are lessons with that and we're able to put it together, have a fight and a competitive game in this one. I believed it and to not have that and to kind of be gutted, it's tough to say that but credit to the coach and their squad, you know, a great example of it early. I felt like early in the beginning of the game we're ready to play, I thought that you know, there was good energy and effort in our detail, especially on defense, but our detail it's much to be desired, it's got to be improved."





On changes in the second quarter

"We wanted the guys that were playing, potential playmakers, guys that made plays already or guys that hadn't touched the ball enough, really could make plays. We had to emphasize them. Kelsey [Johnson] comes up in that, and Monaray [Baldwin] for sure comes up with that, and Drake [Dabney] comes up with that. We wanted to put the ball in the hands of guys that could do something with it. Then defensively it was just a lot of adjustments and a lot of clarifying, simplifying, revisiting, eye progressions, and just all of it. There's a great physicality with Kansas State. You just find yourself in a rabbit hole real quick and so you've got to build back right, pack pretty heavy because you got to go down deep. And you know, that's just an area we did not do well with today."

On younger players...

"No, I appreciate that. Yeah, a lot of young guys have been playing. We've been doing that since the beginning of the year, and I wish a lot of those young guys were not playing like young guys. We had a third and eight and inside pressure, and we had to get off the field and we had a three-technique that was contained. Young guy, you know, and we weren't able to get contain quarterback gets out, you know, I just think there's things like that. If you have a young guy and it's a first start or second start. You kind of work with it. If a guy's been playing the whole season. It's a critical moment. And that happens. It's a different deal. And so we turn the page with some of that, man, you know, we've got to execute that stuff, that's so unacceptable. But our young guys have been playing quite a bit."

On the energy of the team...

"Yeah, I thought the energy to start like I said was good. I thought that, you know, you would have liked to have a stop on that on that first drive. I thought there were a bunch of third downs and a lot of those were the paper cuts. We talked about that offensively to get back into running the ball and the score and do all that, I thought was strong, I thought it was good. You know, there was an intentional effort to have energy guys because it's hard when you've had the season that we've had and the record and the score is what it is, you know, that's always difficult to have, but the guys knew that they mattered. And the words they say, and the noise they make and the touch, they have meant something and so that you can see guys trying. I appreciate that, that they were trying to do that."

On the ejection of Alvin Ebosele...

Yeah, I think Alvin is frustrated. You know, it's frustration. I think just part of it with Alvin is I think for him, Alvin's incredibly smart, incredibly kind-hearted, very conscientious. I mean, could be in the corner of this room, and we wouldn't know it, you know, a poke his head around. There. He was there the whole time. And so I just think for Alvin, for, you know, for him to find a way that's not a personal foul for him to establish kind of his identity. This is his presence and his care. Without getting kicked out of the game, I think is the challenge for him and us as coaches to do."

DRAKE DABNEY, SENIOR TIGHT END

On falling behind after first touchdown...

"One of the emphasis for us all year has been starting fast. I think we were able to do that, but there's still more ballgame left to play after that. Shooting ourselves in the foot and giving the defense points and opportunities is just unfortunate."

On motivation to boost morale...

"Just try not to look at the scoreboard or pay attention to it, and go play every snap one snap at a time like it's your last. No matter what the score is, any time you get the opportunity to play the game, you have to give it your all. There was never a doubt that we couldn't come back, and I know it's tough playing from behind, but we're just going to keep trying to pound the rocks one play at a time. "





On his 63-yard touchdown...

"It was like a little trickery; it was a delay play. They ended up sitting on [the ball], and I tried to go upfield with it. Blake [Shapen] saw that, led me upfield, and luckily the defensive back missed. It was just all glory to God for that one. Doing whatever we can to give our offense and team that spark was big at that moment."

BRYSON JACKSON, SENIOR SAFETY

On not being able to go to a bowl game as a seventh year senior...

"It's extremely tough. Especially with me being here for so long, I just want to be a great leader and influence all the people in the locker room. I felt like there's a lot on the table that has been left out. I wish that I could go back on those opportunities that we've had in previous games and practices to do what I can to sacrifice for the team. I hurt for them, but I wish it was better for them. We are a better team than what was displayed."

On frustrations and game plans when playing K-State...

"The frustrations are, 'how do we execute to stop them?' Defensively, everybody has to do their 1/11 to execute. There are times when one guy isn't doing what he's supposed to do. An example today was in the beginning of the game; I'm not there in a 3 by 1 formation, and they throw a screen. I'm not setting the edge on the receiver that's coming to block me, that happened twice. In those situations, that's me. I have to do my 1/11 to make sure that the ball doesn't come out there. Those situations stack up throughout the game. I hate that it happens, but that's the reason. Winning is hard, and everybody on defense and offense has to contribute to make the plays happen to make points come up on the scoreboard and to make big plays happen in the game."

On remembering previous games to find motivation today...

"No doubt, we never gave up. That's the one thing about this team that I love. We are still not giving up. The coach's conversation was, 'We're going to win this game all the way up until the clock turns zero.' Even at the very end, we wanted to go out there and do our side. We wanted to make sure that we can have an opportunity to win the game, but it just just didn't happen for us. So, we gotta go back to the drawing board and just keep putting that work in and trusting the process because you know, we're gonna get better and this team is gonna be the team that you know, we want to be and that we aspire to be."

