

Postgame Quotes
Texas Tech 48, Texas 45
Thursday, Nov. 26, 2015

Texas Quotes

Texas Head Coach Charlie Strong

Opening Statement: It was just disappointing. It's frustrating. Our guys played hard and they competed. One time we were down 14. We were able to come back and then take the lead. It was just a matter of just going and making a play. In the first half, the thing that killed us was the penalties. We were never able to establish a drive and they were able to make plays and we didn't make the plays.

As I told our players in there a while ago, I was just so proud of just how hard they played. They kept playing. Even when they were down, they kept playing and just kept fighting. That's what you want to see.

I know this: We're out of the bowl picture but we have one more game to play, and we've just got to go play for pride and go play for ourselves and go compete.

Q. Obviously there are reasons - there's injuries, there's all these things going on, but 4-7, what are you telling your team about more than just pride going into Baylor but about the program as a whole and where you're going?

CHARLIE STRONG: You look at it, and you're right, you have the injuries, but still, though, you're looking at a young group, and they've seen it. I think they'll be able to bounce back and they'll learn. It's only going to make them stronger.

Q. What were your thoughts about the play-calling sequence there at the end, especially on 2nd down where Tyrone [Swoopes] had to roll out there? And then the 4th down deep ball to Daje [Johnson]. Is that what you wanted?

CHARLIE STRONG: It wasn't so much of that. I think the thing that hurt us there at the end is we catch the out route there and then the lineman downfield, who was away from the field, that would have made it 3rd and 2, and we would have gotten the 1st down. Now all of a sudden, it backs up. The one play there, the 4th down play, we had a slant called, they pressed man on us, and Tyrone threw a chop on the outside.

Q. I know you don't want to make excuses, but in the first half there it just felt like every play another player was getting injured. Have you ever been a part of something like that?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, and you look at our injuries on defense, we lost [Hassan] Ridgeway, we lost Malik [Jefferson], you called Pete Jinkens, and then Poona [Fore] goes down. On offense you lose [Jerrod] Heard and then [Kirk] Johnson, our running backs. Most of those guys were our veterans, so we end up with a lot of freshmen on the field. They went out and competed, so I wasn't too concerned about guys not being out there. I didn't even think anything about it.

I knew they were down, but I just kept saying, 'Hey, it doesn't matter, next guy up, we have to go play.'

Q. Where have you been hiding Chris Warren, and do you feel like running back is one position that you're pretty well set at?

CHARLIE STRONG: I told Chris Warren before the game, I said, 'I guarantee you have a breakout game; you'll probably have 200 yards rushing.' I don't know where he ended up, but you look at it, you had the backs, you had J-Gray, you had D'Onta, you had Chris, and just didn't have enough carries for all of them. But we knew what we had with him. He's just a big, strong, physical runner, and you look at him, he can break tackles, he can run through people, and that's why I wasn't concerned going into this game. Everybody kept saying, well, you've got two down, but I knew we'd be okay with the running game with him.

Q. What's impressed you most about Chris leading up to this point, and what was it about him that you thought he could do this tonight?

CHARLIE STRONG: Just his maturity level. I was thinking, we played a game two or three games back, and J-Gray needed like four or five yards to get 100, and he told J-Gray to stay in there. I said, 'Chris, you're up next.' He said, 'No, Coach, let him go ahead and get his 100 yards, and I'm fine.' The thing about him, he just continues to work, practices hard and doesn't say much at all. He knew his opportunity was going to come, and he took full advantage of it tonight.

Q. Last year you talked about seven losses being unacceptable. You're back there again. Are you surprised at that?

CHARLIE STRONG: You never want to ever think that -- it's never our goal and never will be, and I know this, we're back there again. But you look at what we have, and I think the future is very bright. I know what's ahead, and what's good is that these players, you look at tonight, and just look at it out there on the field with mostly young players out there playing, so now they understand just how hard they have to go play, and you have to play like that for 60 minutes, and more than anything, you just have to step up and make plays.

Q. You kind of talked about it, on the 4th and 7, was the play call for Ty to throw it deep, or was that just his own decision to do that?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, guys, we're not going to question that now. It's 4th and 7; what they did was they pressed coverage outside so you weren't going to be able to get the slants, so we ran a wheel on the backside of it, and Daje had the guy beat. We just didn't make the connection there.

It just comes down to making plays, and we had our opportunities, and we didn't make them. It just didn't come down to just that one play.

Q. You've got to feel like you're so close so many different times this year to busting through. How frustrating is it for you to keep going through this over and over again?

CHARLIE STRONG: Sometimes I think you have to go through a little adversity. It just makes you stronger, and then the thing about it, you see what you have, and you know there's brighter days [ahead].

I look at what we have, and you look at us on offense, like Swoopes coming in tonight and just had played unbelievable, and then you've still got Jerrod sitting there. You're looking at your running backs, you still have two of them coming back, with Kirk would be three, young at wide receiver, offensive line you can be much better, and at the defense two seniors. Duke and Pete are the ones that really played a lot for us, and even Tank didn't play tonight, so you're looking at three guys right there that you're losing defensively.

When you battle through games like this, I think it only just makes us stronger. It's going to make the team stronger and they'll understand because now it's going to start soaking into them. Then they start realizing, hey, we have to go play, guys; we can't just go out there. What you don't realize, and I tell them all the time, we are the University of Texas; you're always going to get everyone's best shot, so let's not go out there half stepping. Let's go prepare the right way. Let's stay focused. Let's play with the passion we know we can play with, and let's go get it done.

Q. You just touched on all the guys that are out there, the young talent, things like that, but with seven losses, no matter what happens with Baylor, are you committed to making coaching changes, staff changes, whatever it takes internally to get this thing going right?

CHARLIE STRONG: I'll just wait until the end of the season and we'll look at that. I haven't even thought about the staff or anything, I just look at what I have, just player-wise.

Q. You're a defensive guy, so this stuff has really got to stick in your craw, these types of games. Your offensive team is built around running the ball and controlling the ball. How can you deal with the yin and the yang of that at this point? Do you have to change your philosophy?

CHARLIE STRONG: Defensively, if you look at it, even you look at tonight, and that was the No. 2 offense in the country, and it was just matching score with score. So you can match score with score by running the football. It's a matter of just limiting their possessions, and just defensively we gave up the big play. You look at the first one, if Holton [Hill] makes the catch, the ball bounces off of him, and Grant catches the tip and he goes in for a touchdown. But you can get it done. If you can run the ball and limit possessions and play physical at the point of attack, then things could happen for you because if you look at the teams that win, I think most of those teams that win, they can run the football.

Texas Offensive Coordinator Jay Norvell

On the last series of plays: We had two penalties, is what happened. We were driving the ball. I felt like we were moving the ball and had a lot of confidence moving the ball. We had a guy jump offsides and a lineman downfield on a naked. I couldn't see it in the field but those two penalties killed that drive. Then on the fourth and seven, I thought we had the right play on. We had one-on-one coverage with Daje [Johnson]. We just didn't quite make the play so. In a game like this you got to make plays, you got to make catches, you got to make throws, and you can't have penalties. The penalties killed us tonight. At the end of the day, you've got to make plays and we certainly didn't make enough of them tonight.

On the performance of Tyrone Swoopes: Tyrone played well tonight before he went in to play quarterback. He has to learn to get in rhythm. That's just something that everybody has to do. We have to play well around him too. Most of the problems we had were self-inflicted issues: the penalties. These issues we had specifically in the first half - that was not a good half of football for us offensively. The penalties are what kill our rhythm more than anything. It's just so difficult to overcome those things when

you get put in long-yardage situations. When we can stay in normal distance situations we function fairly well, but when we lose yardage on the first down or get put in a second and long situations because of a penalty, that puts a lot of pressure on us. We don't function very well. Those are all things we do to ourselves and you can't do that. I thought Tyrone played well in the second half. I thought he lead us. I thought he gave us a steady influence. His leadership was good. He was playing with a lot of confidence, and confidence we didn't play with in the first half, so our have to give our kids credit for that. The way they came back. The way they put pressure on them. We just didn't do enough to finish the deal.

On the lead blocker switch in the second half: that was a good set for us. It just settled us down. It was a very good attack in the second half. I think Chris [Warren] settle down too. He is a freshman. He was excited to play this game and more than anything we needed to settle down and play within ourselves the second half. I think we did. But Chris ran the ball really well. [Alex] De La Torre has done a great job all year as a lead blocker. We didn't have many mistakes in the second half until the drive where we stopped ourselves. I am proud of the way they fought. I am disappointed at some of the mistakes we made early.

Texas Running Back Chris Warren III

On this game being his "coming out party": I was just doing what I've been coached to do. I was just doing my assignments as told.

On Alex de la Torre's blocking: He was doing a great job out there blocking. He puts his heart out there every time so I really appreciate him for blocking out there.

On when he found out he was named the starter for tonight's game: I was just waiting for them to tell me. I wasn't really told, I was just waiting for my opportunity.

On the pregame conversation with Coach Strong: He just told me "25, I expect a good game from you this week" and I was like "Alright coach, I'll do what I can."

On wearing the defense down and getting stronger as the game goes on: I feel like I'm pretty consistent throughout the game. I do also feel like I wore them down a little bit but it wasn't all me; the line definitely did a great job. Alex de la Torre and [Caleb] Bluiett and [Andrew] Beck and them did a great job wearing them down as well.

On how he describes his running style: Downhill, fast at times, and to the point.

On staying mentally ready to start at running back: I've been ready all season. I've just been waiting my turn, that's how it is as a freshman. You have to make sure you know that you're behind and just have to work your way up or you just wait for your opportunity to come.

On if he got tired on his 91-yard touchdown run: Not instantly. I didn't really feel that until I got back to the bench. I was like, "Oh man, that was 91 yards" but I didn't get tired, I was just a little bit winded.

On the young guys on the team: I feel like we're all pretty good; we're a solid unit. We all love each other, we're all teammates, we're all brothers... I'm looking forward to next year.

On if he felt like the outside zone was there all game: It wasn't at first but it ended opening up that way. I thank [Texas] Tech for that.

On if he felt like it was his night going into tonight's game: I was just playing, that's what you got to do. Because if you focus on that you get too greedy and then you lose sight of what's ahead of you. That's how people end up with 300-400 yard games and then lose a game.

Texas Quarterback Tyrone Swoopes

On the last sequence: On the fourth-down play, we had a good call. We throw that route almost every day in practice, and I just missed it that time.

On Chris Warren: I feel like we all knew he could do something special or he wouldn't be here. It was just a matter of him getting an opportunity to show what he has and tonight he did that and played really well. He showed us what he could do.

On if the team feels unlucky after so many close games: I wouldn't say unlucky. It's just a couple of plays we could dig ourselves out of that don't go our way. I feel like that happens to almost anybody; it's not anything unbearable.

On what to expect next week against Baylor: I don't expect anything different. We still have a game to play. With games to play, nobody should give up. I feel like everybody should be fine headed into next week.

Texas Center Taylor Doyle

On Chris Warren: I'm very proud of the way he played. His number was called, and he did a tremendous job.

On how heartbreaking the loss was: Obviously it's tough. You want to do right for the coaches and your teammates, so a loss is always tough. The effort was there. The team wanted it, and we fought throughout the game. The mistakes and penalties killed us, and it hurts but you just have to do what it takes to keep moving forward.

On the injuries: Guys were hurt, and guys got some playing time who haven't in the past and they did a tremendous job. Warren ran the ball hard, and we knew he could play. Other guys out there were stepping up, too. We just can't shoot ourselves in the foot. Tech did a great job. We knew they were going to put up points, and our defense held them, but our offense came out and couldn't execute. We couldn't get past third down, and it hurt us.

On the coaching calls: We always feel like the coaches are going to put us in a position to win the game, and they did that tonight. It just boiled down to execution and eliminating stupid penalties and negative plays.

Texas Defensive End Bryce Cottrell

On the frustration of the losses: It's very frustrating because we've come so close in a lot of these games and just haven't finished them the way we wanted to. We just have to finish. It's unacceptable. I didn't come into the season thinking we would have seven losses.

On the injuries: It definitely hurt the team, especially the morale and key plays. But it's football; the next person has to come up and fill in his place and carry on what we have.

On what was to blame for third down problems: Mental errors, honestly. Some plays we would capitalize, and some plays we wouldn't. Tech did a great job tonight, they executed better than we did, and they got the win.

On where the program is headed: The amount of young guys we have means the sky is the limit from here. We just have to put the right pieces in places to get a win at the end.

Texas Defensive End Shiro Davis

On the defensive performance tonight: Unfortunately, we've been close and unfortunately close is not good enough. It's not giving us any wins. It's just one of those things where we have to take the positive and try to build on top of it.

On the positives to take away from tonight: The defense had some big third-down stops. We had some plays where we thought we were broke down but we knew we had to get the stop and get the tackle in the backfield.

On the injuries: I don't know what it was. It was crazy. We definitely need them to get healthy again for Baylor.

On ending your career with no bowl game: I can't lie, I'm kind of down but it is one of those things that you have to take and try and find the positives to keep yourself up. You can't beat yourself up too much.

On whether or not the team can take a step forward with the current team and staff: I personally think the staff is great. We are just in a rebuilding phase right now and it's taking a little while longer than expected but once we get it turned around Texas will definitely be a team to look out for. I'm just sad I can't be on that team.

On the one game left: We want to go out on top. We don't want to just go out there and lay down in front of Baylor. We still are Texas so we still have to play with Texas pride.

Texas Cornerback Duke Thomas

On the game being back and forth and what it was like being a defensive player in that game: We saw the offense came out in the second half and we knew we had to get a stop and make it happen. We just couldn't hold out for the last second.

On Texas Tech's last touchdown: They came out of the trick play and they came out fast. We got a line but we had bad eyes on the play. We have to get back in film and yet the young guys and let everybody know what's going on. We just have to execute.

On the injuries and whether it effected the cohesive unit: Oh no not at all. I had faith in everybody on our team. The next man up is our mindset. Everybody out there knows what's going on.

On having seven starters out at one point: I run with those guys all the time at practice and I know they know what they have to do.

On this year not being what you expected: It's definitely frustrating. You go through the offseason and you go through your senior year you don't just expect this season to happen. But, I know we laid down a good foundation and next week we have to get a win.

Texas Linebacker Tim Cole

On Tech's last touchdown: They were in a weird formation. We couldn't identify where 11 was, and that's where most of the trick plays come from. Hats off to Texas Tech. They ran up a good play and unfortunately we didn't stop it.

On feelings over the loss: We definitely wanted to get this win for the seniors. Not just for the seniors but for the team as a whole. The season isn't over. At the end of the day, we've still got to go out there and we've got Baylor next week. We've got to go out there and play for ourselves. We showed a lot of heart and resilience out there. I still believe in this team. We've just got to go out there next week. It's a new week. We've got to start fresh.

On watching teammates leave with injuries: It's tough. It's a tough game, so it's expected. At the end of the day, it's about the next man up. We all have to have each other's backs, so when one man is down the next man steps up and has to do the job. We just can't have a fall out if someone gets injured.

On what they will do moving forward: Hats off to a good team. We've got to go out there next week and get ready. We'll go back on Sunday and watch film over what we did wrong and correct it.

On creating something against Baylor sending momentum into next season: Most definitely. We want to go out there and finish the season off right. We're not giving up. This team shows a lot of heart, and we've got a lot of talent. We're not going to stop until we go out there and correct things and get things right. We know how good we can be it's just a matter of how soon. We're close. You can see it. On a couple of the drives, if we would've made a few stops the game could've been swinging our way. It's just one of those things where we want to go out there next week and finish the season off on a good note.