

Postgame Quotes
Texas 59, Kansas 20
Saturday, Nov. 7, 2015

Texas Quotes

Texas Head Coach Charlie Strong

COACH STRONG: Well it was a great team victory and it's just good to see our team just battle back and face some adversity, but they learned how to fight through it.

You look at the first play on offense and we end up throwing a long touchdown pass to Burt and gave Jerrod some confidence early.

Able to jump out to a big lead and then they were able to make some plays. But in the second half, we kind of turned it on. Then we had to go out in the second half and go establish the run.

Didn't rush for many yards in the first half, but in the second half, you get that ball to D'Onta and watch him just roll it and he made a big run and we got explosive and started making plays after plays.

We like to see 7 come down and make the plays he made, make the catches, actually, but it was just fun. It was just to see the team back to where it should be and just having fun tonight and really enjoying it.

Q. Is your message to the players practice hard, you come in focused and have the right attitude, this is what should happen?

COACH STRONG: Well, it starts on the practice field. We just have to take it from the practice field to the game field.

And then you look at it and one week you don't score anything and then tonight it's so explosive. That's what the players have to realize is, it's all about just being consistent and we haven't been a consistent team.

Q. What do you make out of a win like this? You guys have been so up and down and every time you say you guys turn the corner something bad happens. So what do you make out of this win?

COACH STRONG: Well, we're not going to write we turned the corner, keep writing it's really bad, don't give them no hope at all. We don't need that.

It's like every time we get built up, it's like crash and burn. We don't -- but, no, it's glad. Just so happy to see how our players battled. You hear so much, and I tell them all the time, it's -- what matters the most is the team and when you start playing for what's on the front of your jersey and not what's on the back, then good things are going to happen for you.

Q. Any guess or explanation for how you can get shut out one week and score all these points a week later?

COACH STRONG: I needed those points last week. I just needed half of them last week. But, no, it isn't an explanation.

Last week we don't release the ball and Jerrod knew he needed to make the throws and we don't take advantage of what they gave us.

And then you look at tonight. First play of the game we open it up and just throw the deep one, and just lay it out there. Because the thing about John Burt, he can make plays. Just lay it out to him and he will go get it and run it down.

But just watching us make the plays and watch the quarterback, it starts with the quarterback. If the quarterback has a good night, then we're going to get the good result that is we have tonight.

Q. How important was it for you guys to establish Jerrod Heard and get some of that confidence back? He hasn't thrown for over a hundred in a long time?

COACH STRONG: He needed that. The thing about him and once he gets going and once he -- if it happens, if it's positive for him early, then you're going to get positive results from him.

Just to see him bounce back. And once he made that first throw, then you just knew that he was going to be on point.

And it kind of hit a lull there in the second quarterback, but we were just able to bounce back and get a good start there to the start of the second half.

Q. First half, they pretty much played you toe-to-toe, despite the score. Did you have to have the big halftime speech or was it a matter of just wearing Kansas down?

COACH STRONG: I told them at halftime is that they were playing harder than we were. The thing we can't do is we can't allow that to happen. We are a more talented team and we should come out the second half and go dominate the game.

And I said there's no reason for it. We jump up big and we can't be front runners. Once we get a lead, we got to continue to play. And be aggressive. And we weren't aggressive. We jumped out there in front and then all of a sudden gave them an opportunity to go move the football.

And then them missing that foal right before half, I think it gave us a little more energy and we were able to bounce back.

Q. The goal line stand. Obviously, that was a big part of the game. You talked about the field goal miss, but the goal line stand gave you some momentum on your defense?

COACH STRONG: It was big, because we turned the ball over and then they were able to, we gave it to them first and goal on the 8 and we made four big stops there.

The third down play where they tried to roll out and the quarterback stepped out of bounds and then made it fourth and a half a yard or whatever, then we were able to head it. And it was a big play on the fourth down play. Pete him hit him and knocked him back and stopped the momentum of the ball carrier and he ended up fumbling.

But that was big, because that would have made the really tight and it would have been a three points, and then -- but we were able to go out and get that stop. A really big goal line stand.

Q. John announced to us early in the first half that Malik was only available in case of emergency. Was the second quarter there liking like an emergency and you needed him at that point?

COACH STRONG: Well, I looked out there and I said that we can't continue to miss tackles. Malik is one of those guys he can make the plays. And so I said we will play him. He wasn't feeling well, I said, let's make sure he's okay before we throw him out there.

Q. Is this a long-term thing with him, it's been two weeks in a row where he's been sick. Is he dealing with something?

COACH STRONG: Well, he really, I think it's more stomach virus than whatever, but he's one of those guys that I think I could have started. I just didn't want him out there and then all of a sudden we kept bouncing him back and forth, but when he was ready to go, we put him in.

The thing about Malik is he's one of those guys that he needs the practice work and we weren't able to practice him last week and I just didn't want to play him without practicing.

Q. Did you kind of point to this game that, if things looked like they were going well, you would get Kirk Johnson, DeShon Elliott, Kris Boyd, some of those guys some reps and how would you say that they acquitted themselves?

COACH STRONG: Well, last week we played tried to play the two freshmen safeties. When you look at 11 and 4, tried to play them some last week. When you play them they're going to have to be in there with the vets. So if you play Elliott, then I'm going to need 14 in the game with him. And so then if I play 4, then I'm going to need 31.

So you're going to have to make sure the older guys are in, just make sure they get aligned the right way.

And tonight was good. We played them, ended up playing them, I told our guys, we're going to play them the second series, so wherever the ball ends up it doesn't matter, we're going to put those guys in the game. Kirk Johnson has really been working hard, he's been on special teams, so I wanted to get him a few touches. And even Bernard

last week we ran the ball with him, had it again tonight, called a play, but they overloaded the one side, so we weren't able to give him the pitch.

But just playing those young guys, you see how young and talented we are and just watching just how explosive they are and just, the more they play, the better they're going to get. And it's good that, when you're going to be able to build the secondary, the way you build it. Because you look outside at corner, you look at 5 and you look at 9, those two guys are lined up with 24 and then Duke is 21, so you look at those, you got four corners you're going to be able to build it with four safeties. And then at the running back position, 25 wasn't available tonight, but we were able to play Kirk.

Q. Given that Kansas is 0-9 now do you want your players really excited or are you scared they might get overly excited?

COACH STRONG: No, they won't get overly excited with this because I told them we have to go out and dominate this team and next week is critical for us because we're going to have to play very well. We're on the road, haven't played very well on the road, but we are going into a tough environment. And you look at what they did today, beating Texas Tech and now they have us coming in there next week. So it's going to be critical for us.

Q. How much was the first few passes from Jerrod especially the first one and the third one, how much of that was Jay trying to send a message to him, send a message to us the fans that y'all can throw the ball?

COACH STRONG: Combination of both. Because we know he can throw the football. It's just a matter of him just having the confidence to release the ball. The first one was big, because we had the wind at our back also, so just release it and let it go and let Burt go run it down.

And then he made some really good throws on the short routes. Then he hit the one down the seam with Lorenzo Joe making the big catch. But it was just a message where he wanted to build the confidence of our quarterback, but then they wanted everyone to see, hey, we can really throw the football.

Texas Wide Receivers Coach Jay Norvell

On the forward pass focus: I've been saying it for a month or so; we've had good practices. We chose not to throw it much against Oklahoma and then the next week it rained like crazy, so we didn't throw it much that game, then last game we didn't play very well as a team. I thought our kids were very aggressive, and when we've played aggressively we've had success all year long. We have to learn from that, and we have to carry over this week. It will be a big test going on the road and playing West Virginia. It's a very tough environment and you have to have a very tough mindset to go in there and win. That team is always physical and makes things hard on you. So I thought it was important that we had a game where we made plays and everybody was involved and had a hand in it, because we're going to need to have that kind of confidence next week. We have to mature as a team, we have to grow up as a team, and we have to

have a great week of practice and go in with confidence and have everyone make plays. This was a good step in that, the way we played tonight.

On the long ball plays: I just think the things we've been doing in practice need to carry over to the game, and that's more of a confidence than anything else. We've just been inconsistent in our confidence and the way we go about things and that happens when you're not firing on all cylinders with players. Some of that has to do with immaturity, young players learning lessons at different times of the year, but we have to press forward and everybody has to understand they can bring something. John Burt is a freshman, and he made some of the most confident plays on that field tonight. Jerrod [Heard] threw some great balls, and I'm very proud of Jerrod and how he has protected the football. On his first year of playing quarterback, I think we are the lowest in the league as far as turnovers, and that's a credit to him and the rest of our guys. We have to build on those things. I thought he threw the ball well on third down; we still aren't where we need to be overall, but he made some real strides in that.

On the first play: We do different things on the first play, and it really comes down to the defense and what we think is best. [Jerrod] was excited, and he liked that play. It's important that he gets off to a good start, so we felt like that was a good play to start with. Play action pass he's been very good at it. He threw the ball accurately, we should have had a few more touchdowns tonight, but we just didn't finish catches. That's something that we can build on; it's certainly a strength of his and we need to continue to use it.

On channeling the confidence going forward: We just build on it. We show them the things that are going well and we keep pushing them. We have to push this team, we've got to ride them, and we've got to make sure they have the kind of focus and effort that we need out of them. This will be another big challenge this week. We felt coming out of the bye week after the Oklahoma game that we could build on our performance and we did a little bit but we took a step back. It's just not a team we can take anything for granted with. We got to press them, keep getting what we want on them and that's our job as coaches. We just have to continue to push. We need a breakthrough on the road against a good football team and we haven't done it yet this year. We're certainly capable of all these games on our schedule. If we perform the way we are capable of, we can put together games where we can win on everybody left on our schedule.

Junior DE Bryce Cottrell

On how important it was to come back and get stops in the second quarter after letting a few get by: I think that was very important. It changed the momentum of the game and it kept the offense going for sure.

On what it's like going from one emotion to another after last week: It's always great to have a win of course, but we have to move on to the next game. We have West Virginia next, so it's time to move on to that game.

On how you are taking this win: I don't take any win for granted. A win is a win. At the end of the day, it's better than a loss. So no matter who you play, a win is a win.

On how you plan to take this momentum and bring it to a road game: It's definitely a positive. The offense moved the ball and the defense played well, so it's obviously an upside. So we need to take all of that and bring it into West Virginia.

Junior QB Tyrone Swoopes

On why you turned up your game in the second half: We just came in at halftime knowing that we could play a lot better than we were and we just came out in the second half with a different mindset.

On the take away of beating a team you know you are supposed to beat big: You have to look at the things we did well. There were a lot of things we did well and there are obviously things we need to work on. So we have to take that and bring it up to Morgantown with us.

On how everything was going your way: That play was just lucky. I saw him and thought he was just going to scoop it and score it and I thought I was going to have to chase him and I honestly didn't think I was going to catch him. But the ball just kind of squirted out and I just went with it. But, the rest of the game everyone was playing really well, especially in the second half. We just kind of try and build on that.

On how the guys played inspired tonight and whether it had to do with the jerseys or just playing back home: I would honestly say it was a little bit of both. We didn't play nearly as well as we wanted to last week, so we came out with a different mindset and were ready to play tonight.

Freshman WR John Burt

On looking forward to deep shots: Yeah. Throughout the year, there's a process to getting your play called. I just had to wait my turn. I had to wait for coach to call the play.

On throwing deep the first play: I'm not sure what it was. All I can do is go out there and run what the coaches call every week. The coaches decided to throw a shot the first play of the game. All I can say is "yes sir" and go out there and run it.

On getting the pass game going: We work on it a lot in practice, along with the run game. It really was just a matter of time of getting in a situation where we could pass the ball efficiently. As you saw tonight, we did a pretty good job of that.

On execution progression: Execution should be worked on every week, whether you're 8-0 or 9-0 or 3-5. You always have to work on execution. Really, really just executing that wasn't a problem. It's not like we hadn't been working on it all year. It kind of just clicked tonight, I guess.

Senior LB Peter Jinkens

On successfully sacking: It feels really good. It's really the coaches. They draw good schemes, and we just go out there and try to execute it to the best of our ability.

On the mood during the half: We knew that we were playing a little slow on defense, especially I knew I was. I wasn't playing up to my abilities. Everybody just got their mind right, and we just came out and did really good in the second half.

On where the team is moving forward: We're just still trying to get things right. We still have to clean up some things from tonight. We've just got to keep going off what we have and just keep doing what we do.

On his surprise by a competitive first half: A little bit, but they play hard. They have scholarships, just like we do, so of course they'll come out and play hard. We just have to get our minds right.

On the goal line stand: That was a really big booster for us. We really needed that. Shout out to Jason Hall for that. He did a really good job, and he's just a good player.

Junior S Dylan Haines

On his interception: I had an angle down the sideline and I thought for sure I could run around the quarterback and score. I think I got around that one player and I was going to put a move, but he got me on the back of my heel, so he tripped me up, so I thought I might as well go down and hang on to the ball.

On the quality of the win tonight: Anytime you can win, it's a good win. I don't believe in a win that's not a good win. Kansas has shown that they can play close with some of the teams they've played. Any win is a good win. Now we have to take this win into next week, because we have not played well on the road. We're just looking to go to West Virginia and get a win there and hopefully make a bowl this year.

On wearing the throwback jerseys: I think they were awesome. Just to get to honor a player like that and for all that he stood for and all that he's done here, it's just an amazing thing. I think it kind of got everybody excited. When we got in there and everyone saw the black cleats and of course the throwback socks, those were the best. So to get to wear those and honor him, it was an awesome experience. It gave us a little bit of momentum and excitement going into the game.

On playing at West Virginia following tonight's big win: You just look at the way we've played on the road and it hasn't been our standard, so we've got to change something. We have to take the energy and excitement that we play with when we're at home and take it on the road, and that's easier said than done, but we have to find a way to do it, because we have to win on the road if we want to be successful here. That's just something that we'll be emphasizing this week.

On finding consistency on defense after an evenly matched first half: We started out real well. I don't know what it was, but we might have gotten a little comfortable or we might have just missed assignments. We'll have to look at the tape to figure it out. But they got a little momentum there in the later half of the first half, so we can't allow that to happen. Really good teams are going to take advantage of that and put up a bunch of points. We didn't play well on defense in the second quarter there, but like you said, we need to be more consistent throughout the game, and going on the road to Morgantown isn't going to be an easy win at all. We got to play consistent if we want to win.

RB, Johnathan Gray, Senior

On D'onta Foreman's 93-yard run: It did a lot. As running backs, you have to be able to take the ball and score from wherever and D [D'onta Foreman] did that. The offensive line did a great job of blocking that play up and the speed kicked in and he gave us a burst in the third quarter and gave our offense a spark.

On significance of win: We needed this win. We needed this win in the worst way. We know what we are trying to accomplish and we know what we have to do to accomplish it. We have to go one game at a time and keep fighting.

On confidence of Jerrod Heard throwing the deep ball: Jerrod [Heard] did well. He does a great job with the offense and keeping us going. We work on those in practice every day, the deep balls, and we know that he has it in him and that we have the guys to go up and get it. He showed he can do that tonight and we have to be consistent and keep it going.

On mentality during this week's practice: Go out and play hard. That's all you can do. Stay focused on your work and show those young guys what you have to do to be a championship team and be a competitor. The team stepped up and the young guys followed, and if we can keep that consistent, the offense will be great.

Senior Safety Duke Thomas

On what wearing the different uniforms did for the team. It meant a lot. Coach definitely surprised us. A lot of guys were really hyped to do it. Coach told us who we

were playing for. Coach let us know Steinmark and what he stood for, the pride and everything that goes with the tradition of the program. Having that jersey on, having the throwback, and having the guys out there able to watch us meant a lot to us.

On what it meant to wear Steinmark's number. It meant a lot. That's a big stage putting on that number. It meant a lot. I knew that every play out there, I wasn't just playing for myself. It was definitely big.

On what was done differently in the preparation for this game. It's across the board. We started on Tuesday. Well, really it started on Sunday. Everybody was more 'in', more serious. People just took it more seriously. We just took that loss to Iowa State and the guys didn't want that to happen again. We took practice very seriously and preparation was key. We came out and executed.

On his impressions of the freshmen players late in the game. I feel that they aren't freshmen anymore. The preparation throughout the week put them in the position to make those plays. We knew what the quarterback was going to do. DeShon did a great job in the middle of the field, playing his eyes and ended up making those two interceptions. We already know what we're getting ourselves into before the game happens. The thing today was, we won the game before we even played it.

Texas Quarterback Jerrod Heard

On accomplishment tonight: A lot of execution on the offense, a lot of the plays we wanted to get, we got done. I have been with Coach Strong and know that we had to keep pushing. They really loaded the box and so it was a lot of outside the main throws. It was pretty good.

On the first play of the game: It meant a lot. I really stress on myself and when that play was called, and for me to just complete it. It was a progression read so I knew I had good options everywhere, but I know I had a lot of faith in John Burt to make that catch. When we were told that we were running that play first, I went straight to my playbook with John and went over the coverage that we were going to expect and this formation, so this is what you need to do to beat this corner. We really talked about it and we connected.

On passing game struggles: It doesn't really. I know it's going to take time and we showed a lot of good things with the passing game so it was good.

On the performance from Kansas: I can't take anything from Kansas. Kansas came out here and played a good game. That did not surprise me. This is the Big 12. If you watched a lot of the game tonight, there were several upsets, so you can't really go off one team and think that it's going to be a relaxed game. That's why we picked the call that we did at the beginning to make a statement.

On the stress of the forward pass in practice: It was just like every week. We also talk about it and make the moves. I know when Coach started a zero blitz we weren't going to be able to run it, and that from pee-wee football. It was critical for us to make those inside slants.

On the statement made in the first play: Just to get on the boards first. When we get that option to go out there, we have to make points every time. That was our statement and I know John and I really had it going that we were going to connect it on this deep ball.

Texas Running Back D'Onta Foreman

On importance and timing of the touchdown: I feel like it was very important. It was important for me, it was important for the team. This game, I just wanted to go out there and make an impact on the game and I feel like I did that. But with the help of my brother [Armanti Foreman] and the team, it was set up for me. I was really untouched on the play. They blocked for me very well. I talked to Coach before the run, he told me to just run. Just go. A lot of people underestimate how fast you actually are, so just run and get the edge. And that's what I did. My brother had a wonderful block. Caleb Bluiett had a wonderful block. Everybody blocked perfectly, I was able to go untouched.

On how special it is your brother right behind you: It was wonderful. I told him and congratulated him, and told him thank you. I kept telling him, "thank you, you did that for me." He laughed and said, "you know every time you make a big play, I am always in the game." And I laughed and said, "yeah, I know that's true." He just told me how proud he was of me and just to continue to go out there and play hard. I told him, "yours is going to come tonight. You're going to get one too" and he did that too. So it all felt good.

On the open field run against OU versus the one tonight: I had great confidence in myself tonight. I knew that I was untouched, so I knew that I had to make that play. I couldn't get caught in that play. In my head, I knew that I had to score. There was no way I was going to get caught twice. I already got it from my friends, family, teammates, parents, everybody, they asked me, "how did you get caught?" So I knew this time I could not get caught. I knew when I got inside the five, I was good.

On his run being the third longest in program history: I did not know that until a few minutes ago, but I was like, "wow." I didn't know that. I feel like that it is a big accomplishment and I am very happy, but I just want to continue to go. I want to possibly tie for the longest. Hopefully, I can just go on and keep getting better.