

University of Texas Football Media Conference

Monday, September 14, 2015

Kent Perkins



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Kent Perkins.

Q. Was that as much fun as you have had on the football field in quite a while?

KENT PERKINS: Yeah, I felt like we were all excited, just the fact we got that win. It's always good, you know, winning. It feels great.

Q. What is the biggest difference with Jerrod in the huddle?

KENT PERKINS: Well, I feel like Jerrod, he did well working with the offense. Communication was good. He made plays. He did a good job.

Q. After you got a win like you did, everybody was having fun, what is the mood of the team?

KENT PERKINS: You always feel great after a win. But the biggest thing is making sure we focus in and keep it going.

Q. What do you have to do to get better on the line? You had a lot of big plays, but the running game is still not there.

KENT PERKINS: The biggest thing I feel like is communication. Physicality is there. We have the right guys there. It's just a fact of communicating and acting like pros on the field.

Q. Talk about the team's mentality playing a PAC-12 school, a team that's never beaten Texas. There's a lot at stake.

KENT PERKINS: The biggest thing is, as I said, acting like pros, in practice making sure you do your job to the T, understanding your assignments, understanding what's expected of you to do, and basically just going out and handling business.

Q. Did Jerrod bring the juice and spark that you needed? Is there a bigger difference on the offensive side of the ball?

KENT PERKINS: The biggest thing, like I said, is communication.

A big change this last game was we all communicated as a team and we got things done.

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Taylor Doyle



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Taylor Doyle.

Q. What was the biggest difference with Jerrod in the huddle Saturday night?

TAYLOR DOYLE: We have a lot of confidence in all our quarterbacks. Jerrod went out of there and took advantage of the opportunity, played with a lot of confidence. He's a dual-threat guy. Really exciting to see him play and see what he was capable of.

Q. Was there a difference? Did you notice anything in the huddle he was doing differently?

TAYLOR DOYLE: Two different types of players. Both are very capable of winning games, have a lot of talent with both of them. Jerrod had an opportunity to go out there and play and he took advantage of that.

Q. What do you want to get accomplished before Big 12 play?

TAYLOR DOYLE: We just need to continue to focus on competing and doing our jobs as individuals as well as a unit and as a team.

We had a lot of fun with this past game. But we know it's back to work. There's still a lot of things we need to improve on. We're focused on that, becoming a better team every week.

Q. I'm sure it's fun to watch Jerrod as he takes off for a long run. Do you ever cringe as he's about to take a big hit?

TAYLOR DOYLE: As the offensive line, we want to minimize the hits on our quarterback. With his ability to get out there, we can't always do that.

He's a tough guy. He's a tough player. We know that. We have a lot of confidence in what he's doing.

Q. Does that change anything for you guys when you know he has the ability to break out on a long run when a play is already broken down? Do you change your approach at all?

TAYLOR DOYLE: Our job as the offensive line is to dominate our blocks. That doesn't change with different players behind us. With him, you have to be more conscious of downfield blocks once he breaks out.

Q. You talk about dominating the blocks. Do you

feel like you've done that? How much further do you have to go where you're dominating on the line?

TAYLOR DOYLE: We know we have to continue to improve, you know, in blocking assignment football, being an offensive line that prides ourselves on downhill blocking, protecting the quarterback.

Q. Are you happy with the way the line has played so far?

TAYLOR DOYLE: Yeah, we know we have to continue to improve. We set a higher standard than what we've shown these past few games. But we're on the right path. Guys are improving every week, including myself. We're excited for another opportunity this Saturday.

Q. Does it feel a little weird scoring 42 points but the offense wasn't on the field very much in that game?

TAYLOR DOYLE: Yes. Whenever you have 30, a handful of snaps, it's a little bizarre. We need to work on being more consistent, not having any three-and-outs, staying on the field. That's something we're putting a lot of focus on this week.

Thank you.

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Desmond Jackson



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Desmond.

Q. (No microphone.)

DESMOND JACKSON: Well, I decided our senior year, this is straight business. I decided in every press conference I have, every chance I have to be in front of a camera, I was going to look nice. Put a little suit on, a tie. Taking a different approach for this season.

Q. Charlie said he's not sure you're at 100%. Where do you feel you are at?

DESMOND JACKSON: I mean, I just take it through a process, day-to-day every day. I just go out there, try to play as hard as I possibly can.

I don't really worry about that really.

Q. How does it feel? Are you getting there?

DESMOND JACKSON: Getting there. I'm getting there.

Q. How frustrating is it being on the D-line with the struggles you've been going through the first couple games?

DESMOND JACKSON: I mean, we as a unit, we just coming together. It's just some things we need to improve on.

We watched film this week. We all talked about how we need to improve from how we are week by week. Just go and get off blocks, making better tackles, not missing any tackles when we possibly can.

I mean, just take everything day by day, just try and get better.

Q. With Jerrod on the field doing what he does on the other side of the ball, how does that energize you on defense?

DESMOND JACKSON: First and foremost, congratulations to him. I know this is his first career start. I think he did a pretty good job, being his first career start.

The offense is taking care of their business like they did on Saturday, it's really good to see them having the success they had for this game. Just take it into the week by week, day by day. Proud of them, glad they did what they needed to do.

Q. Do you take that personally when a team is able to get 96 snaps?

DESMOND JACKSON: That's not basically what we did. It's basically what we didn't do. On third down, we have to get off the field as much as possible.

I think Rice did a pretty good job. But it was more the things we didn't do, more the things that they did.

Q. How has the approach changed with Cal?

DESMOND JACKSON: I know they run a fast tempo. They have a great quarterback. They like to throw the ball everywhere. I mean, have to be able to get off the ball, get to the quarterback. We got to defend the run first, then go ahead and get physical for the pass-rush.

That's something we have to approach the game, something we need to do better.

Q. They seem to be a team that passes to set up the run, different than what football was 10 years ago. You're used to that by now?

DESMOND JACKSON: In the Big 12, we always have teams that like to throw the ball more. You think they're going to pass the ball first. Then they just try to run the ball, so...

It's good. We'll go week by week and get ready for that.

Q. Do you look forward going against a quarterback that's more of a pocket passer, won't have to chase him around as much?

DESMOND JACKSON: I don't think it makes a difference. For us, you got to be able to get back there. First and foremost, you got to be able to change the angles.

Thank you.

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Dylan Haines



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Dylan Haines.

Q. What's been the most frustrating part of the defense?

DYLAN HAINES: I would say third down. We've done just not a good job of getting off the field on third down. We've had a ton of opportunities to get into third-and-medium, third-and-long. We just haven't capitalized. I don't know what it is. I think we tense up on third down. We just missed assignments, missed cues, bad eyes. Just not getting in zone drops. Just simple stuff like that. We're allowing teams to convert. We're on the field too long.

I think that's probably been the most frustrating thing.

Q. It's easy to say, Just execute. But what is it? What do you have to do specifically?

DYLAN HAINES: I think just play smart, understand where the stick's at and where the teams are trying to attack you. Most teams on third down they're going to go right on the sticks. They're not going to throw a deep ball on third-and-long. They're going to go right, (indiscernible). They're going to try to high-low you. Stuff like that.

It's just discipline mainly. Not trying to jump up there, make a play, make a sack, tackle for loss. Let them throw the ball five yards down the field, drive up, tackle it and get off the field.

Discipline is the main thing we have to do on third down. Play the coverage, play the call, don't try and do anything special, just do your job and get off the field.

Q. Can you accept the 'bend don't break' defense mentality and be satisfied with three turnovers, three interceptions?

DYLAN HAINES: I mean, yeah. Obviously great to get a lot of turnovers. You look at what we did on defense just against Rice. A lot of things we did not do well. We gave up a bunch of rushing yards, a bunch of passing yards. Like I said, third down is a big thing.

I think the only thing that kept us in that game was turnovers. I think we had like five of 'em. So we definitely have to get better at all the other things as far as third-down conversion rates for the offense, getting off the field, the amount of snaps we're playing on

defense, then stopping the run. We got to take pride in stopping the run because if you don't stop the run, you can't play good defense.

I think turnovers definitely helped us. It's something that we didn't do a good job of the first game of the season, but we stepped it up and we got the win.

Q. Imagine you haven't done a lot of film study on Cal. From what you have seen, do they remind you of a Big 12 team offensively?

DYLAN HAINES: I mean, I haven't gotten a chance to look at Cal yet. I'm going to start looking at them today, this afternoon. Just from what I know, though, I know they have one of the best offenses around. Got a great quarterback. They're going to come out and they're going to try to throw the ball around.

So we know we're going to be prepared for that. We're going to start looking at some of the route concepts today, working on how to defend them, all of our coverages.

It's just a challenge. That's what you want. I mean, that's what you come here for. As a DB, you want them to try to throw the ball on you, you want to get the opportunity to make plays. Looking forward to a great challenge this week.

Q. Is Malik a leader of the defense or...

DYLAN HAINES: A little bit of both. I think he's as much of a leader as you can be as a true freshman. That's a nearly impossible thing to do, come in as a true freshman and immediately be a team leader. A lot of it just comes with experience.

But he's done such a good job. He's the most impressive true freshman I've seen in my days of college football.

He's played really well these last two games. You just know that there's such a high ceiling for the kid. He's just got an unbelievable future ahead of him.

But he does such a good job just staying focused, taking it a game at a time, working on the things he needs to work on because nobody's perfect. He's new to the game. So a lot of stuff he's got to work on, just like all of us.

But he's done a great job. He's definitely a leader on the defense.

Q. What is it about him that separates him?

DYLAN HAINES: Well, you know, you see a lot of guys come in, four, five star recruits with a ton of talent. But some of them maybe just let it get to their head or some think they don't have to work as hard as others to play at this level. That's not like him at all. You don't see that from him at all.

He's a hard-working guy. Comes to work every day. Doesn't think too highly of himself. Very humble. An unbelievable athlete, too. I mean, you look at just the physical aspects of that guy, I mean, it's amazing the way he can run, the way he can tackle, the way he can get back into coverage, and then the way he can just come and fit gaps and stop the run.

I mean, he's a physical specimen. He's got a good head on his shoulders, too. I think that's what helps him be an all-around good player.

Q. What did it mean for you individually to make some plays Saturday night, an interception, sack?

DYLAN HAINES: Obviously, you know, a good feeling to come out and have a good game. I don't think I performed up to my ability week one. Just to come out and get back on track, not let it affect the rest of my season, the next week, the week after.

I'm just taking it week by week, you know, one game at a time. It's a one-game season. Next week it's Cal. That's all I'm worried about. Just looking to go out next week, perform just like I did this week. Just focus in on my job, doing what I'm supposed to do, what I've been coached to do, what I know how to do.

Yeah, I mean, like I said, one-game season. Notre Dame's in the past. Rice is in the past now, too. Now it's just all about Cal.

Q. Did Boyd and Malik have a lot to say after the fumble return for a touchdown?

DYLAN HAINES: I mean, not really. I kind of ran down there and celebrated with Malik. Then we watched it on film.

They said the pitch was dropped before Chris hit him. I think maybe he saw him coming and then kind of freaked out. But obviously just a great play by two true freshmen. Just a game-changing play there coming out in the second half, getting that score on defense. Whenever you can get a score on defense, I mean, that's going to swing the whole momentum of the game.

To have it done by two true freshmen, that's obviously an amazing thing. Haven't seen that done very often, so...

Really excited for that.

Q. A lot of the things you talk about that you need to improve on sound like it's basic stuff. Are some of the guys making it more difficult than it is?

DYLAN HAINES: Yeah, I mean, I think if you look at our defense last year and how well we performed, it's the same defense. For the most part it's the same players. They say we lost at least two linebackers, two DBs. But you look at the people that have come in and stepped up. They're just as talented as those guys.

After Notre Dame, we played them, we looked at the film and just compared to last year, so many more missed assignments, missed cues, bad eye discipline. Just all stuff that's correctable.

You look at the defense from these last two games, you know, you just look at the statistics, the numbers, it doesn't really look in our favor obviously. Third down has been a big thing. Yards allowed. We don't look like the type of defense that we know we are.

So it's all correctable. It's just getting in the film room, just coming to work every day. I think the first game we came out, and you're going to have a ton of missed assignments the first game of the season. That's every team. You rarely see a college football team come out week one and just completely dominate another really good team and play.

Teams get better as the year progresses. No one is a superb team week one. You just got to continue working, continue practicing, getting down all the things that you've been messing up in the first couple weeks here. I mean, that's just what it's about.

I think we're a long way from where we've shown as far as how good we are as a defense. I don't think we've shown how good we are yet.

Q. It's easy to harp on a lot of the negative things. How much did you need Saturday night to kind of get all the tension out and win a football game?

DYLAN HAINES: Yeah, I mean, obviously just feels real good. It doesn't matter who you play. It's way better to be 1-1 than 0-2. To come out and get a win, not taking anything away from Rice, but not definitely one of the greatest opponents we're going to face this year. We know we have a lot tougher teams ahead in our schedule.

But, like I said, just one game at a time. It doesn't

matter who you're playing, you got to go out there with the same mentality, same intensity, whoever you're playing.

So it just felt great to get a win. We're not concerned about people saying, Oh, it's Rice. That doesn't matter. You play who you play. It's 11-on-11. It obviously feels real good to go get the win. Now just going to try and keep things rolling.

Cal next week. Just a great team, so...

Just going to put in the same preparation we put in this week. Just get all the missed cues from last game, try to correct those, then hopefully go out and get another win.

Q. (No microphone.)

DYLAN HAINES: Obviously the best defense is a great offense. Obviously for Jerrod to go out there and get the opportunity that he got, to start, to go out there, try to make things happen, whether it was throwing or running. You saw he could run a little bit, too.

Obviously it helps us out a lot. When you see an offense go out there and continue to make big, explosive plays, like that touchdown, John Burt, then even on special teams and stuff. But to have an offense go out there and score as many points as they did, that's obviously going to take a little pressure off the defense.

But we know that scoring that many points every week is maybe not completely realistic with some of the teams we're going to play. So we know we got to get better on defense. It was good this last week to have them go out and perform so well, kind of pick up the slack for the defense.

But we're just going to go out next week and try and maybe pick up some slack for them. Who knows how many points they're going to score next week. We just got to get better as a defense.

We were on the field way too long. We didn't give the offense nearly as many plays as they would have liked. So we got to work on getting off the field, especially on third down.

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Jerrod Heard



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Jerrod.

Q. How does it feel to be the man walking around campus, a little pep in your step, more people coming up to you and say, Hey, we love you?

JERROD HEARD: I haven't even get that yet. That would be nice.

You know, I guess it's part of it when you win the game, a new face in the backfield. It is a great feeling, but it's also something I want to keep building on to get more wins here.

Q. How does it feel to know you're the guy, got the starting job, starting quarterback?

JERROD HEARD: As far as that, I don't know the real inside of that. Either it's me or Swoopes starting next week or the following week. I think our team is confident in both of us.

When you have two guys that can really start any week, it just brings I guess a confident feeling out on the field.

Q. How badly have you been wanting that chance to get out there and show what you can do?

JERROD HEARD: I knew I had to be ready soon during this time. When my number was called, I had to definitely be ready, provide what I have for the offense.

Q. How great was it to play and be unleashed?

JERROD HEARD: It was a great feeling to finally get to play. What Malik probably don't know, it's called a redshirt. I don't get the chances like Malik get, to go out his freshman year and get a fumble recovery for a touchdown.

It was just a process I had to go through, to make sure I was ready. I think the coaches felt I was ready to play, be that guy out there.

Q. Do you think you could have played last year?

JERROD HEARD: I definitely think that. But, you know, like I said, it's a process. All freshmen think they're going to come out and ball. It's more than that, it's knowing the defense, knowing what to do in situational football.

Q. Coach talked about the other night your attitude

was a lot different than last year. What is so different about your attitude this year?

JERROD HEARD: Just having that confidence in all areas now. Knowing the opposite defense, knowing from the fronts, the coverage, knowing where to place the ball. It gives you a different confidence of coming out on the field and just executing.

Q. You are first on the depth chart.

JERROD HEARD: Okay. All right.

Q. Do you think you're a different player from practice to games? Charlie mentioned when the lights come on, you come on, too.

JERROD HEARD: I think that's definitely part of it. In practice I'm really learning. I have my ears back. I'm not saying I'm taking it slow, but I'm making sure I'm trying to perfect everything in practice. I want to do that in the game where I'm reacting and going fast.

Charlie is right. When them lights are on, definitely time for me to go.

Q. Is it easy to not be overconfident, but let all this kind of soak in, what happened Saturday night?

JERROD HEARD: I just take it one game at a time. I don't let it get bigger than it is. I just keep calm, stay humble with it, keep grinding.

Q. Is it tough not to get overwhelmed with it?

JERROD HEARD: Oh, definitely. When that's your first game, we win like that in such a big atmosphere, all the momentum on the field, both sides of the field actually. You know, it's real hard not to just soak all of it in.

At the same time you just have to learn, too, just take it at a time and grind for it.

Q. Can you step back and realize how much further you have to go?

JERROD HEARD: There's still a whole lot we have to get done. Credit to special teams and the defense, especially special teams for Daje making those returns, just giving us field advantage. I guess now it's working on it in practice, when we do get out there, executing and driving the ball down the field.

Q. Is there a different vibe with the team after a win like that?

JERROD HEARD: Definitely. I think it gives us definitely a good momentum for the team. It was good for both sides of the ball, too, and just for the team, period. It was a great feeling. I think the guys like that feeling. We're going to try to get another one this weekend.

Q. This is your last game before Big 12 play starts. What do you want to get done?

JERROD HEARD: We just want to win. I think that's all we want to do is just win. It doesn't matter how we get it. Get that W under our belt and lead into the Big 12 just ready to go.

Q. Do you know how to slide?

JERROD HEARD: Yeah, I do. I try to slide. It was hard last Saturday (laughter).

Yeah, I do know how to slide, get down. I try to use the out of bounds as my friend.

Q. How important is that to protect yourself?

JERROD HEARD: Yeah, it's very important as a quarterback. It's very important to, like, cover my body and don't take any licks. I try to use the out of bounds and the slide technique.

Q. The dancing, the push-ups, the energy you bring, where does it come from?

JERROD HEARD: Really the push-ups was because I kind of got frustrated. I didn't want to show a lot of it on the field. I was really about to punch the ground. I just calmed down and did push-ups.

That just comes from a mental state. That's how I get in my zone. Before the games I'm probably going to be dancing hard, doing a whole bunch of stuff. That's how I feel, like, calm when I go back out on the field. If I get too tensed up, I'm not having fun with it.

Q. Has that always been the case?

JERROD HEARD: Oh, yeah. You probably can ask some of my high school teammates. They probably will tell you. I'd be the most goofiest kid out there before the game.

Q. Charlie said that can be mistaken sometimes as you're not focused.

JERROD HEARD: Yeah, I mean, I can see that sometimes. I try not to get too wild with it. I just try to make sure everyone else is relaxed and I'm relaxed.

Q. Do you think that helps them relax when they see you're not uptight?

JERROD HEARD: I think it does. Even me and McNeal, we're joking literally in the huddle, making jokes and stuff. That's what we do to stay relaxed, just

have fun, you know, execute.

Q. Sometimes when people play for the first time at a new level, they talk about the speed is overwhelming. Did you feel that at all?

JERROD HEARD: I felt comfortable. It was something I did have to adjust to, especially in practice. With our defense as good as they are, it was easier to make that adjustment just practicing with those guys. They fly around, make reads hard, give you different coverages and different blitzes. It really helped me for the games.

Q. Have you had a chance to talk to Vince at all?

JERROD HEARD: I talked to him more last year, my freshman year. During the spring of this year, I definitely talked to him more. He just always gave me little ball tips, how to release, throw the ball, stuff like that.

Q. How important is it for the offense to stay on the field?

JERROD HEARD: It's very important. I have confidence in my defense that they're going to make stops. Cal has a good offense. They throw the ball around. They really stay on the field a lot.

It's a good challenge for us. I think in the Big 12, we got a lot of teams like that, that can really use their time on their offense, throw the ball around. It's going to be a good challenge. I have total confidence that our defense is going to make stops for us so we can put points up and match up with them.

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Malik Jefferson



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Malik.

Q. Jerrod just called himself one of the goofiest people.

MALIK JEFFERSON: Fact.

Q. It makes him calm to be that way. Is it like 24 hours a day he's like that?

MALIK JEFFERSON: He's goofy all the time. If you ever listen to his laugh, y'all never catch it, but he has the funniest laugh ever. Makes me laugh. He has the eyes that are really low. Really funny guy.

Q. What does his personality bring to this team?

MALIK JEFFERSON: Swagger, I think. We need that sense of humility. We need to have fun when we're on the field. I think he brings that attitude. He wants to go out there and win. Of course, he wants to have fun while winning. So that's most important.

Q. Jerrod was talking about the defense. He believes in the defense being able to go out this week and make stops. What gives him that idea when you haven't made a lot of stops out there. What has to change this week?

MALIK JEFFERSON: We have to convert on third down. When we look back at film, we missed a couple tackles on third down, including myself. I was a part of a lot of that.

We just have to come and execute when it comes down to third-down situations. We have them behind the ropes and we can never finish.

Right now we're focusing just on practicing better, becoming a better unit 24/7. Just going out there and execute this week because this is a good one for us.

Q. What is this program like after a win?

MALIK JEFFERSON: I think everybody just loosens up a little bit. That's what everybody needs, because the pressure can get to you and it can make your head bust.

A lot of this relaxed everybody, including the coaches. But we're still going to go out there and still play our hardest, no matter what.

Q. This is your last game before Big 12 play. What

do you want to see the team do, what do you want to accomplish?

MALIK JEFFERSON: Make a statement. This is going to be a challenge for us, especially as a defense. This team likes to throw the ball. They're very different than most teams we played so far.

Now we really have to focus this week on the passing game, linebackers being ready for running, the O-line getting sacks.

Q. (No microphone.)

MALIK JEFFERSON: We're definitely not breaking. You can tell how much potential we have as a defense. We have five turnovers. That says enough for itself because turnovers change the game. That's so important when it comes to playing football because any turnover can make a game change.

We just have to focus on the little things, like I say, conversions on third down. We need to make our unit better.

Q. Is this going to be the biggest test to see how far this defense has come in the last few weeks?

MALIK JEFFERSON: This is going to be the biggest test. I'm glad we're playing Cal right before conference play because we seen the dual threat, and now we're going to see a passing team. Big 12 are all just passing basically.

Really excited to go out there and execute. We're going to be really focused this week on Cal, try to go out there and beat them.

Q. Have you seen their quarterback play at all?

MALIK JEFFERSON: I've watched clips of him. He's a pretty good pocket quarterback. We have to get after him out front. When we do blitzes, we have to go and attack. He's looking to throw it deep, not short.

Q. How much will it change the way you'll play?

MALIK JEFFERSON: I have to play a lot slower, be more patient. They gave us a lot of run looks that turned into passes, play-action. As a linebacker, you have to become patient when it comes to situations like this.

Q. (No microphone.)

MALIK JEFFERSON: He's another football player to me. He may be great in other's eyes, but he's out there on the field, same as me, playing the same game. Execution has to happen on my side.

Q. You say you have to slow down a little bit. Doesn't seem like it's in your nature.

MALIK JEFFERSON: What I mean by 'slow down' is knowing what they're doing. That slows my game down and makes me play a lot faster than normal. That comes from preparation this whole week, watching film, going out and seeing the plays, just being prepared for any situation.

Q. You talked a lot about what Heard does. When you see a guy like him in the offense, special teams doing what they're doing, what does that do for you on defense?

MALIK JEFFERSON: It makes us excited. We want to see the offense do better than us, of course. We're going to have to come out there and execute no matter what, because at the end of the day, defense does win championships, as I've said already. That's basically it.

Q. (No microphone.)

MALIK JEFFERSON: Yeah, I wouldn't understand that. I'm humble to say that. I'm not a redshirt right now.

Thank y'all.

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Johnathan Gray



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Johnathan Gray.

Q. How much did y'all need Saturday night just to get the tension off you?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: We needed that a lot actually. Coming off a loss from Notre Dame, just to go out there with excitement, just ready to get a bad taste out of your mouth, go out there and get a W, I think that's what the team needed.

Everybody was excited. Everybody bought into the system, everybody was in tune to what was going on on the field. That's what we need as a team, for everybody to be successful.

Everybody was excited. We're glad we got the W.

Q. What does it do to you as an offense to go to Jerrod now?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: Like we say, it doesn't matter which quarterback. We're rolling with both. Whoever is in, they know what they have to do to get the job done. As a team, we have to get the job done to help them. As the offensive line, as runningbacks and wideouts, we have to do our parts to make the game easier for them.

Having Jerrod in there for this game was an excitement for the team. He got the job done. He knew what he had to do. He helped the team win the victory.

Q. What kind of spark did he provide for you guys on offense?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: It was a huge spark. He came out there and ran for about a 50-yard run. That got everybody jumping around. He threw well. He played a great game.

So I think everybody was excited just to see him play and be successful. That brought a spark to us and got our bench going and got our fans going. We came out with a W.

Q. What's your mindset like right now two games into the season? Have you done what you want to get done or do you want to be more productive?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: Just get better each and every week. You got to produce each week, get better, go out and prepare to win games.

Right now, kind of started off slow. Progressively as a team we're getting better. We know what we have to get done to go through the season. I feel good about our team.

Q. There's so much talk about the youth. Are you ready to say, There's still some seniors here?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: There's some seniors in the work. We have to get healthy. But those young guys are balling. As a senior, whoever is ready to go out there and play, I'm ready for them to go in. It's our young guys right now. They're producing for our team.

Whatever helps helps. They look good. We need some more seniors to push through the season and help these young guys get better. Collectively as a team we get better that way.

I'm excited, ready for the rest of the season.

Q. What is Jerrod's personality like?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: Jerrod is goofy. He's a goofy quarterback, but serious when needed. He brings a lot of energy to the team, a lot of excitement, a lot of maturity, a lot of knowledge. Just a great guy to be around. That's what the team needs, especially from a quarterback. I think he's done a great job of taking over that role.

Q. How much did it help him to have the redshirt year last year?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: It helped him a lot. It helped him grow. It helped him understand what this team needs and where we're trying to get to.

From last year to this year he's grown tremendously. He's done a great job of doing what the coach asked of him, what the team needs from him. I see a successful season in his future.

Q. How important is it to have a game where you balance the time of possession, get some plays on offense, especially going up against a team like Cal?

JOHNATHAN GRAY: This game, special teams and defense took over. We really didn't get that many plays on offense. It got us a victory.

This week we're prepared to get ready for Cal. They have a great defense. We got to get prepared for that and be able to keep our defense off the field this week and put up points.

University of Texas Football Media Conference

Monday, September 14, 2015

Jason Hall



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Jason Hall.

Q. You know this team only has one turnover this year, right? What did you learn from the pick and the fumble?

JASON HALL: You know, from the pick, just be more smart about it. But, like, how I ran out, just be more cautious of holding onto the ball.

Q. How did you feel to get one, though?

JASON HALL: It felt pretty good. I couldn't do it without the help of, like, everybody else on the defense. It wasn't just about me. Everybody else, like, caused that for me to have the interception.

Q. How much do you feel like you're starting to come together?

JASON HALL: We've always been together. Just, like, at times we didn't execute. During week two, we did execute and it showed.

Q. What do you have to do to get off the field on third down?

JASON HALL: As a whole on defense, you got to execute, focus on your assignment, be able to trust the next person to do their assignment.

Q. Is it frustrating having 96 plays? Are you still happy you got the turnovers? What's it like?

JASON HALL: On defense, that's what you do. You try to stop people, get off the field, shorten the field for the offense. We didn't do a very good job of that. We're working to get to that point to where, you know, shorten the field for the offense on top of making the takeaways we have made.

Q. How much frustration was there in Rice continually converting third downs and you not being able to execute?

JASON HALL: Just got to stay focused and continue to focus on your assignments, play hard and play fast.

Q. What is the challenge this week against Cal? Different offense than the two you've seen.

JASON HALL: You know, they've got a great quarterback. They run a fast, up-tempo offense. Great opportunity for us to show what we can do on coverage and make plays.

Q. (No microphone.)

JASON HALL: Yes. Like I said, it will be a great opportunity, get in the spread offense early, so we'll be ready when the time comes when we go into Big 12 play.

Q. What kind of personality does Jerrod have?

JASON HALL: You know, cool dude. Always smiling. We call him J-Smile. He's a great person to be around, brings a lot of energy in practice and on the field. Great energy to have on offense and the sideline just supporting the team.

Q. How much was having him in the game needed Saturday?

JASON HALL: The offense gave him the opportunity, and he took advantage of it. He gave everyone a lot of confidence in making plays. With the offense, along with the people on the sideline, we all rallied up behind him, cheered him on.