

POSTGAME QUOTES

TEXAS

Saturday, October 29, 2016

Head Coach Charlie Strong

Opening statement:

I'm just so proud of this football team, and I just told them a while ago, it's just amazing what we've been battling here just the last three or four weeks and what they've been able to overcome, just all the noise in the system and everything just being so negative, and I'll tell you, this is a team that is going to continue to grow each and every week. You just don't know. It's going to be a game by game; it's just the youth of the football team.

But to watch them go out tonight and just battle, we fall behind, play very well there in the first half, give up the score right there before halftime, then we come back out in the second half, and the defense made just two key stops there where they just held them to field goals and then that just gave us a chance there.

Even on the last play there, we were just trying to get the ball lined up because Domingue wanted it on the right hash so we could just go and kick it through.

But for them to just battle and just continue to fight, you could just tell the grit within this team, it's no quit. You look at the games that we did lose, and it's just -- you just watch how they just continue to fight through it. But I am, I'm so proud of this team, and told them to enjoy this evening. They really deserve it. But we know we have a tough test next week, but tonight was our night, and it's just special.

On if they control their own destiny:

You know, when you talk about the noise in the system and just -- I know this: I have a really good team, and I have a special team, and I have a team that I really care about, and a team that really cares about me, and it's not a program that's in disarray, which many of you think. It's not a program that is going backwards. It's a program that's headed forward, and it's a program that is going to be a special -- it's going to be special one of these days when you watch this program really take off.

But as those guys continue to battle the noise, it helps no one. It's just an embarrassment to everyone, and I just hate it for them, when you're talking about 17, 18 year olds, and the way they feel about their coach and the way their coach feels about them, and for them to have to just continue to hear it.

On wins not coming easy:

When you have a young team, sometimes it isn't going to be easy. I just knew this was going to be a 60-minute battle. We walk in there at halftime, we're up two, and I told them, I said, guys, it's going to take 30 minutes and it's going to take every bit of it, and at the end, someone is going to end up driving the football, and I hope that's us, where we can take the ball and go get a score.

On Domingue:

Well, we go through that every day, where I have him at the end of practice, I put the ball down and just have him go out there and kick. Some days he's on, some days he isn't, and for him to hit it tonight, it was really big, and the players, they have so much confidence in him, and they believe in him so much.

On not starting some of the regular defensive contributors:

Well, guys, it's week by week, and they need to play well, and not so much -- they're going to play, it's who starts the game, but when you look at it, Malik probably played more than any linebacker there tonight.

On if that served as motivation for Jefferson:

Well, he played very well, so maybe it was a little motivation for him.

On if he was concerned about setting up for the final kick:

No, I really wasn't, and just -- because you look at it, I wasn't really -- I saw the clock, and it was just like,

even if we get a 1st down here and try to convert it to a touchdown, I just didn't want no time left for them, so I was just hoping, hey, don't score too fast, don't score too fast, because I didn't want them to take the ball and drive it and put them in field goal range. But just going out there, you just know that he was going to hit that one because he was walking the sideline just saying, just give me one chance, just give me one chance.

On the Foreman twins:

I think they feed off of -- I guess when you're twins, you feel one another and you play off of one another, but you look at big 33 and for him to go get a thousand tonight, and then for -- to be recognized was really special, and he really enjoyed it because he kept saying, Coach, when I get my 1,000 yards they're going to recognize me, and I said, yeah. So when he got it, he ended up getting the recognition that he deserved. And then you look at Armanti, he scores a touchdown and then he makes a big play there on the sidelines, and the one he let get away from him, it just burns him. He's one of those guys that has so much pride, it just kills him when he doesn't do the right way.

But that fumble, we were able to go out on the field, and actually we got the safety, so I told him, I said, I know we didn't get the touchdown, but we did get two points out of it.

On D'Onta Foreman:

You know, he's just playing at a different level. He wants to be the best back in the country, and right now he's playing like he is the best back in the country.

You just watch him, some of those yards, he's going to get the big runs, but also there's those two and three where he has to grind it out and he has to pound it, but it's the way he works. He practices like that. That's what I tell guys all the time. You look at him, and he practices so hard, then he goes out in the game and he plays the way he practices. We can't always get that effort from some of you other guys, and I wish we could.

But it was just -- he's just playing at a different level right now.

On the negativity surrounding the team:

No, it hasn't gotten in, but what it is -- not with me, but the thing that happens is they read it because they're young kids and they're social media people and they're going to get on everything from Snapchat to whatever, and it bothers them. When you have players that come to you and apologize for dropping the football when I tell them you don't have to apologize, no, Coach, because they're putting all the pressure on you. No, it's no pressure on me, guys, I will be fine, don't worry about me. But when you hear those conversations and then you hear parents just continue to send you text messages, I'm praying for you, you have our support, then somebody is -- I'm not reading it, but they're reading it and they're hearing it. And like I said, it's nobody wins in that situation. Hey, every year a coach enters, and there's a lot of coaches on the hot seat, but it's just like the drama continues to play when it doesn't have to.

On if the team is close to breaking through:

We're very close, and you know, we've got four left, and we just need to go play well in these next four and just continue to build on this game, let this game carry us to the next one.

But we have to play better on the road. We just haven't -- that's where our Achilles heel is right now, just playing well on the road. We're going to play well at home. The crowd tonight was unbelievable, got behind us. You see the stretch there, and when we would go and score -- even when we went for two, it was close, then we don't get it. But it was just more added incentive for the defense to go, now we've got to stop them, guys, we've got to get a stop get the ball back for our offense.

On P.J. Locke:

P.J. played very well, and you look at their first drive, the second drive, when 2 bats that ball in the air and then P.J. finds it and just makes an unbelievable catch to get it caught. Then we were playing -- what we were doing was playing a lot of just man under, where we're chasing routes underneath and making them throw the ball over our head. They beat us one time there on a double move, where they kept running hitch,

kept running hitch, then they ran a hitch and go and then got us. But our defense, our DB's, for the most part, they did a good job of just covering, and you look at what Cannon and what they have, Zamora, they have so many weapons, and the quarterback, he did a great job just hitting us with some pop passes there, fake to run, and then find the tight end.

But it was just -- it was a grind-it-out game where they were going to get theirs. We knew they were going to get theirs. They have a really good offense, and we just wanted to make sure that we would get more in the end.

On the team's chemistry and makeup:

Well, you've just got to build off the night, and then the team has really good chemistry. These guys all like each other, around each other a lot, so the chemistry is there. Now, it's just all about us just -- we go on the road, just go play well and just eliminate all the factors and make sure that we just stay focused.

On giving up almost 400 rushing yards:

You know what, the second half is when they just really -- they felt like they could go pound the football, and a lot of it was just creases where guys weren't getting off blocks and guys in gaps. But the main thing is we went into the game saying that the most physical team is going to win this game, the guys who can rush the football. They had more yards rushing than we did, but we were able to make the stops at the right time.

On the defensive line:

Well, we saw it coming with Jeff in the second half. I just started all-out blitzing, and I just played zero in the back end, just four across, and it just felt like waiting for us to get the pressure, and the one time that Bryce hit him from the backside, we were in zero coverage and running Malik and the blind backers through the gaps, just trying to get the pressure on the quarterback, because I didn't want him to hold the ball because if he holds the football and the protection breaks down and we can't get there, then he's going to complete the ball, so I didn't want to put out -- just hang our defensive backs out, so a lot of those sacks just came off of just zero pressure.

On if the team has bonded because of the noise surrounding the program:

Well, you would like to think that at the University of Texas you would not have to go us against the world because you would feel like, they -- these guys, they signed on for this, and this place is special to them, and you would feel like, okay -- yeah, we should get what is given to us when we don't play well, but we just don't need to continue just a falsehood, let it just continue to try to destroy the program. You're dealing with young people, and young people, some of them get their feelings hurt. But we've just got to be careful about how we do it, and like I said, I can take it, it doesn't bother me, and just continue to give it to me, and I'll take all the heat for you guys.

But this team, they're a special group because any other team that I've been around probably would have let that affect them, and they probably would have turned against one another, which it hasn't done. It's so funny because everybody thinks within these walls, it's crumbling, but if you're coming within these walls you'll never see a team so close and a team that knows what they have to do and a team that just hurts inside when things don't go their way.

It's not a group of guys that is filled up with egos who walk around like beating their chests and it's us against the world. I told them, we don't need that attitude. Let's just continue to bond together and let's play together and we'll get things accomplished, and good things are going to happen for us.

Junior TE Andrew Beck

On his play tonight:

It's exciting. Every time we run it in practice, my eyes get big. I'm just excited I got called in the game. That's always a plus. It still hasn't set in yet.

On carrying the momentum forward:

We haven't been great on the road so far, but we've matured as team as the season has rolled on that I think guys understand now that we have to be able to carry this onto the road. We've been pretty good at home, but obviously a road win is due for us.

On getting this win despite the negative comments surrounding the team:

It's exciting. It hasn't set in yet. One thing Coach Strong does really well is tell us all the time, "Keep your ears in the building. I'll take care of everything going on outside of it. Just focus on what's happening within these walls, and we'll be able to win like we did today."

On the unity of the team:

Each time we step out on the field or go into meetings, we grow a little bit closer. It's exciting to see that. This is my third year, and it's been different every year. This year we've come together quite a lot.

Sophomore S P.J. Locke III**On his two turnovers today:**

I'm just proud of my preparation. It allowed me to make plays today.

On improving the defense:

We just had a chip on our shoulders. I feel like the game against Kansas State, we just made a few too many mistakes. It cost us the game. We focused on not making those mistakes so we pull out a win.

On the negative comments surrounding the program:

We try not to put too much focus on that. We just worry about right now and create our own new story for the game.

On the defense tonight:

We all come together. We never dropped our heads this game. I'm proud of my team for that. We get a stop and we expect offense to score. If the offense doesn't score, we're going to get the ball back.

Sophomore OL Connor Williams**On what this win means:**

I think we've got our confidence back. We played as a unit, and we played well. That's how we can perform if we play as a team.

On D'Onta Foreman:

He ran very well. I just watched film, and he made holes out of nothing sometimes when we messed up. He made us look good.

On the performance tonight:

It was just a great performance on our part, both offense and defense together. We fought very hard. It was great to see.

Junior WR Armanti Foreman**On how special today was:**

It was extremely special. I knew I had to come out here and make big plays. Last week, I just kept replaying that moment in my head. I just told myself that when I get that opportunity to make that big play again, I've got to make it. I feel like I did that tonight.

On what D'Onta said to him today after the fumble:

He just told me, "Forget about it. He fumbled the ball too. Just go out there and make up for it." He just carries me to go onto the next play.

On how to get the bad plays out of his head:

I'm always confident in myself. I do beat myself up a lot, but I'm always confident in myself. I don't ever give up on myself. I think that's what motivates me to keep on going, keep fighting. I feel like that's what I had to do this week. I beat myself up all last week and this week too just thinking about it. I just had to stay focus, believe in myself, and come out today and play great.

Junior RB D'Onta Foreman

On how it feels to beat Baylor:

Unreal. It's unreal. I'm so proud of those guys in that locker room, our defense, O-line, quarterback, receivers, you know. I'm so proud of those guys, I can't even explain how proud of the team I am.

On winning even with recent negativity surrounding Coach Strong:

We just always believe, we never let outside noise interrupt what we want to do and I think that we wanted to accomplish the season, and things haven't been going our way for the most part and we just have to keep fighting and today we did and I always say at the game, we have to play four quarters of football and tonight I feel like we did that.

On what's being said about Coach Strong:

Personally for me, I'm not going to say that I took it personally or anything like that but I just wanted to go out there and play for him, play for the team, so I hope he's here next year.

On tonight being the best Foreman brothers performance:

I don't know, we had it pretty good in high school, but definitely in college. I'm so proud of my brother though, he's been down a lot about his performances but tonight he went out there and just showed the world against the number 8 ranked team in the nation. I'm so proud of him.

On what he said to his brother after the game:

I told him I was proud of him. That was a really big catch he had at the end of the game he fumbled that ball early and I told him "you're going to make up for it, I've fumbled the ball before too and I still end up at the end of the game with some positives." I'm so proud of him I can't even explain how proud of him I am.

On both he and his brother playing well on the same night:

This is stuff we dream about, this is stuff we talk about all the time. He comes and sits in my room and we talk about these moments all the time so to go out there and do it in a big game like this, it's a game that we really needed to win and I'm so proud of him.

Freshman QB Shane Buechele

On the negativity surrounding Coach Strong affecting him:

I think you fight against it but you also kind of take it in as motivation type thing, just to help us, you know you hear it and it's hard not to hear it when you're at the University of Texas. I think you just take it in and use it as motivation. You block it out. But you also take it in and prove them wrong, you have to stick together as a team but try and block it out and listen to everybody who's in our room right now and try and go out there and ignore it.

On tonight's win:

This is a big win for us, any win is a big win but especially this one just to get confidence back and just bring it to a higher level. Just having this win and then we're going to try and carry it on to the next week.

On D'onta's performance:

He's a big time player and it shows every week. He's doing things that are unbelievable and that Heisman pose that he did, he should definitely get recognition for it and especially for the trophy.

On the Foreman brothers combination:

They're always fighting. They always fight to the end, they're always hard on each other and they're smart players. They're always going to fight till the end, they're competitive guys, and they're competitive with each other and I think that makes each other better.

On being a young team and dealing with negativity:

I think just hearing it all, I think it does make us come together stronger. We try to block it out, like I said, we try to stay what's in our room, in the team room, but it's definitely something that we've learned to block out as the young guys. It's hard to keep that stuff out when you're a young guy and just learn to block it out. For our young guys, and everybody on our team, we're doing a good job coming together as a team.

Offensive Coordinator Sterlin Gilbert

On how his offense has helped progress the program:

That's the thing that we've asked of those kids and what we've installed. Just steady progression; that's what we want especially in year one when you have young kids, you just want to see steady progression, you want to see guys get better. You want to see fundamentals and techniques show up on tape through the week and you for sure want to see it show up on Saturday and we had an opportunity today.

The thing I love about today is our kids fought, our kids battled. They kept overcoming. We obviously had adversity and like any time during the game, our kids continued to battle and fight, through all three phases we were fortunate to put it together at the end.

On how much credit he gives his players and staff for the tremendous turnaround in the offense since he has arrived:

Yeah, 100%. Our kids do an unbelievable job. Somebody has to give them the information and teach them and coach them and that's where I'll put that to our staff. Our staff has done a really good job of giving the kids the information and going out and coaching them on the fundamentals and techniques and demanding excellent and discipline.

That's what you get through the week when you get the result you got today. And for the kids, it's unbelievable. I mean, those kids went out and battled and I couldn't be prouder of a group of kids on how they battled and fought and continued to get better. Just to see their faces and look in their eyes, to see what we got today was huge for our program, huge for the University of Texas.

On what it's like to have running back in D'Onta Foreman who just pass the 1,000 yard rushing mark:

He's a special back, number one. And congratulations to him. He's a guy that just continues to get better week in and week out and battles and pounds for yards. The thing about him that is unselfish is that he knows those guys up front are the reason he's able to accomplish that. I saw him hugging those guys in the locker room and that's what it's about. So those guys up front paved the way, and I always say, "As y'all go, we go," so those guys paved the way for that to happen today. D'Onta was special enough to accomplish it with his legs himself. That's huge. That's a huge accomplishment to be a 1,000 yard back for our football team. That means we have some effective things happening on our end.

On how the offense exploded after a tough third quarter:

You just battle. You're fighting hard for yards and trying to find a way and willing a way for this thing to happen. And that's what our kids did and that's what we keep telling them on the sidelines. To keep battling and we're going to find a way for this to happen. We know we're a play away from being right back with momentum and being right back in the football game and those are the things that happened today.

On how big the Armanti Foreman catch in the fourth quarter was:

Yeah, that was huge. A big time catch right on our sideline. Being able to make that catch and have a huge momentum swing for us right at that moment, and it takes us down to the final kick.

Senior DT Paul Boyette, Jr.

On how the team can see a different result on the road:

Going forward, we know we have struggles on the road but this is a step in the right direction. It's an 11am start in Lubbock and we need to go out there and give Texas Tech our best shot.

On what's not clicking when the team goes on the road:

I think it's just about confidence. We can have confidence playing at home, but we need to have confidence away, too. Every game we have to go in and make their home crowd our crowd. We just have to go in there and have pride and be physical and just play with great enthusiasm.

On how to change the loss after a big game that has happened in the past:

Just going back to practice and back to the basics. Humble ourselves and enjoy this win tonight and tomorrow watch the film and let it go. Come in Monday and get ready for Texas Tech. We know that Patrick Mahomes is one of the nation's leading quarterbacks in passing yards and they're not going to change what they do. They're an air raid team so we have to step up to the challenge.

On whether a win like this against Baylor relieves any pressure:

It relieves some pressure but the pressure is still on. We have to win out. It's a step in the right direction and it relieves some pressure.

Sophomore DT Chris Nelson

On what this win feels like:

It's a great victory and shows all the hard work we put in. Everyone working together as a team.

On who this team is:

We still have unfinished business to do, but you can tell that we're coming together as a team. Through all the downs, we keep each other up in practice, trying to capitalize and watch more film.

On why the team seems to be good when the back is against the wall:

We just have to come out and play early.

On how tough it is when an opponent continues to make offensive plays:

From a pass game, we lose our momentum when we get back to the sideline everyone gets down. We have people on the team talking, going back and forth down the line, telling people not to worry about it, that we'll get it on the next play. Just one play at a time.

Sophomore FOX Breckyn Hager

On the defensive performance in the second half:

As a defense we realized this game's in our control and so we just took it as far as we could and we got the W.

On the effect of negativity from outside of the team:

Oh it's gotten to me, especially. I was like, listen, everybody's talking badly about this defense but we're gonna be about that action, still showing what we're really about. We took a stand tonight and I think we showed that against one of the best offenses in the nation.

On the defense's "us against the world" mentality:

Yeah, and then that we're undefeated at home. We've got some of our best opponents at home, staying the course. But now we're going to focus on Tech and we're going to go and beat them.

On taking talk about Charlie Strong and his future personally:

I take it very personally because I'm tired of it. They're not with him everyday like I am, they don't know what kind of man he is and like I said, we're going to be about that action.

On defense strategy to bring blitzes and zero coverages in the second half:

Yeah, well but that... we just know we've got to get ten yards deep. You know, get penetration, get our hands up for that quick pass, that pop pass Baylor likes to do. You know, it's good because now we've just got to go and get the ball.

On if the maturation of the group will facilitate a similar performance on the road:

I do. Because we are a young team as much as people don't like to say that. We're a young team, we're learning how to win on the road and we're getting closer to that and we're going to work as hard as we can to achieve that this week.

Senior S Dylan Haines

On if negativity fuels team:

We definitely don't let it affect us but we do get the sense that we are playing for Coach Strong and we love him as a coach so much. He's done so much for a lot of us and he's really that player's coach that you've always dreamed of having. So we know we have to go out there and play for him and that's exactly what we did tonight. We knew if we go out there and played well that we would give him a good game. He said it was going to be close and you can't get much closer than it was tonight. So I'm just proud of everyone that went out there played a complete game.

On if he's seen growth in the young players:

Yeah absolutely. There are a lot of young guys playing and starting, so they're getting that experience and now they're getting snaps and they're not going to be these young guys anymore. They're not going to be saying next year we have this young team. These guys have experience, they have snaps, they have starts, so I think everyone's trying to take that, take what the coaches are giving us and learn the playbook. Learn what teams try to do with us and mature every week.

On if they can take this on the road next week:

We'll see. That's going to be what we're going to preach; why we play so well at home but we can't play on the road. We're just going to have to work to bring that confidence, bring that energy that we bring at home and take it on the road.

On the energy of the team after this win:

The energy around the team is different. With everyone writing us off and we're right now in that stretch to make a bowl game at three wins so getting the one tonight we knew that was huge. So the energy now is we know we can go win them all out because we just beat the number 6 team in the country. So we know if we just play to our ability we can win the rest of them and we can probably win our bowl game. So we have a lot in front of us. We just have to take it week by week now.

Senior K Trent Domingue

On how he is feeling after game winning kick:

It's awesome. I'm just thankful that Coach Strong had the confidence in me to make that play. Even through all the misses and blocks he's had my back and he's told me how confident he is in me and same with everybody else. They've always had confidence in me and it's really helped me get through whatever.

On if he thought the kick was good right away:

It was great. Honestly it started with the snap so I have to thank the snapper, Jak Holbrook, and Trey Holtz, the holder. They do a phenomenal job. I have no worry about what they're going to do. But yes right when it hit my foot I knew it was in.

On if he was nervous before the kick: I was extremely nervous:

As a kicker you're not supposed to think "don't miss" but I was thinking don't miss. But I was confident enough in practice it made it almost easy because we do it so much.

On if he was ready to redeem himself after Kansas State game:

I was ready to redeem myself because I knew that wasn't me, that kick. Especially right there in that situation but it feels good to redeem myself and hopefully we can take this momentum and win out.

Junior FOX Naashon Hughes**On if the negative talk in the media:**

Coach Strong is like a superhero for us. Every team meeting he is like guys don't worry about the media. I'll take care of the bullets, I'll take every hit they try to throw at you guys. So he takes all the media negative talk for us.

On what it's going to take to win at Tech:

I hate that place. They have a great quarterback, another great set of receivers just like Baylor so defensively we just stopped a team like them so we should be pretty ready for Tech.

On the defensive energy tonight:

We called a timeout and we all got together and we were like thee guys get field goals. They don't touchdowns. We have to help the offense out as much as we can so that was just the main message in the huddles and everything like that. It starts in practice. Monday and Tuesday when we go out in practice guys are focused. They are like ok if they get passed the 50-yard line they're probably going to go for it on 4th down so the goal is to not let them get passed the 50 yard line.