

Postgame Quotes

Texas 50, No. 10 Notre Dame 47

September 4, 2016

TEXAS QUOTES

Texas Head Coach Charlie Strong – *courtesy of ASAP Sports*

Opening statement: A great team victory by our team. Just loved the way that we just played and we came out, we had energy from the very beginning, and then we got up by 17 and they were able to come back and recapture the lead. And I said a year ago that we probably would have lost that football game because we wouldn't have known how to finish and we wouldn't have known how to continue to just play through.

They had so much confidence in one another that you watch, we got the score back on offense. Then we end up getting the extra point block, and they tie the score back up. But we still had a great kickoff and we were able to pin them down. We didn't allow them to just drive the ball and get the field goal to go win the game.

Those two quarterbacks, I had the conversation with them, and I told Swoopes, I said actually with both of them, I told them, Buechele's going to start, and I said Swoopes, "You know what's going to happen in this game? You're going to have an opportunity to go win this football game for us," and you look what he did. He came in there with his 18-wheeler package, and we knew he was going to play.

It's just you look at that freshman and he played an unbelievable game. You look at what Swoopes did, John Burt drops a long one and the long one off Petey's hands that caused that interception. But just the poise that he has.

And you look at Swoopes, a lot of times, when you get a senior, a lot of them can actually go the other way and kind of become a problem, but Swoopes told him, he told him, "Listen, I'm behind you. Anything that happens, I'm going to be there for you. Anytime we need to have a conversation, you just call because I'm going to be on the sidelines and I'm going to be there to help you."

But it's just the way this team has just come together and you feel how they have so much respect for one another. But we needed tonight to get this program back in the spotlight, and this is a big win for us to get the program headed back. I know one game does not make a season. We have many more to go, but this is a great start for us, a record crowd.

I told our coaches, just make the game plan easy because the crowd is going to allow us to play with the passion that we have and the players are going to play off of it.

I was teasing them, the preparation yesterday, it's the first time I've ever seen it. The guys, we were meeting they didn't say anything. I was like, oh, my God, what is wrong with this team? Usually some guys are joking around. Even this morning at pregame I had to say something to them. I said, "Okay, y'all don't want to start, let me get it started. Let me tell some jokes." And then Heard comes walking in, and he said, "Coach let me stand by you," because I always start a meeting with the clap. I start the meeting. And Heard said, "Let me do the clap because I'm nervous, but I'm not scared though. I'm nervous, but I'm not scared."

I said it's all right to be nervous, because usually when you have the knot in your stomach, then that means you're going to go out and play well, and that was great tonight. It was just fun to watch the team and how it just fought back.

I just knew that second overtime we had a chance. I said we're going to go on defense first. I just said the defense to hold them to a field goal because we're going to score a touchdown. Get Swoopes in there and let's run behind him. You see that one run, he ran over two guys. One guy ended up being taken off the field. I hope he's okay. But then he goes in with the touchdown and scores.

But what a great win tonight. It was just amazing. Just to see our crowd. I'm so happy for our fans, because they needed

it. Our fans really needed that. We've been down for so long and people have been talking about us. It was a night for us to just make it right. At least for one game, for one game. I'm just so proud of our football team.

Q. You did a good job of not listening to us about the quarterback issue. What was your thought process as the game unfolded as to whether you're going to go with Buechele, go with Swoopes? What was the thinking to the situation? What made you want to go with the 18-wheeler?

CHARLIE STRONG: If you watched the game, when we first started off, if you watched Buechele, he was throwing the deep balls and the first one we had dropped, but he was just making the throws. You really don't want to just pull him. You want the rhythm with the game. Then we brought the 18-wheeler package in there and Swoopes was able to just run the ball. I think we had a 17, 18-play drive with Swoopes in the game.

But it wasn't like we were just going to settle on one guy. We were going to make sure, hey, let's roll these quarterbacks and we have the packages for them. The one, I said, hey, Sterlin, let's throw a deep one in there and Swoopes threw the ball. I said, oh, God, he's not going to be warmed up, this ball's going to sail out of bounds and it sailed out of bounds and hit the white.

But so much can be said about Swoopes and just for him to be the person he is, and I told him that. This morning we did our team walk and I said, come and walk with me. I just want you to feel like this. Now I don't want you to be upset the young guy's in there. But you're going to have your chance. You're going to have the opportunity. But you're a special person to handle this situation the way you're handling it.

Q. After such a high-profile win, how do you keep the team's energy in up for the game next week to make sure that they don't sit on their laurels?

CHARLIE STRONG: Well, what we have to do as a coaching staff, we have to realize a lot of us have been in big games and we have to make sure that we can go out and practice and make sure that our kids do stay focused because it is. And I told them that they're going to have tomorrow off. Tomorrow is off because we played on Sunday, so I'm going to give them Monday off and then get ready to go back to work on Tuesday.

I think with our leadership now and our seniors, I'm going to talk to them and just make sure, hey, let's not -- let's make sure that we don't all of a sudden start feeling good about ourselves and then we lose our confidence.

Q. Just talked to the governor and he said the only thing topped this for him is Vince Young running in the end zone in 2005. You weren't around then, but does this feel like some sort of turning of the corner with 14 weeks to go in the season?

CHARLIE STRONG: Well, you look at it and you love to see that. You always need a signature win and where's that signature win, and you hope you can get one where it gets you going. Even last year, you go beat Oklahoma and feel like, okay, we have seven more games in the season. Now we've beat this team and it's one of the tough teams in our conference. Now maybe we can go out and play well these final seven weeks, which we didn't do.

But you have a different team now. You have a small group of seniors that provide so much leadership, and then you have a young group where you have a large amount of sophomores and freshmen. They don't know any better. You know, a lot of times with young guys, those guys have so much confidence, so much flair about them, they're just going to go out there and say throw it to them, or I can beat a guy deep or I can do this. And you're hoping that we'll be able to maintain that. But it's our senior class, and what they've done and even up to this point just how hard they've worked from January to now.

Q. As much as you've been through, you've talked so much about this thing flipping. You've said that word over and over. When did you know or at least get the sense with this team that things had flipped and this would be a different team this year?

CHARLIE STRONG: You know, it happened this summer when we had a chance to just work with our guys in the days that we have. You just felt like now when you bring it, when we brought in that class that we just brought in and you just saw the big bodies and you saw the athletic guys, but you saw a very confident group of players. And I think it kind of just, that group kind of rubbed off on to our players that we had already in the program.

Then the players in the program, they would say, oh, my God, coach, we're big now. We're really big. And they'd start getting a little confidence about themselves. Perkins, he don't say much at all, and Perkins actually he sits right here and one day he sat up in the meeting here and said, listen, guys, there's no more excuses in our program now. We have talent. We're young, but that's not an excuse either. You young guys are going to have to step up and play.

Even tonight, if you look at tonight, you had a freshman in Buechele, and then you had a freshman center, and on the defensive side of the ball, you rode Roach, but you didn't have many freshmen playing tonight. You had a fair amount of two-year guys, three-year guys that have been in the program that played.

Q. You talked about before the game that these freshmen aren't going to know what's going on and they're going to be out of their heads. But Buechele, the way he performed, he looked so mature. Can you talk about how pleased you are with his performance, and going forward that the two quarterbacks can actually really work here?

CHARLIE STRONG: I called Buechele's mom, Nancy on -- it had to be Saturday night -- Saturday night. I told her, "Hey, listen, I think that the decision is final. I'm going to go with your son," and he was standing next to me. He said, "What's she doing?" And I said, "I think she's crying." He said, "Oh, God, I told you she would, Coach." And I said, "Well, let me say this, you better not let her down."

But the confidence that he has, and that's why I talked about him this summer, like he's always had a confidence, but he has a respect for his other teammates.

Like some guys are kind of cocky and they kind of rub you the wrong way and guys don't want to associate with them. They're just hoping they fall on their face. But as with him, all the players, they have so much respect for him. When we talk about just the different games that we play. And he's always around them. He's always around. You see him in the building, he's always around. You just knew that he could handle it. Like this stage wouldn't be too big.

I said to him in the beginning, "What do you think?" He said, "Well, when I first ran out there, Coach, I think I'm going to be nervous, but let me settle down." I said, "Well, you're going to turn around and hand that ball off anyways. You're not going to throw it deep, okay. So we don't have to worry about it."

You will not underthrow or throw the ball over your head, you're going to hand that ball off. You may hand it off the first few times. I think he did. Then once he got settled down, he just, you know like sometimes there's a player that comes through that's a special player, and he's one of those players.

Q. First year you lost Dom Espinosa and David Ash in the first game, and this was an emergency going into this week. Last year on the road at Notre Dame it was tough. This year, what is your messaging to this team coming out of this where you beat a Top 10 team and you've got some positive momentum?

CHARLIE STRONG: Well, I just told them that one game doesn't make a season and we have a lot of games left. We've got to continue to just build on this game and continue that we have to get better and not let everybody pat ourselves on the back.

Yeah, that was a great win, but there are still a lot more games we'll go play. And if we just rest on this game, all of a sudden someone slips up on us, then this game won't mean as much. That's why we've got to continue to build on it. And I think with the group of guys that we have, they'll come back to work, plus, the coaching staff, they can't rest on it themselves. We as a coaching staff, we've got to make sure that we don't lose our edge and we continue to coach hard and do a better job of coaching. Tonight, we need to do a better job than what we did tonight.

Q. How much confidence did it give you to see that 16-play, 88-yard drive where you just basically pounded them? And number two, how big was the win tonight knowing that there were guys that won National Championships celebrating with you guys on the field?

CHARLIE STRONG: Well, the 16-play drive, it was big because I just kept saying, I said to Sterlin just pound them, pound them, pound them. And I just wanted to see if we could wear them down. Even at the end with the last session with Swoopes I said, listen, we're not throwing the ball. We're going to lineup and we're going to let 18-wheeler just run over

people. He said let me do it tonight. Coach, I want to win this game, and I said you're going to get your chance to win it.

Then they go out there and with all the players on the sideline and there were a ton of them. Just for them to see all those former players to have a chance to enjoy this victory and be a part of it. It was so funny because we came in at halftime and I saw Jeffcoat, and he said, Gosh, I don't think I've ever seen us play as hard as we're playing right now. I said, We're not, but we still have 30 minutes to go, so let's go finish this thing off.

Q. It all worked out, you can be honest. What were you thinking when the extra point got blocked and they ran it back? Was it a here we go again type of thing?

CHARLIE STRONG: I looked back and I think it was like 3:00 minutes to go, and I said, oh, God, now we've got to go out here on defense. So we get the extra point blocked, and then I think I was the one who hit the official as he was running down the sideline. I was so pissed and he ran into him and he threw the flag. I think that was on me. I knew it was on me.

Then we get the ball and we had to kick it off from the 20. I said to Becker, I said, Just boot it. Just punch it as far as you can. Our cover team, we have to go cover it. We need to get a stop here so we don't allow them to drive in and get a field goal.

We came with pressure, we came with pressure, we came with pressure, and even we had our chance, we get the ball back and we're driving. 33 makes a big run, and then we get a holding call which took us back and then the bad snap. I said, hey, let's get it into overtime. If we can just hold them to field goals, we're going to score a touchdown. I just felt like we would pound them and we'd get the touchdown.

Q. What were you expecting from Notre Dame for their quarterback rotation? Were you surprised to see Zaire as much as you did?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, I wasn't. I think that Zaire, he gave us a lot of problems because he can run and throw. We knew that -- no, Kizer can run out there, but when Zaire was in the game, we felt like we could load the box and take away his run game. But when Kizer came in, you watch, and I think every time he came in there were more runs than throws. At one point he threw the ball six straight times.

But I knew that they would rotate him. We felt like they would rotate him the way they did. But at the end when they wanted to come back and two win the game, they left Kizer in because he's a more productive thrower.

Q. As far as the blueprint, what can you share about, if there was a blueprint, between you using the two quarterbacks the way you did?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, it wasn't really a blueprint. It was just how the flow of the game went. We knew this. I think the third series is when Swoopes went in the game. I think we told him he's going to go in the game on the third series. Then once it got down there inside the goal line area, we didn't want to get -- Shane isn't the runner that Swoopes is, and there is no need to try to run the quarterback. I think he ran a couple where he broke loose, but he doesn't need to take that pounding when you've got Swoopes who is another big running back that can just run through people.

But just it worked out the way it did at the quarterback position. Sterlin did a great job of just managing it, and we knew once we get in there we can just balance people up and let him get -- if he got one-on-one on a guy, it was hard for someone to tackle him one-on-one.

Q. Malik had an awesome game on defense, especially in the first half. But I guess you had him shadowing your quarterback during the second half to try to keep him running to kind of take his aggressiveness away there? How did that work out for you? Obviously, it worked out for you well in the end.

CHARLIE STRONG: Yeah, Malik, the thing you can do with him, he's such a great edge rusher, and he can put so much pressure coming up the edge and blitzing him. Like on one touchdown they scored in overtime, we were bringing him off the edge, and he said to one of the DBs, Hey, I'm going to come. He just knew the ball was going to come out and they were going to run a jail break and they ran the jailbreak and scored.

But just his leadership that he provides. He's still one that can make a lot of plays, and even at the end there, he made a

big sack where he was able to get in and put the pressure on Kizer. But he's a guy that we know he can make plays, and he can win one-on-one battles when he blitzed.

Q. You get the 72-yard touchdown pass right away to start the second half, and then Shane throws the interception. Was there a conscious effort to kind of buckle it down and run it at that point? And Collin Johnson, any reason why he wasn't part of this one?

CHARLIE STRONG: Well, he played. I don't know how many snaps he played, because I think like John Burt had a lot of catches. But when we went up 17, and we allowed him on defense, we allowed him to drive the ball down the field like bang-bang. Like four plays, touchdown, and we're up ten. And the ball there, the ball he threw wasn't a bad ball. Just Petey never looked at it, and he had the first downs, just catch the ball, we're backed up.

Then the ball tips up because the defensive back was so far back, that's why he intercepted it, because he was giving him too much leverage. But it wasn't one of those where you say, okay, now let's go run the ball. Because we were going to take anything they gave us, and if you look at it, a lot of times they gave Burt because of his speed, they were off playing way off of him. Then Armanti had, I think 36 on Hammann who is a really good corner. But we were going to take they gave us.

Q. It looked like postgame you did everything from crowd surf to talk to the governor. Can you just take us through those moments?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, I wasn't going to crowd surf. The players picked me up, actually, and I was trying to get away from them. I was really looking for Swoopes and he had ran around the field.

But, you know what? I was just happy for our players. Had a chance to see the governor, and I know this is special for him. He's honorary captain, too, and to add a big-time game like this with a sellout crowd, it was a special moment for us all.

Q. I think you said it was Becker on that kickoff, but how big were him and Dickson with what they do with their legs to pin Notre Dame back and give your defense some breathing room?

CHARLIE STRONG: I tell you what, when you look at just how well our punter and even our kickoff guys, they did a great job of really punting that ball tonight too. Because if you look what Mike did, is that he outkicked our coverage. We would have liked to have seen our outside guys, what you call gunners, get on down the field. There's been a wrestle and missed a couple of tackles early.

But Kris Boyd had cramped up early in the game, so we couldn't really get him back, so we were playing with two different guys on the outside. Even when that field goal got blocked, Burt had came out and Tristan came out, and on so those are two guys on the right side who had been there on the extra point field goal. Then I think we had two other guys in and they were able to jump up over and go block the field goal.

It was just fun to watch him punt the ball because he was a huge advantage for us early in the game because he was booming it. And the thing he does, he puts so much hang time on it, that he allows our players to get down the field and get a fair catch and make the play.

Q. It's been an interesting couple of years since you've been here and you've had a lot of bad breaks whether it was the Cal game last year, OSU, and you faced so much criticism. Is there any part of you that has any sense of relief now after such a huge win?

CHARLIE STRONG: No, because I've still got a few more to go, so I don't have any relief (laughing). No, I don't think you get any relief, no (laughing).

Texas Offensive Coordinator Sterlin Gilbert

On tonight's game: Number one, it was a huge great team win and that's first and foremost. I'm extremely, extremely proud of our kids, just what they did to be able to fight and respond series after series, and then you get into overtime and just being able to respond the way they did. I'm just extremely proud of all those guys on both sides of the ball to be able to fight and battle and get that win.

On having two quarterbacks that are very team oriented: It's a blessing and what you see is, like any other position, is you see talented guys and our job as coaches is to be able to find a way to utilize talent and that's what we did and that's what happened tonight along with all those other guys being able to make plays from series in and series out.

On if he feels unstoppable: Well I wouldn't go that far. But, are we confident in it? Yes. Is Tyrone Swoopes confident in himself and his abilities as a big strong football player? Yes. We were excited to be able to put that package on the field and those guys go out there and execute. Those guys up front, we say "they go we go" so if you don't get movement up front you don't get the results we get. Again, it was a huge time win, a team effort, even when you get that package on the field.

On if the team feels energized: Yea, we got a spark out of that. Absolutely, there was a spark throughout that game.

On today's tactics: We were just trying to think schematically of what was going to put us in the best situation to win and again, I just give to our kids and we did an unbelievable job in our offensive coaching staff and being able to go to battle tonight for the first time for a lot of us together and to be able to have the clean communication that we have is huge in a first game in those kinds of scenarios. We're just trying to schematically make sure we got the right plays and making sure we give ourselves a chance to succeed.

On if Buechele exceeded his expectations: Pretty open minded about that just because the situation, the scenario, just to know he can play but expectations for him to go do well and compete at the level he did is something that we expected.

On Buechele's playing tonight compared to the past: Very similar. He's just a guy that continues to get better since the day we got on campus and that's the thing about him and our whole football team, yall have heard me talk about, its about progression with us as an individual and as an offense.

Texas Player Quotes

Freshman QB Shane Buechele

On the dynamic of the QB position: Tyrone [Swoopes] is a great player, and he's a great quarterback. I was thankful to be able to go out there and play, and just seeing Ty run out onto the field I know he's going to be doing great things. It was just really exciting going 1-2, 1-2, and being able to win the game was awesome.

On playing the QB position together with Tyrone Swoopes: It was really special. Tyrone [Swoopes] is a great guy, and he's a great quarterback. We couldn't win the game without Ty. Him executing the way that he did and executing the way the team did, we came out with a great team win.

On shifting the ball to Armanti Foreman [regarding the first hand-off]: I was excited. Throwing touchdowns is great, and to start it off like that was awesome.

On the game being better than he anticipated: I'm just happy we came out with a win. We would've liked to have done it with only four quarters instead of two overtimes. We'll definitely take it as really exciting, and we're just happy we came out with a win.

On playing in front of more than 102,000 fans: I always get nervous before games, but I always say that it's a great thing. It wouldn't be the same if I wasn't. Seeing all of the crowd and seeing how big the field is, how big the stadium is, it was

really cool. I've never played in front of 102,000 people. That was awesome. Having our fans behind our back on defense, on offense, on special teams, on everything, they were great.

On the fun he had tonight: It was a lot of fun. I still have a little adrenaline. I haven't really thought about the whole thing. I've just been kind of running around, but it was definitely a lot of fun being able to go out there and play.

Senior QB Tyrone Swoopes

On the two-quarterback system: I mean it feels different but it feels good though. I mean anything I have to do to win I'll do it. And I feel like this team has the same mentality. And we did a wonderful job on everything we did tonight. It was a great team win.

On not checking out because he's a senior: I mean I've never done it before. That's just the person I am, the way I've been raised. I've never checked out or gave up on anything I've ever done. I just bought in. I know they have a plan and the plan came into fruition tonight and it was a great win.

On the last play of the game: He said, like I said earlier, he told me I was going to have an opportunity to go win it and I believed him. And we got a chance, we got it down inside the 5 and the offensive line did a great job blocking and doing what they had to do and I did what I had to do and we came out with a great win.

On the energy of the crowd: It just felt different. Everybody was standing the whole game. I didn't see anybody sitting down so that always helps. Everybody was yelling and cheering and everything so it's really good to always have the crowd into it.

On how he took the news he wasn't starting: I mean I'm always ready. I knew I was going to have my package, I knew that was going to be my role. And so when I got the opportunity, I did it to the best of my ability. And that's what they expect from me and that's what I'm going to do.

Junior RB D'Onta Foreman

His thoughts when the extra point was blocked: We've just got to keep fighting. You know things happen in the game that's what they tell us all the time, things are going to happen, we're going to have momentum changes and we just gotta keep fighting. That's what we did.

On how happy the guys were for Tyrone: Very happy. I was so happy for him. I called everybody up in the locker room and I told him things don't always go his way but this man I never see him pout, I never see him throw no attitude, no temper tantrums. He just goes out there and works hard everyday. And it shows on the field.

On the offense: Oh yeah there's a lot more. There's a lot of stuff we didn't really pull out tonight and we just got to keep building on what we did tonight.

On playing in front of the 2005 National Championship team: It felt really good. Texas is a wonderful place. We have wonderful alma mater and they came back and they just tell us we've got to keep going and get us back to where we are supposed to be and I think that's what we're trying to do this year.

On this year's game vs. Notre Dame compared to last year: I can't ever put it into words. Its wonderful right now. We just went out there and we put everything together. We could panic. We had some momentum, they had some momentum but we just had to keep fighting and that's what we did.

On what is different about this year's team: The hard work we put in during the summertime. I feel like everybody went out there this summer and knew what we wanted to do, knew what we wanted to accomplish, we knew we had a big game coming up and we didn't play well last year. So we had to go out there and make a statement today and we did that.

On what he saw out of Shane Buechele today: I didn't even see a true freshman out there tonight to be honest with you. I saw a veteran quarterback. That's how I look at it. He really stood in the pocket. He had some really good runs tonight and I'm proud of him. I told him many of times tonight how proud of him I was and I told him that if we keep running the ball like that it would help him with what he wants to do, pass the ball. And we had to just be a team.

Junior DE/OLB Naashon Hughes

On defeating Notre Dame at home: I know we're all pretty excited. We all knew going into the game that they would be good, but we're better than what we've proven in the past. Today was taking that next step and showing everybody what Texas is all about.

On special teams tonight and his block: They drove it to us everyday. Special teams can win or lose games, so today I helped us win this game for the most part. With the blocked kick and then them returning the touchdown, it shows you that it can go either way, but with my blocked kick it bounced us back up.

On staying focused and preparing for UTEP: We'll be back up here, probably tomorrow, watching film on UTEP and getting ready for the next game. We beat the No. 10 team, but we have another opponent coming, so we've got to get ready for them too.

On offensive success tonight: As a defensive player, you always want to see your offense do well. When they do, that just gives you much more excitement to go back out there and give them the ball again. Of course you want to score as many times as you can out there.

On what's different with the team chemistry this year: It's just a more family-like atmosphere. You can tell that each and every person on the team cares about everybody else on the team. For the most part, we're all like a brotherhood in there. We just take care of each other.

On playing in front of a record setting crowd: It got loud. That was the loudest I've ever heard DKR, so that was fun. It was fun. For those freshman, they come and they see a full packed house stadium, and this is what they've dreamed of when coming here. It just shows that if you work hard and do it right, your dreams can come true.

Sophomore LB Malik Jefferson

On what tonight feels like: A deep breath. A relief. In a good way, meaning that all the pressure's off and now we go play Texas football like it's always been there. And I think just stay focused and stay consistent in what we do.

On what is different with the team: That's the best part. The offense has changed. The defense, we still have some work to do. We had a couple of brain farts, I guess you could say, got off track a little but, but I think the biggest thing now is just capitalizing and making sure that when we have a lead like that, we go out and dominate.

On what the biggest difference is about Texas Football this year: The excitement part. It's a family. You can tell that everybody is playing for each other and the person next to him. That's what makes the emotions become a part of it because you see guys going out there fighting every play trying to make something happen.

On the feeling after this game versus game against Notre Dame last year: Very, very different. Last year I had a good game against Notre Dame, and I didn't feel like I did anything because we didn't win, and I didn't contribute to anything. So I think the biggest part now is just moving forward from that. We have a couple more games this season, there will be some challenges. People are going to try and knock us off, but we've got to stay focused and consistent.

On feeling either hunted or the hunter: We're very hunted. Yes. [Did you feel that way before?] Yes.

On why this could be a real turning point, when last year, everyone thought Oklahoma was a turning point and it wasn't: The thing is a lot of last year, we didn't have the consistency. A lot of people weren't playing consistent. Offense wasn't consistent, our defense wasn't consistent, that's the things we eliminated this year. We're focused on every game, treating it like it's a big game. We can't let anybody get in our way. We have to keep doing what we have to do.

On how this feeling around the program is different after this game: It's a lot of love. A lot of love around here.

On how the team has progressed during the offseason: Everyone believed in each other. Every day. And I think that's the biggest part. We believed in each other and we bonded with each other each day in camp. Throughout off season. Every moment we had, we bonded together. And that's what's makes this whole team's atmosphere so special. And I know everyone can feel it.

On whether he was concerned when the field goal was missed: I knew it was going into overtime after that. I was prepared for it. You know, stuff that like, we've got to eliminate and get better at.

On making a big play at the end: I just have to go out there and make plays. When it's a big moment, people have to step up. I was watching all those guys. Big time players make big time plays in big time moments. And that's what we were focusing on. We could not let them in the end zone. We had that one bloop because we had some miscommunication, but the second time we came out there, we were prepared.

On the perception that when Texas gets its quarterback situation figured out, it will be good: Both [QBs] looked really good. Tyrone [Swoopes] always does what needs to be done; he's a team player. That just shows you what type of team we are. We sacrifice for each other. We want to win. We'll do whatever it takes.

On seeing the quarterbacks working together: We all understood what the situation was, and they understood it, too. I'm very proud of Tyrone [Swoopes]. He *always* sacrifices for this team. He deserves the highest praise, honestly.

On whether there is a ceiling on what this UT team can do: Like Matthew McConaughey said, "Take it off." And we'll keep going up.

On how his role in recruiting freshman changed the mentality of the team: I told those guys we were going to go win. I told them, "Just wait." It's all a building process and it takes time. I'm a sophomore now, a couple more guys are sophomores with me. Those guys sitting behind us are watching and learning. They want to play already. I told them it just takes patience. When you come here, you're going to play. If you're going to ball, you're going to ball. This win validates that. It's not a fluke. It's something we came out there and worked hard for, and we're going to continue to go out there and do what we do.

Senior S Kevin Vaccaro

On the former Longhorns on the sidelines: It's awesome having all the old guys back on the sideline. We're trying to live up to the standard of DBU, and we're moving toward it.

On what the former Longhorns had to say: They were saying, "Congratulations. That's how Texas plays." It's a good win for the start of the season. I'm excited.

On his thoughts during overtime: Going into the game, we knew it was going to be a battle. They're a tough team, and I had flashbacks of last season. We knew we had to stop them, and I think everyone played hard and played with their heart and practice.

Sophomore DT Chris Nelson

On the quarterback situation: In practice, you seem them both competing well, and they both show leadership. It doesn't really matter to us who plays.

On his thoughts on the 18-wheeler package: When we see 18, we already know the ball is moving forward. We never really see him get knocked back.

On the confidence of the team moving forward: As you can see, the offense is a lot better. When the offense is better, it kind of balances out. When we are on the sideline, we get hyped up when they're moving the ball. We know we have to go match them.

Senior DT Paul Boyette Jr.

On the win tonight: We worked so hard for this. It started back in the spring, and we just went out and executed. This team didn't give up. I think that's the real big standard coming from last year. This was so emotional, especially for the senior class, getting the stepping stone of getting the program back to where it used to be. I'm so excited, and I'm honored I had a chance to go out there and defend the house. It's a surreal moment for me.

On what this means for the program: I think it's a step in the right direction. Like Coach Moore said, "It's a project. It's not a process." I think for the most part, we have to go out there each week and learn our keys and keep on coming together to build a team and become a family. With that being said, I think today was a stepping stone in the right direction.

Sophomore WR John Burt

On the difference this year: I feel like this team is a better team and will go out there and battle for each other like we just did.

On the message he sent to Notre Dame: The message we wanted to send was, "We're more conditioned than you guys, and we're going to show it." That's the whole thing behind this offense, to get the tempo going and get the defense tired so that we can make big plays like we did. I really feel like that worked to our advantage.

On Buechele: Shane threw some pretty good passes. Tyrone also did to help out the team. In retrospect, it's a ball that I have to go and catch. There were some good passes. I did like what I saw from him. I wasn't surprised by any of it, seeing it throughout camp. Going out there, I just wanted to see how he would react, and he did pretty well.

Senior OG/OT Kent Perkins

On Swoopes: Swoopes is just a ball player. We talked about him in the media room just now. He was running through all the tackles.

On the message sent to Notre Dame: We wanted to send that we can run the ball, that's the biggest thing. We had trouble with that in the past that hurt us. We worked hard this offseason, and we've gotten tremendously better. We just want to keep on doing that everyday.

On having the former Longhorns on the field: That's a great feeling. You walk through the hallways and you see these guys on the walls. You want to play hard because they left a legacy, and you want to compete higher than that legacy. It's a great honor. We saw them on the sidelines. When we were down, they said, "Let's go." It was great. You wanted to play hard.

Senior WR Jacorey Warrick

On the way the team battled: The way that we battled, it was a full game. Just coming out, we just kept playing. That's something we weren't able to do in the past. We kept playing through the ups and downs of the game. The defense would make a play and then the offense would make a play. It was a great team effort. It was a great team win.

On the sidelines during the overtimes: In overtime, we were still very confident. This team has a different feel. We feel confident this year that we can go out and execute our game plan and be able to compete in games that come down to the wire.

On what the coaches were saying on the sidelines: They just told us to go out there and do what we always do, execute. We practice these situations a lot. Not necessarily overtime, but 25 yard and in. Don't let the moment overwhelm you.