

# Texas Tech University Football Media Conference

Monday, November 21, 2016

## Kliff Kingsbury



KLIFF KINGSBURY: All right. So I know Matt already told you all, but I felt the need to make an opening statement as an alum and as a head coach of this university. This community, the university, this program obviously means the world to me, and that performance was as embarrassed as I've been. Completely unacceptable in every way, shape and form. I take sole responsibility.

Didn't have our guys ready to go, didn't have them focused enough, didn't have enough energy, didn't have good enough game plans, obviously, and that's on me. I think after watching the film there was no real silver lining to be found. We didn't play well offensively, defensively, special teams, and we didn't handle adversity well. It just got worse as the game went on, and that's the responsibility of the head coach, and that falls on me.

We knew they were a better team. We talked about it, and the record indicated all week. But when we got out there, we didn't match their intensity, didn't match their effort, and it came back to bite us. I think we knew what was on the line. It was probably the most disappointing part to me as coaches and players and we didn't answer the bell.

So with that being said, we can't let that game beat us twice having Baylor this week on a short week. We know they're a great football team. We know we have not beaten them in quite some time. It's the senior's last game. Our sole focus now is moving forward and trying to send those seniors who have never beaten Baylor off with a win.

With that, I'll take questions.

**Q. Coach, do you sense that the team has that same feeling of embarrassment, frustration, and wants to kind of prove the world wrong on Friday?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: No question. That was the sentiment that I felt after we talked about it yesterday. I thought practice was focused. They know that's not who we are. It's not who we have been all year, and they're anxious to get back out there and show who we really are.

**Q. Do you think when Pat got hurt and Nick came in, do you think that killed the momentum more?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Looking back I think obviously you want him to stay in the game, but we have complete confidence in Nick, and some of those negative plays we had and those couple of drives weren't on him. It was those other guys not doing their job. So I don't think that effected us in any real major way.

**Q. You said before the season, you thought this was your best team, but now the record is what it is. What's happened? What happened?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: That's a great question. I think I obviously overestimated how we'd develop, how we'd come along. I felt like the pieces were in place. There's been some attrition, but every team has that. So that's not the answer. But, yeah, I still think it's a talented team. We just haven't closed out the games we had an opportunity to win. Obviously last Saturday was as bad as it gets. I'm not sure where that came from.

**Q. What is the attrition? Of course it does happen everywhere. But it seems there has been more attrition here. What do you attribute that to?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, I think there's been quite a bit this season for guys that we were depending on to be starters, and whether it be injury or off-the-field situations, it seems they've come up. And hasn't helped our cause. Some young guys have been thrust in there, which will be good for the future, but there's definitely some growing pains going on right now.

**Q. Regarding the attrition, obviously in (indiscernible), but are there other guys who maybe weren't meeting the standard that you're setting? In other words (indiscernible).**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I don't know if I'd state it that way. I think we have a standard in our program that you're going to meet on and off the field. If you're not willing to do that consistently day-in and day-out, you're not going to be here.

**Q. (Indiscernible) responsibility and you're the ultimate fall guy but you also have nine assistants out there. But what was their performance like on Saturday, when they're supposed to be rallying the troops so to speak?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I think collectively as a group, coaches and players, none of us showed up for whatever reason, from the first play on. Not enough intensity, focus, leadership from anywhere. It ultimately

falls on me, like I said. I have to find a way to get it better.

**Q. In the last 48 hours, you and the staff and players have been trying to figure out what happened. From that, what do you think happened Saturday?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, I think it's we're still trying to search through it. That's the biggest deal. When you have a team that's been fighting, has been competing throughout the past month and then show up and do that, that's still what we're searching for.

All you can do is get back to basics, your fundamentals at practice, hold them to a higher standard moving forward. Ask your leaders to step up and be more accountable. Coaches have to be more accountable. And try to make this week of practice the best you've had.

But as far as locating exactly what happened, it seems to be one of those games that you look back on and just everything went wrong. And you use it as motivation moving forward. And 2017, through your off-season, you point to that one and say that can never happen again, and it won't ever happen again.

**Q. (Indiscernible) on Saturday?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: We just felt like Keke had done a great job practicing, and felt like Jonathan had some things he's got to work on and contribute more to this team. We know he's a great pass catcher, can do some good things with the ball in his hands, but there's things away from the football that he's got to continue to work on.

**Q. (Indiscernible)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, there's some of that. Practice at a higher intensity, play at a higher intensity when the ball is not coming your way. Just different things. And he's still learning the position. I don't think it's a situation where we're disappointed in him. He's a true sophomore. He's had some great moments. We're just asking him to do more as a player.

**Q. Obviously only one game left, but previous to Baylor, just as a coaching staff, do you have to look in the mirror and say process-wise do we have to operate differently?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I don't think a wholesale change is possible with one week left. But you can try to change some things around to do differently this week. But, no, not the process as a whole. You have to try and improve a lot of your techniques, fundamentals. You have to cut your game plan down where we understand it and know what we're doing and can play fast. You do things like that. But as far as an overhaul

with one week left and a short week, I don't think that's something that's possible.

**Q. It does seem Mike Gundy came in the last year or the year before when he gave up OC duties and he kind of went more to the CEO, head coaching role, is that anything you'd be willing to do or interested in?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: That's something for an off-season thought process. I'm preparing for Baylor and trying to come up with a better plan to come up with as a staff. So that would be something that we look at in the off-season. If it makes sense for our program to be better, I'm always open to those good ideas.

**Q. Were there times this season that that could have been beneficial?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I don't think so. That's the only way I've done it. So I haven't seen it from the other side. So I'd really have to experience that to understand if that would give us some sort of edge.

**Q. Speaking of Baylor, how's this year's Baylor team different from last year?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Still very talented. I thought last year with some of their defensive linemen, the quarterback when we played them was playing at an all-time level that I thought when we played them last year, they had everything going for them as good as anybody in the country. I think this year, they've had some attrition. They've had an injury to their quarterback. But still as talented as ever and very dangerous. I think they can play with anybody in our league, and we know we're going to play our best game.

**Q. (Question regarding quarterback)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, for a young guy, you watch his poise. They've done a great job teaching him their system, the way he handled himself in his first start. Really good thrower of the football. They have great wideouts outside. And he hung in there and made some tough throws against that Kansas State defense. So anytime you see a young guy playing, you want to see his poise and how he operates inside the pocket. He looks really good on film.

**Q. (Indiscernible)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Noah's still on the team currently. He's not practicing. Just focusing on academics.

**Q. Is he (indiscernible)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: We'll see. I don't know exactly how that's going to play out, but we're going to visit that as soon as our season's over.

**Q. (Indiscernible)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: We'll see. He won't go today, but we'll get him with the trainers and have him -- see what he can do in the pool and other rehab exercises and kind of take it day by day.

**Q. What did you think (indiscernible) Joe Wallace (indiscernible)?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, they're tough young players. I know Coach Patrick's excited about them. They get in there, they do what they're supposed to do. They fight. Young and raw and all those things. You see flashes, so that's encouraging. I thought they did a good job.

**Q. Knowing you don't have a Bowl game coming up, how important is Friday's game coming up just to kind of turn the table and take a little momentum into the off-season?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, it's huge. Like I said, I know our team is anxious and our coaching staff is anxious to show that wasn't us and how much better we are than that poor performance. It's always a great atmosphere. Our fans are incredible in that DFW area. It's a Bowl game atmosphere anytime you play inside AT&T Stadium, and we have to other approach it that way and give everything we've got for the seniors.

**Q. Has it been difficult for you this year or different for you in the sense to motivate this team?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I don't think motivate. I think every year there is a different button you try to push. It's a different group. I think when you have only 12 seniors, the leadership is a little bit different. Last year we had 23, and this year we had 12. So it is a different group. But I think every year you try to find the best means to motivate, and it's always different with each team.

**Q. After the game you said you don't really focus too much on the outside noise to turn the program around. As a head coach, do you think it's a prerequisite? But knowing your players are tuned into social media and they see all that stuff, and people talk about the future of the program, and you still have one game left, what do you tell them to keep them focused?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, I think early on when they get here you try to implement the whole, hey, block out the noise. When you come inside this facility, it's about us. Nothing else matters. It's about the people in this room. So we start that early on in their development, and hopefully that pays off. You can't keep them away from all of it, but you just try to have them focus on the right things.

**Q. How do you handle that?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I just focus on what I can control.

That's the way I've always been. I try to avoid any of it that I can and just focus on being the best coach I can be the next day.

**Q. I think last year there were a couple teams that 5-7 (indiscernible) make it into a Bowl game, and I know some college football fans think maybe (indiscernible) yourself being in a position to possibly (indiscernible), do you have any thoughts on that and just the opportunity and the chance?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I think every college coach wants those practices first and foremost to develop their young players. Anytime you can extend your season for those seniors, I think it's a great reward for them.

**Q. How do you avoid pressing this last week?**

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, like I said, you try to control what you can control, and that's come up with a great game plan offensively, defensively, special teams. Motivate our team and make them understand what this game is about and what it means to our fan base and those seniors and go from there. I don't think you sit around and try to add any extra pressure. That comes with the territory. You understand that. My job is to get this team ready to play.

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## Patrick Mahomes Justis Nelson

### Q. What happened Saturday?

PATRICK MAHOMES: It's hard. I never went through it before. It was bad overall, and no positive stuff happened in the game at all. It's something we try to move on past and work on getting ready for Baylor this next week.

### Q. Any sense of that kind of possibility in the locker room before you guys went out of the tunnel?

PATRICK MAHOMES: No, in pregame warm-ups, everybody was energized. We were all pretty hyped up. And just got on the field and it's like no one really showed up as an entire team.

### Q. Was it more of a sense, you think, of when things started to go bad that helped feed into that or you struggled from the get-go and the energy wasn't there?

PATRICK MAHOMES: From the get-go. For the -- offensively the last few weeks we haven't been starting fast, and it kind of happened again. But usually we pick it up. And we just didn't in this last game. I don't know what to blame. I mean, pretty much just all blame ourselves that we didn't really come to play that day.

### Q. Did you feel healthy in the second half?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, I felt fine, definitely. I went down, I think, in the first or second quarter, I went and got checked out. I was fine, and I went back and started playing. It's something where no one came to play, including myself. No one really showed up.

### Q. It's your left shoulder you hurt?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yes.

### Q. And you're saying you're healthy? You're okay?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, it's fine. It was a stinger of some sort. I just wanted to get it checked out before I kept playing. And everything seems fine.

### Q. TV showed the series before where you took a hit on your left shoulder?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, it was after I took the hit on the left shoulder and made the run, and I tried to fight through it. It just kind of felt funky, so I went and

got it checked out by the doctors. And they said I was good to go, so I went back and kept playing.

### Q. How do you feel you guys responded? This is Monday, it happened Saturday, it's been almost 48 hours. The fan base, everybody is obviously upset about this. Do you feel like you guys have shared in that sentiment that you're pissed off, embarrassed and want to right the ship and at least go out with a win Friday?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, definitely. Yesterday everybody was a little disappointed, little embarrassed. But the feeling in the locker room today is more of want to get back out there and kind of prove to people that we're still here and we still have respect for the program. We still have pride, and we want to go out there and finish off the season on a good note.

### Q. (Indiscernible) how do you convert that into wins this week?

PATRICK MAHOMES: I was just executing my job. Be a leader, be vocal, get everybody pumped up for the game. Go out there, run the system, get the ball out, complete easy passes and get the chains moving.

### Q. (Indiscernible)?

PATRICK MAHOMES: They're still really talented. They have really good players. They're kind of like us where they're going through a down stretch of the season, but they're going to want to finish out the season on a good note. So we'll go out there and fight. We'll fight, and it will be a good football game.

### Q. You've obviously the last few weeks had scouts coming out and watching you. Do you feel like you've been pressing at all the last couple weeks with the attention you've gotten on the sideline with people coming to watch you?

PATRICK MAHOMES: No, I don't. I feel like just the whole season I've just been trying to win football games. I've always said everything that comes after football or comes with football is all about wins and going out there and winning football games. So for me, it's trying to win games for my brothers. Trying to send these seniors out the right way and go out there and play as hard as I can and leave it out there.

### Q. (Indiscernible) how does it feel with Friday possibly being your last game?



PATRICK MAHOMES: I'm going to focus on that after the season. Like I said, I'm going to go out there with these guys that might not play a football game again and try to get a win and finish on the right note.

**Q. What's Baylen Brown meant to this offensive line? I think I saw 34 consecutive starts. He's been shuffled around out there as well. What type of leader is he, and what does he mean?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: He's a true team player. He's been banged up throughout his career, but he's always out there. He's always giving it all he has. Like you said, he'll move around. He's played left guard, right guard, center, tackles, both tackles. He'll move around and play whatever is the best for the team. You love players like that and want to play with people like that.

**Q. Is there something out there in losing Murph? How has that affected you?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: For me, it's just going out there, trusting in it and just trusting in the process. They're young guys, but they're really talented. They're going to have some growing pains. They're going to have some mistakes they make. But just as long as they keep getting better and leaving it out on the field, there's nothing more you can ask for.

**Q. What did you tell the guys in a game like that the other day as you're going? You're hurt, you've come back, you've been battling through stuff all year. Obviously, there is no quit in you. What do you tell the guys in a game like that?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: You can try to be positive. You can get on people, but at the same time, you've got to be positive. Just tell them that you leave it all out there, take it one game at a time, do your job, leave it on the field, and that's all anyone can ask for.

**Q. Are you ever sitting there going in the third or fourth quarter on the sidelines, like good Lord, what's happening?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, you get these thoughts in your mind. But for me, it's one play at a time. All I can do is go out there, make one drive, score a touchdown and get ready for the next one. It's something where you never expect that to happen. You never expect them to get that up on you like that. But me and our team, we're going to go out there and leave it on the field, and whatever happens, happens.

**Q. Every team has different types of leaders. There's a lead-by-example guy and there's the quiet guy who says three or four things and there is a turn-over-the-table, watercooler guy. Does this team have that guy?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, we have guys that I feel all lead different ways. I try to be vocal and be a more

lead-by-example guy, trying to be vocal. But it's something this season a lot of stuff has happened that hasn't gone our way. We're going to go out this last week and leave it all out there to try to get a win and really just get some pride back to the program, back to our football team.

**Q. Coach talked about blocking the outside noise. Even in Texas there is all the news floating out there, and they've already made a decision (indiscernible). How do you feel the players have done trying to block out some of the outside noise?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: I think we've been pretty good about that all season. People have been kind of negative towards us. But we're going to kind of help us build as a team and really have each other's back. We know the coaches love us, and I know the coaches are coaching as hard as they can. We love each other as a team. So it's just something we're playing for the guy beside us and playing for whoever's in the room with us.

**Q. How do you plan on doing a mental dump of Saturday's game so that you're not looking back when you play Baylor on Friday?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: When you get beat like that, you just want to get back on the field and get it out of your head. So I'm going to really focus in on learning the game plan. We have a short week. I'm about to study more and I'm going to be ready to play Baylor and try to go out there and get a win and move on past this last week.

**Q. Is the short week kind of what the doctor ordered?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: Yeah, I mean, it helps out that we have a Thanksgiving break at school, so you only have a couple days at school and then you get off and get focused in on playing Baylor. It's on a Friday right after Thanksgiving, so you'll be one of the only games on TV. So you want to get out there and get a win in front of the nation.

**Q. (Indiscernible) to the program after this year if you do possibly lose this last game and have a season like this when you guys were hoping for change?**

PATRICK MAHOMES: I mean, any way possible. Leaving the program early would be hard. I love it here. I love Texas Tech. Like I've always said, I want to win a Big 12 title here. And whatever it takes, I want to do that here and bring one here to Lubbock. It will be hard anyway to leave.

**Q. What happened Saturday?**

JUSTIS NELSON: Just didn't show up to play. It's as

simple as that. Defense didn't show up. Offense didn't show up. And give credit to Iowa State, they took advantage. They played the best ball they could that day. We just didn't show up.

**Q. Everybody keeps saying the team didn't show up, but no one has said why. Why do you believe the team didn't show up?**

JUSTIS NELSON: I mean, if I could tell you, I would, but it's just how the game went on that day.

**Q. When you look at a week like that after a performance like that, how do you get that game out of your head when you've got a short week?**

JUSTIS NELSON: I mean, we've got a game Friday, so you watch what mistakes you made on film, but you have to get over it quick. You recuperate, you talk to your position groups, try and figure out what's going on and fix it as fast as you can. Figure out what mistakes you made, and then you game plan next week and try and fix those mistakes as quick as possible.

**Q. (Indiscernible) going back home to play?**

JUSTIS NELSON: Yeah, it's definitely hitting me now that it's the last week of my collegiate career. But it's rough, but I wouldn't want to play anywhere else but in Dallas. So, I mean, Cowboy Stadium, you can't ask for a better environment than that. So we need to go out with a bang.

**Q. (Indiscernible)?**

JUSTIS NELSON: Oh, we love it. Like I said, it's that NFL atmosphere. Cowboys got a great stadium, great locker room, everything like that. The fans show up, seeing all red on one side, all green on one side. It's just exciting.

**Q. Is there any talk for you guys, especially the seniors, of kind of making this your Bowl game?**

JUSTIS NELSON: Not really making it our Bowl game. I'd say just leave it all out there. If you can't leave it all out there for this last game, then something's wrong. So just going and playing your heart out.

**Q. What did you guys talk about or maybe not talk about? Was there much discussion?**

JUSTIS NELSON: No, there was definitely no talking. Not much to say. When we got back, Coach just told us, you know, you can't let it beat you twice, so you've got to move on as quick as you can and prepare for this week.

**Q. Every team has got different type of leaders. There's the lead-by-example guy and there's quiet guy who says one thing and everybody just stops and listens. And then there's, when things are going bad, the turn-over-the-watercooler guy,**

**throws it one somebody, gets somebody to spark. Does this team have somebody like that?**

JUSTIS NELSON: Any of those three, or just the last one?

**Q. The last one.**

JUSTIS NELSON: I'd say Pat. He's been one of those guys. Whenever things are going wrong, he does come up and he speaks with a lot of conviction. I mean, Pat, Stice. We have a couple guys like that.

**Q. How is this year's Baylor team different from last year?**

JUSTIS NELSON: I don't see much difference. I mean, they have all the athletes they had before, if not better. They're just as efficient, I'd say. They're going to try and take the roof off the defense. So they have a lot of athletes that they like to get the ball out in space and just let them go to work.