

Texas Tech University
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Kliff Kingsbury
Luke Stice
Patrick Mahomes II

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach Kliff Kingsbury.

Q. After look at Saturday night's film, what are your thoughts?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Missed opportunities, both sides of the ball, went back and forth for a while and we had a chance on offense to score more points and defense had a chance to get 'em down and get some stops and create some stuff, and we didn't make the plays we needed to. A lot of that has to do with them and their execution.

Q. You got them on third down 16 times and they converted nine of those. What do you think the difference was on those conversions?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: The quarterback played really well, made great throws. The first week you didn't see those throws he was making but he was locked in, being down their on the field level, he had a tight spiral, he was decisive, putting it where it needed to be put, and obviously we could have been tighter on coverage, but I thought he was accurate and that was the difference.

Q. When you look at the defense, how do you fix it at this point, or do you feel like it's maybe not broken, just had a bad night?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: We're disappointed in how we played defensively, but I believe in those guys. I believe in Coach Gibbs. After you watch the film there were times we had positive people in positions and didn't make plays, so we gotta keep growing and keep playing together and go from there. Not anything that's broke. We gotta improve it, no question. But we just gotta get-going the right direction.

Q. When you look at it from a head coaching standpoint at what point do you go, I gotta spend more time with the defense, or do you feel like you have spent enough time with the defense?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I feel like I have a good grasp of what they're doing and how they are handling things and how they're coaching, and the way it's getting

done.

Like I said, I believe in those guys, all the coaches in that room and Coach Gibbs and those players, and I know they'll get it going in the right direction.

Q. (No microphone.) -- three times in the first four series. Did you detect any adjustments that you needed to make after that?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: No, that fifth series was the one where we got the fumble return for the touchdown and the rushing of the passer for the penalty, so it would have been four of five. So after that I saw a change in momentum, our attitude, and we didn't handle that adversity very well and never recovered.

Q. The fact it was 101 degrees at kickoff. Did you feel conditioning was an issue at any point?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I did not.

Q. How do you think that your offensive line, tailbacks picked up blitz packages after having a chance to watch the film?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: They were fine. They didn't pressure as much as they normally do. I think with Patrick they wanted to keep some things in front of themselves, so I thought our backs were fine in that regard.

Q. When it comes to the poor tackling, do you feel like in Gibbs' style they're trying to rip the ball out and maybe not worrying about securing the tackle and getting the guy down first of all and then letting the guys who follow come in and do that?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I don't think so. Week one we tackled well. This week we did not. They're talented running backs, big, strong physical guys. Maybe we haven't seen that type of back, and they weren't prepared for it, but, yeah, we gotta find a way to get 'em on the ground better.

Q. Coach, there were times when you guys got someone to the ball carrier at the line of scrimmage and then they got an extra 5 yards after initial contact. Is there anything you see from your defense maybe during those spots where they were able to push the ball after that contact?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: No, we gotta get more people to

the ball. Some of the backs are big guys and couple times we had safeties or DBs there to make the plays and got overpowered. Need more bodies trying to get those guys down.

Q. You said that you had to let them tackle more, tackle the good guys more. I assume that was in spring camp. How much more of that did you do? And I assume you are still doing that?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: No, we don't tackle in season with our veterans. Yeah, we probably three times as much as we had done previously in spring and fall camp.

Q. Do you think 55 points is enough to win? Is that kind of when you look at this and go, okay, 55 that's a big number?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: You like it to be. But y'all watch the Big XII every weekend and there is one of those a week in our conference that you go back and forth and it ends up 56-52 or 65-60 and that's playin' the game, and we got in one of those games and as a team we gotta be able to find a way to win that game.

Q. The first loss of the season, can you look around the Big XII the first couple of weeks and say there have been top teams projectionwise that have lost and the conference is still wide open, let's finish nonconference and see what happens?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, I think you always take that approach if you drop a nonconference game. You're not to conference yet and that's the ultimate goal to win the Big XII and that's still out in front of us.

All of that will shake out down the road, but this is one we can learn from and have to improve.

Q. Coach, Tony's bad snap on the goal line, was that miscommunication on his part?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: No, the D-linemen jumped into the neutral zone and they didn't throw the flag. Can't fault him on that. We turned that into the officials and it's pretty clear that he was across.

Q. When you look at LA Tech, the defense probably is better than most people probably think, wouldn't you say?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I think as an overall team, just the success they had last year. They went into Arkansas and had a chance to win that game right at the end, played at Mississippi State last year, played in their championship game last year. So he's developed a good culture there, even when he was at East Carolina they would play anybody anywhere and they will come in here confident and expect to win the game. They're a very good football team.

Q. What sticks out to you, guys on defense, what

sticks out on them?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: All of them, really. They swarm to the football. They will change up looks pretty much week-to-week, and they play hard. They're aggressive they're well coached and don't make many mistakes.

Q. Last week you said that the offensive line played soft to you. Did you see that come back and be better much last Saturday?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I thought we were better. We were more physical. We still weren't able to run the ball on a couple of times, we had very light boxes, and you would like to hand it off and get some yards and we weren't. It's still a work in progress, but I thought protectionwise they held up against a defensive line fairly well.

Q. How about the receivers, the blocking with them, how did they play?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: They blocked well, definitely stepped up their blocking, route, technique, depths, I thought, got sloppy particularly toward the end of the game. But we asked them to have a much higher sense of urgency in the blocking and they did.

Q. The 55-points thing, how do you think the offense did there toward the end of the game? Were they gassed? Seemed like they weren't as effective. I know that's a relative thing when you score 55?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Yeah, no, we definitely had opportunities. I think guys just started pressing, you know, you get in that situation you try to make everything in one play instead of just running our offense and going through our system. That's something we've got to get better at.

Q. Defensive series where you had (Away from mic.) What do you think of the call?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I'll stay away from that. That and then I guess there were two more on the same drive, correct? That's tough. You're talking about 60 yards of penalties, 50 yards of penalties, so it's a tough drive.

Q. Not sure how much of the game you've been able to watch. Who stood out to you from watching Louisiana Tech and Arkansas?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: I like their young quarterback, athletic, true freshmen went in there and handled himself very well and that was the one thing that jumped out to me was for a young kid how poised he was in that atmosphere.

Q. (No microphone.)

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Not when we don't win the game. We don't give those out.

Q. What do you think of the way the Oklahoma State game was handled at the end where they got the call wrong and walked off the field and then realized that it should have gone the other way?

KLIFF KINGSBURY: It's tough, I can see both sides of it, but I think whatever happens on the field you have all those levels looking at it and the end is the end. You all have to live with it.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else? Thanks, Coach.

KLIFF KINGSBURY: Appreciate it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Patrick?

Q. I don't know how much you have watched Big XII football, some of the other top teams and what they're doing on the weekend, but seeing Oklahoma lose, TCU and Baylor struggled, do you ever sit there and say, it's one loss. Big XII is ahead of us. Let's get out of the nonconference and it's ahead of us at this point?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: I told the team after the game, we did lose the game and it's disappointing, but we went out. We still have the things that we want in front of us. We can still get and it's something -- the Big XII will be tough, a lot of good teams, but we can go out there and win games if we want to.

Q. Patrick, I know you guys struggled the second half, but end of the first half and early in the second half when you were able to match their scores, every time you went down the field you scored a touchdown. What were you guys doing on the field mentally to keep yourselves in that game?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: On the field we were definitely executing our game plan. We didn't necessarily run a lot of trick plays or anything like that. We executed our normal plays and they were scoring. We were hitting check downs, making big plays out of checked downs, and we need to carry that throughout the game. We can't have those stalls where we turn the ball over and stuff like that. So really executing the playbook is what was effective.

Q. Have you seen anything from this Louisiana Tech team and have you had a chance to watch them?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: They're a confident group and those guys are really confident and think they can win a football game. So we have to put our minds in the right place and compete and hopefully we can come out with a win at home.

Q. Seeing that they played Arkansas to a 1-point game, does that come up on your radar as a team

not to mess around with at all?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: Most definitely. They're confident, coming in here expecting to win a football game. They're not going to come in here and lay down. They're going to come out here and it's going to be a dog fight to win a good football game against a good football team.

Q. Patrick, have you noticed when a team of a nonpower five conference football team comes in that they genuinely believe they have a chance to win the game?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: You can tell from warm-ups, they come out and when they're going fast through warm-ups and they're talking. You know they're here to play and you expect that from everybody, and every team we play is going to be a good team, and I expect to go out there and have a dog fight and win every game.

Q. Patrick, the game that Cameron had and the first couple of weeks, how have you seen him develop?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: We talked about it all off-season. He came in and took that spot and took the ownership of playing in behind Jakeem who was a big producer the year before and you can see it on the field he's going out there playing confident and making big plays happen and making big catches. It's something that he worked on all off-season and he took his game to the next level and it's showing on the field.

Q. Are there any particular routes that he's getting open on right now or just sort of all of the things he does?

PATRICK MAHOMES II: It's pretty much all he does. That's when you are most effective. That's when we are effective is when you run at the right depths, and we have that really good timing so he's doing everything the right way right now.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Patrick.

Questions for Luke Stice.

Q. When you were preparing for Arizona State -- (No microphone.)

LUKE STICE: You know, when you're preparing week-to-week, you try to prepare for the unexpected and I feel like we had a great -- we did a great job doing that, but that's something that we were -- I'm not saying we were caught off guard, but they haven't shown that as much, and especially only in week 2 in the season there is not as much tendencies. So you have to go off the first week and obviously last season well.

Q. Talk about your gap integrity and how you played fundamentally in the run game?

LUKE STICE: I feel like for the most part we're fundamentally sound. We will break it down this afternoon. We broke it down this morning with the position coach, but we gotta do better on picking each other up if some guy doesn't do what they need to do. There need to be ten guys flying to the ball, which we are, but we got to continue to improve each week.

Q. -- extensive playing time on the number of snaps you've got since when?

LUKE STICE: Probably since 2013, honestly. Going back to, you know, when I was that fullback, tight end position. Obviously, every game and every situation is different especially when you're switching positions, a guy like myself, but the way we train and the way we're built and coached. Coach says to expect the unexpected and be ready for anything out there on the field, and I believe we were in a position to be successful, and I got put in that role.

Q. When D'Vonta got the injury at what point did you know that you were going to be playing that much?

LUKE STICE: You try to have the same mind-set going into each week and that's doing whatever you can do to help this team win and be successful and as the week progressed, you know whatever role you get you need to do the best of your ability and that's one as I communicated with my coaches I made sure I did going into that game.

Q. As a new guy on defense that has performed like this in the past, how can you help these guys get over this so it's not the mantra which we have heard before, here we go again and slide down the slippery slope and somebody has to step up and say we are not going down the road again?

LUKE STICE: We got hit in the mouth Saturday. We take full responsibility for that, but one thing you've got to be able to do in this game of football as well as in life is respond to adversity. That's one thing we've trained for since Coach Whitt has been here last January that's taken place and when times get tough, when you are faced with adversity, you've got to revert back to your training, what we've been instilled in here at Texas Tech, and something we take pride in and here is a perfect opportunity for us to get hit in the mouth early in the season and see what this team is all about and looking forward to responding next week.

Q. Who are the leaders in the locker room that you see stepping up?

LUKE STICE: Justis Nelson does a great job of -- he's not a vocal guy, but he leads by example and if there is anything that he needs he feels to communicate to the team, he needs to communicate to the vocal guys, the defensive line, Ondre Pipkins has done a great job,

another transform guy and Keenon Ward has been in the secondary for a long time here at Texas Tech and he does a great job as well and we gotta continue to build unit and move forward each day.

Q. You were able to stop their running backs at the line of scrimmage and they would turn out an extra 5 or so yards. Was there anything you guys noticed as a group, whether you were fatigued or the size of the backs as something that contributed to that theme throughout the game?

LUKE STICE: That kinda goes back to what I mentioned earlier about flying to the ball. If you're the first guy there you gotta know your boys are coming for you and as we continue to build confidence that's something we have to emphasize on, 11 hats flying to the ball each play and gang tackle and do everything you can to bring that guy down as soon as possible which I think we're grooving on.

Q. Coach said earlier there is not tackling at practice. How do you guys work on that after a game like this?

LUKE STICE: We get individual periods, beginning of practice, each with the linebacker unit and the defensive line secondary. They do things as well and that's when you can work on fundamentals. But as far as practices go, you still put your body in position to make a play and you're still breaking down and trying to fill up the running back, you're just not taking him to the ground and help out your teammates keep the legs under 'em. But at this point in the game it's about critiquing the little things and getting prepared to do whatever you can to be successful on Saturday.

Q. Luke, you've been around -- a lot now, do you ever feel like defensively there are guys who are ripping at the football trying to get it out before worrying about making the tackle first and that contributes to some of the missed tackles that exceed throughout the game?

LUKE STICE: Coach Gibbs has worked since he's been here to instill in defense to get the ball out, be a turnover defense and it's -- that goes back to what I've been emphasizing on, everybody run to the football. If you're that first guy there and you get the guy instilled, you gotta know that your guys are coming there to work the ball out and obviously the primary deal is getting the guy on the ground but the culture that we're trying to instill here is work the football and always try to make turnovers and that's something we're working to be successful on.

Q. Do you feel like that ever worked to your detriment at times?

LUKE STICE: There is a position, a time for everything. You gotta know third and short or whatnot, you gotta

know when to get 'em down before he gets first down, but the culture and the mind-set I feel like that's a successful, confident thing we're doing moving forward.

Q. What stands out to you about Louisiana Tech?

LUKE STICE: They got a good offense, spread out the ball, good quarterback. He can throw it as well and he can take off as well as throw it and we'll break down more and more this afternoon get in the game plan, and it's a team that we're excited about and we're definitely not going to overlook them and it will be a great opportunity for us moving forward.

Q. Luke, they're they were forced to be punt after the first few series, what changed there in the momentum?

LUKE STICE: I think you just said the word, the momentum. We gotta do a good job of getting momentum early especially on the road and if we feel the momentum slip back. We gotta do a job of somebody stepping up and take charge and getting the momentum back on our side and do whatever we need to do when faced with that adversity to respond to it, and continuing moving forward and cut our losses, if you will, and look forward to moving better throughout the stretch of the rest of the game.

Q. Why do you think it slipped away?

LUKE STICE: We gotta do a better job when opposing team starts to have success. We gotta do a better job as a unit minimizing that moving forward and create our own momentum.

Q. Now that you've seen that momentum slip away is that something you will look for in the future and you will try to step up and use your voice to keep that from happening?

LUKE STICE: You know, I believe that going into each week whatever your role is you gotta do it to the best of your ability, and if my role needs to be that vocal guy, that's something I do take pride in and continuing to do whatever you need to do to help that team be successful in that particular moment. We got a lot of young guys and that's no excuse and we're continuing to build confidence each day with them as well as play more as a unit, and whatever we need to do to be successful that's what we will do moving forward.

Q. It's gotta be demoralizing especially in that fourth quarter when the offense is able to get it back, and I'm sure you feel as a defense you gotta get a stop. What's your message on the sideline during those times where it seems like nothing that y'all are getting thrown at you is able to work?

LUKE STICE: That's a tough deal especially on the road and we gotta do -- we gotta keep fighting and respond. There is no secret formula. There is no

magic play Coach Gibbs can call other than going out and competing and that's what we need to do moving forward.

Q. Luke, I'm sure there is a balance between the using the loss for motivation and flushing and forgetting about it. When you guys do use it as motivation, does the fact that -- Kalen Ballage tied an NCAA record for most touchdowns scored, and you see it blown up everywhere, does that give you extra or is it a wash?

LUKE STICE: Honestly, that deal for me is irrelevant. I feel like that is the same for the entire unit. We got hit in the mouth Saturday. I come out and say that, we're not giving any excuses and anything like that. All I can tell you is we're going to respond. We're going back to work. You get defined by the trials and tribulations in life not when you're successful, and the identity and the culture we are instilling here at Texas Tech is we're going to show back up to practice and go to work with that blue collar mind-set we take pride in and get after them this week.

Q. They took Arkansas to a 1-point game, does that show you it's a confident group?

LUKE STICE: We're not going to overlook anybody week-to-week. This is a one-game season and it takes our primary focus. At the end of the day it doesn't matter who we're playing. It's what we do as a unit. We're confident in the game plan that Coach Gibbs instills in us, and we gotta continue to execute and move forward and whoever we are playing be able to compete.

Q. What's your career goal after football?

LUKE STICE: Well, after football, right now I'm focused on Texas Tech winning a Big XII Conference Championship, and I'm a single-minded guy at this point and my primary goal is winning a Big XII Conference Championship, and that's what I'm focused on.

Q. Do you have a desire to coach football?

LUKE STICE: When you are out there and you put so much heart and soul into the game there is definitely that mind-set and I'm a single-mindset guy right now, and it's a goal to get to the championship and continue to compete at a high level week-in and week-out, and we're attempting to do that. I'm not worried about anything else.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Luke.