

TEXAS TECH ATHLETICS COMMUNICATIONS



TEXAS TECH VS FIU

September 18, 2021

Jones AT&T Stadium

TEXAS TECH POSTGAME QUOTES

Head Coach Matt Wells

Opening Statement

"First of all, thanks to our crowd. The students, the fans, I thought it was another good outing. Great atmosphere to play in, going to need that here in three weeks when TCU comes to town. Great atmosphere, it was fun to play in front of these guys and I think it will keep getting better and better. We talked all week about starting strong on both sides of the ball and how we wanted to start strong and it was not an indication of the result of the first series. It wasn't going to be whether we scored or we gave up a score it was the vibe of starting strong and I certainly think we did that. It was a really good second quarter. Tyler (Shough) got in a rhythm, we did a nice job protecting him, spreading out, a lot of guys got balls. They tilted the coverage and doubled Erik (Ezukanma) early, that was obvious that was the game plan early. (Geiger) came alive like we knew he could, Koontz and Tharp had big third down catches. It was good to get them involved. Defensively, holding that running back to 51 yards, 55 yards total for the defensive in terms of rushing, that's a big night. You told someone to less than 250 (yards) that's a big night, proud of them. Step one, big goal for us, was to go undefeated in the non-league and we accomplished that, 3-0. Now you get into a one-week, big time game, every single week in the Big 12, and we go to Texas this week and we're certainly excited to do that."

Q: "What do you feel like you have learned about your team during this 3-0 start?"

"You look back on the first two games and resilient is the first word that comes to mind. Down 14 at half, down seven at half, nobody bickering, nobody griping, nobody arguing, playing together and then having a sense of urgency in the third quarter to tie games to take leads and find ways to win at the end. I think I learned that we are in pretty good condition, we are built for a fourth quarter game. To see the improvement in practice from week two, to week three, I think Sunday, I think these guys would probably tell you, it was tell the truth Sunday around here. Our coaches were very, very direct. In the coaching world they say you can coach harder off of wins, and I think there's certainly a lot of truth to that, but our players responded, they were very, very coachable."

Q: "How was the offensive line tonight?"

"Seems like, until you watch tape, we protected Tyler (Shough) a lot better. There was maybe one sack, and a couple of flushes that were more coverage driven, where guys just didn't get open. But I think we protected (Shough) better tonight."

Q: "What in this game allowed you to spread the ball to other receivers?"

"When you double cover (Ezukanma) with two guys, and even walked out a linebacker sometimes, you start to thin the box and thin the coverage. (Geiger) showed, Koontz, Tharp those tight ends. When you start getting matchups on linebackers and safeties, and I think at times we have the advantage with Koontz and Tharp and then (Geiger) on the perimeter, he broke loose tonight and made some nice catches."

Defensive Back Marquis Waters

Q: "Obviously you guys were behind given the punt right back, what did that do to you? You came in wanting to make plays, such a game changing one like that early on. What did that do for you and what were all the guys saying over there?"

"It just built more confidence, just to play as myself and play with my teammates and just keep going. It brought a spark and every game we need a spark, so we did it, I did it. Like I said it brought a lot of confidence to be honest."

Q: "How did this defensive effort look for you now finishing nonconference and really overall team effort on the defense after the first drive. What did you see the rest of the game that was really working for you guys?"

"Just having fun, that's the main thing, just having fun every play. We make mistakes but we know have to correct them, we correct them and go out there and do our best and finish the game strong."

Q: "Marcus, what have you learned from the defensive as a whole, stepping up big in the past couple of games?"

"That we have a lot of play makers and everybody comes to play every week and lots of confidence and everyone is getting comfortable and looking forward to the rest of the season."

Quarterback Tyler Shough

Q: "Tyler, you're probably sick of getting asked this question but everyone asks about (Ezukanma) and the targets he's been getting and everything. What were you seeing out there? Is this something you guys have been working on for a while to see how many guys can get out there, what was available during the game, but what was it that allowed eleven guys to get involved this week?"

"I mean it's just like what coach Wells said, it's a part of the progression. Guys were getting open and traditionally in the past couple of games, (Ezukanma) was getting open and sometimes he was the first reach and I'm not going to pass him up so all wide receivers and tight ends, like Koontz and Mason, (Geiger), they're all getting open and doing a great job, and obviously the offensive line, they gave tons of time to throw and really the only sack was my fault. You know, I ran right into the guy, and I mean that wasn't even on Josh, so they did a great job, they played their butts off."

Q: "From week one to now, how much more comfortable do you feel in the offensive and how do you feel y'all are jelling?"

"I feel we get better every week and it's been our goal, every day, every practice, we are going to practice even harder coming into this week, because we practice harder every week, we got to keep going because we aren't satisfied."

FIU Head Coach Butch Davis*On Miscues...*

"If we don't throw an interception and drive it down, we might take a 14-0 lead. What a lot of people don't understand is, score changes everyone's perception on what they are going to do. They might not be able to do all the RPO's now. Instead of it being 7-7, it's 10-0 or 14-0. We miss a field goal, and it changes all of those things like calling plays and stuff, but they are a good football team."

On quarterback Max Bortenschlager...

"He was okay, at times he made some good plays, where he extended plays, and got some shots down the field. We didn't get open as often as we should have. We didn't block on the perimeter with wide receivers. We would get looks on the perimeter and instead of it being a seven- or eight-yard gain, it was a two- or three-yard gain."

On Special Teams...

"Every time you play someone really good, it's a measuring stick. It tells you, "what are your issues?" As coaches we have to fix them, and we have to find people to fix it with."

On the locker room...

"All the veteran guys are pretty disappointed, they worked hard the last four or five months to get ready for the season and they don't like the way we started. We have nine games left, we could win them all or lose them all. The team takes advantage of their own attitude and how they play."