

Washington State at Washington Post-Game Quotes

Husky Stadium

Nov. 25, 2017

Washington Head Coach Chris Petersen

Opening Statement

Happy for our seniors, happy for Bob Rondeau and I'm happy we played our best ball lately. I think these kids are awesome to coach. When things don't go right, they get a chip on their shoulders and they work hard. They never just go through the motions at practice. I'm happy with how they played.

On defense and the turnovers

We knew that was going to be the key to the game. It has been every year. These guys are good at possessing the ball, so if we don't get turnovers, that causes all kinds of problems for us. One of the reasons we've had some success is we have gotten some turnovers. And we didn't turn it over on a wet night. The combination of those two things was really good.

On the execution on Offense

The offensive coaches did an awesome job putting that plan together. Those guys are hard to block. We protected gaps for our running backs. We knew if we could get things started and avoid getting hit in the backfield, which Washington State is very good at, we were going to have a chance. We did a good job for most of the night. It's hard to not get negative yards against those guys. The other thing is third downs. Our defense rallied on third downs and we were close to 50 percent on offense. When we have struggled, those are some areas we haven't done well in.

On the injuries

I think they (Dante Pettis and Lavon Coleman) are okay. It's always different in the morning, but the trainers feel okay. It's hard for me to answer injury questions. I hope they can play in the bowl game. It's always next man up, but in this case, it changes a little bit. It was a hard and wet night to throw a new punt returner up there with the rain, so that was a little bit different for us. Other than that, we have some good running backs.

On the WSU matchup

It's hard to know how we've been successful. Everyone knows it's a big game on both sides. I'm proud our guys can respond and play their best when their best is needed, and it is needed. They are a dangerous team on both sides of the ball. We played very clean tonight.

On the seniors

This is a really good senior class. I have a lot of respect for those guys. Some of those guys played as true freshmen. They have been unbelievable in terms of doing things how we like to do them. Everyone likes to do things differently. Those are the guys change is the hardest on because here comes a new crew and we didn't recruit them. They bought in and they've been great.

On Myles Gaskin

He's a heck of a running back. He's underrated, not of our opinion. We know if he's covered up, he has that unique, patient style where he can find creases and he's strong and fast. He has a great combination of all of those things.

On energy level

When that stadium feels like that, it's an automatic boost. It hasn't always felt like that. We have great support, and when it's packed like that, it's completely different for those kids. When you come for warmups, you can feel it. And that is when it is truly the greatest setting in college football. And that's when it changes for us. We can be pretty good at home, but we're really good when all of those seats are full. And I mean that sincerely.

On getting 10 wins

They are great guys to coach. They are fighting and trying to get better. That's all we can do: try to get better every day, just keep fighting. We have felt that from these guys all year long. We knew we had a good team, and we do have a good team. We will play someone who is good in the bowl game for sure, maybe our toughest game because I know we will get matched up with a good opponent. We will have one more really good game. When that's all said and done, it will take about 48 hours to feel good about it, then we will move on.

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HUSKY PLAYERS

QB Jake Browning

How does it feel to get this win?

It feels awesome to win this one in front of the home crowd and for all the seniors here who have battled through everything.

How did Gaskin get it done tonight?

Well it all starts up front. The line opened up good holes and it was our game plan to run it a lot this game from the beginning.

RB Myles Gaskin

How did you do it tonight?

It really came down to everyone else tonight man. I may be the guy carrying the ball but it's the line and wide receivers blocking that are all the hard work.

How would you summarize the regular season this year?

We had ups and downs but these guys on this team are the best and there's no one else I'd want to be playing with.

LB Keishawn Bierra

Is there a sense of pride that comes with such a solid victory against a good Washington State team?

Absolutely, we always try to play our type of defense and always have good coaching from coach K. We understand what we are capable of when we play as a unit, tackle well, and play within ourselves. Every time we come out and bring our A-game the score is always going to look like that. That's what we expect from each other.

What was it like to be able to create as many turnovers as you guys did?

The last few games we haven't been able to cause as many turnovers, so we made that a priority this week. We focused on putting our head on the ball, punching the ball out, hustling to the ball and making sure we are all around the ball all of the time. We've put the ball on the ground a lot and just haven't been able to scoop those ones up, but today guys focused a little bit more.

What was it like to play behind Vita Ve a tonight?

Usually you see a 350-pounder and you think run stopper, and yes, he does that, but he also creates pressure. Greg Gaines created a lot of pressure, the edges were creating pressure, Coach K was drawing up the scheme nicely and sending three-man pressures and it was all working. It was working, and it makes the job so much easier for those of us playing behind him.

S JoJo McIntosh

How'd it feel being back out there?

Well you guys know I was taken out of last game so it felt good to get back in there and be making plays.

How did it feel to put out such a dominating performance?

Our defense showed up today. Guys were flying around, getting turnovers, picks, hits, PBUs, it was great.

What was your guys' game plan coming in?

We knew we had to play these guys different than we play anyone else. They throw for a lot and get the ball downfield and score. We had to play them man-to-man, and we knew every play that they ran tonight. We prepared really well.

How nice is it to be able to rush only three guys?

Those three guys we rushed are some beasts. They were penetrating and getting through and they forced some bad throws that we made plays on.

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Washington State Head Coach Mike Leach

Did anything change in this week of preparation coming off the bye?

I don't think the preparation really changed. I didn't think we transferred it as well as we might have. I think that this is a really good team that you have to play good and play together in order to be them. And of course their strength is the offensive line and the defensive line and I think that showed today. I think they did a really good job there, on both the line of scrimmages. But, you know, the biggest thing is we went out there and we played anxious and squandered all kinds of opportunities in the first half. Then it became a series of over corrections after that.

How do you think Luke Falk did today?

It kind of depends when. I saw about three different Luke Falks today. I saw the first half guy, which that guy was a complete stranger. I saw, you know kind of in the middle of the game, just a guy struggling to get on track. Which I thought he courageously did. And then I saw the Luke Falk at the end, and that's the guy I'm a lot more familiar with. We had tempo, bouncing around, and the team responds to it.

Did you consider removing him from the game and putting in Tyler Hilinski?

Not really. Luke has done a tremendous job with that type of thing. He's had a great career. You know, statistically the best PAC-12 quarterback in history. And, you know, sometimes you just have to fight through it. I mean you can pick out whoever you're favorite quarterback is and I can certainly circle a game he's had like this. And he probably didn't, relatively speaking, have it against quite as good competition. But that's just part of it.

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COUGARS' PLAYERS

QB Luke Falk

What were they making tough for you guys out there tonight?

They just executed. When you have four turnovers it is hard to win a football game. We just went out there, they executed and we didn't. If we got any points on the board in the first half, maybe the momentum would have switched, but we just weren't able to do that, or put it in play to get things rolling. It is disappointing, but they played hard, and credit to them.

Were there any changes in preparation with the bye week?

We approach the bye week like we always do and it is just the same preparation. We go out here and unfortunately we just didn't play our game.

How would you evaluate your own performance tonight?

When you turn the ball over four times, it is not a good game. I don't think I played that well, I had to give me team a chance and I didn't do that.

RB Jamal Morrow

How big of challenge is that front to deal with? How hard is it to handle them in your running game?

Credit to them, they are a great defensive front, especially Vita Vea, he is definitely a great player. We just tried to make some adjustments in the second half to make it work, but when you get behind it is really tough to capitalize off of anything. Credit to them, we just have to execute better and prepare for the bowl game.

How disappointing is it when you guys know what is on the line, again this year to not play to your standards?

It is disappointing. You play this whole season for it to come down to this game and to play like we did, it sucks. You just have to take it and move on and get ready for our bowl game.

With so much on the line, do you think you guys might have psyched yourselves up for it too much?

No, I think we went into it with the same attitude that we usually do. We knew what was at stake, but we still didn't come out and execute or do the things we needed to.

WR Tavares Martin

What was the mood like at halftime? What did Coach Leach say?

He was positive, telling us to get out there and try to fight back. He was being positive but we just couldn't execute.

How discouraging is it to go into a game like this and not be able to perform to your standard?

It is not discouraging, we just had to execute more. We have to get back to practice and work on some things and bounce back.

S Hunter Dale

Coach Leach described the team as anxious, how did that apply to the defense today?

For this game we knew what was at stake and you could definitely tell that people wanted to play good and really wanted to go to the Pac-12 championship. Stuff like that. We knew the hype on this game. You could kind of see out there and that people were trying to overplay, do other people's jobs, and trying to make that one tackle or play that they thought would win the game. That's something that we have to learn from the film and get better from it.

Did you think the hit from Hercules Mata'afa was targeting?

Personally I didn't think that it was targeting. But the refs called it. Not much we can do with it but move on. We've got to see that on film too.