

CFP Semifinal at the Capital One Orange Bowl: Georgia vs Michigan

Monday, December 27, 2021

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Hard Rock Stadium

Michigan Wolverines

Blake Corum

Mike Sainristil

Luke Schoonmaker

Press Conference

Q. Blake, can you just talk about how you're feeling right now headed into this match-up, and also what you see out of Georgia's defensive line? You've obviously been in physical games before, but what it's going to take specifically against them to be able to win that match-up.

BLAKE CORUM: You know, personally I feel great. I feel like my ankle is finally back. I feel like I have my cutting ability, my speed and my top-end speed, my burst. I feel like I have all that back.

Georgia is pretty stout. They're a stout defense. They have a good front seven. I mean, we've just got to continue doing what we do. There's no need to change anything. We've had a wonderful year. Offensive line has done great, our tight ends have done great, our receivers, everyone has done great. Just continuing to prepare and watching film on them and just keep going.

Q. I'm curious of your take on the Georgia defense and it's been branded as one of the most dominant of all time and physicality and everything else, and you guys have shown your own level of physicality. Are you kind of interested to see what it's all about, what they're all about and how you guys' physicality matches up with theirs?

MIKE SAINRISTIL: I'll take it. Yeah, you know, like you just said, they're a dominant defense, but we ourselves have a really good offense. Physical physicality is the brand of football we play here. That's just the motto we have on this offense is we call it PSP, which is physical smart precise, and as you see the first word is physical.



**PLAYOFF
SEMIFINAL**



That's just how we play football here. That's what we want to do. That's what we instill into our guys, and that's just how it's going to be. This game of course is going to be one of those physical games, and it's going to come down to the most dominant side of the ball winning, and that's how we're attacking this game.

Q. For all three of you, can you guys talk about the evolution of Josh Gattis, especially how he's kind of embraced also the use of the tight ends in the offense? He just talked about that.

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: Yeah, I think we've just been able to grow our room so much. Obviously just guys that -- we can do so much, and Coach Gattis has done a great job with getting us all involved with so many ways to attack defenses. It's been a pleasure to play for him, and we just accept anything he asks us to do, so it's been fun.

Q. Of all of Hassan's runs this year, I'm wondering if you've got a highlight that sums up his ability or what he's all about.

BLAKE CORUM: My favorite run that Hassan did this year was probably the Nebraska run where he jumped the dude running full stride. I thought that showed his explosion, speed that he got. That was probably one of my favorites.

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: I like all the hurdles in general. Anytime he's going over somebody, I think everybody gets excited for that.

MIKE SAINRISTIL: Definitely. I feel like you can just look at Hassan's runs and just be amazed by all of the hurdles and whatnot, but what can't go unnoticed is when he looks stopped in the backfield and he's still pushing and gets those two, three extra yards that we need for a 1st down. The good-looking plays are always fun to look at as highlights, but the real eye for football will never let those plays go unnoticed.

Q. Georgia has 12 games of film where it gave up almost nothing and one game of film where it got sliced apart. Does it help at all when you start breaking down film to see them actually have a bad

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

game? Does it give you any kind of maybe schematically or just confidence to see them having breakdowns as opposed to 12 weeks of just mashing people?

MIKE SAINRISTIL: I would just say that regardless even if they didn't -- if last game didn't go that way for them, I feel like however we looked at it, we'll just find ways through film, find different ways to expose open areas of the field, find ways to create good runs in the run game. Coach Gattis does a great job of coming up with game plans for us, and we do a great job ourselves of believing in the game plan and just sticking to what we do really good on our offense.

But yeah, I guess it definitely helps just seeing a team that kind of has a style of offense that we have, as well, going in there and doing what they did. I wouldn't say we -- we didn't need them to do that, but just looking at the film, we understand where they can be attacked, and we're just going to do our best job to keep attacking those areas.

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: Yeah, and off of that, we're just excited for the opportunity, too. I think the past few weeks we've all really gotten into it and have stayed excited. We're excited for this opportunity that they're giving us.

Q. Mike, I'm curious, when you first started working with Cade as a QB, did it take some getting used to to see that sort of release point that he has and his mechanics in throwing the ball, and have there been any times during the year where you've thought, how did he get the ball out with so much traffic around him because he does sort of vary that side arm delivery and keep plays alive that way?

MIKE SAINRISTIL: Cade might not be as mobile as A-Rod, but sometimes I call him, like I joke around with him, I call him Baby A-Rod because of the way he moves around in the pocket. Yeah, he does a great job of working in the off-season, whether that's ball placement, delivery, whatever it is. Since we both came in together our freshman year, 2019, I've always had a connection with Cade, and it just continues to grow and get stronger on and off the field.

I feel like Cade is doing a great job for us right now.

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: He's definitely separated himself from others just with what you're saying with the arm angles. I think it's pretty special if a quarterback can do that. Yeah, he's definitely separated himself by being able to have those different angles.

Watching it after in film is like, yeah, it's legit.

BLAKE CORUM: Another thing is he's a field general. He runs our offense, so he makes sure everyone is straight and all of that. I mean, he's the leader of the offense, so he's great.

Q. How would you describe this offense in that you guys pride yourselves on being physical, and yet some of the metrics show you guys are as explosive as any team out there in certain categories?

BLAKE CORUM: I feel like we're a complete offense. I feel like we're physical, we're elusive, we can run in the middle, run to the outside, we can throw deep balls, throw short, screens. We can do everything I feel like Coach Gattis comes up with great plans, great ways to get everyone the ball, and no one is selfish. Everyone wants each other to eat. We play for each other, and when you do that, great things happen.

I feel like we're just a great offense that can do everything.

MIKE SAINRISTIL: Definitely. I feel like the physicality or the explosiveness comes after the physicality in terms of the O-line creating holes for guys like Blake, Hassan, Donovan, tight ends, as well, a part of the blocking, and then receivers are blocking downfield to help the explosive plays continue, and then that just leads into the pass game. Physical -- the physicality of the offensive line allows Cade to have time back there in the pocket. Clean pockets allows him to have 7-on-7 vision, deliver balls the way he wants to, and then that's just how we like to do it, just physical.

Q. What do you guys do the night before a game to prepare, and does that change at all when the stakes get higher, especially for a game like this?

BLAKE CORUM: Are you asking as a team or like person?

Q. Personally.

BLAKE CORUM: I mean, for me, I stay the same. I like chilling. I like maybe watching a movie or listening to some music. Really just zoning in, thinking about what I'm going to do the next day and really just getting my mind right. I mean, that's what I kind of do before a game.

MIKE SAINRISTIL: Yeah, for myself I would say I do the same thing. It doesn't matter what the game is. I like to joke around a lot, so whether that's on game day or whether that's on Monday, that's just who I am. I'm going to joke around with you. I'm going to laugh. I'm going to just bring good energy, good vibes, maybe sure everybody's energy is real high. That's how I like to do it.

Before bed, I do envision plays or picturing what I'm going to do in certain moments when my number gets called just making sure I'm locked in, but yeah, I'm going to just keep it cool.

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: I'm pretty much the same as these guys. Just the night before taking my mind off of things and being around everybody, too. I love -- usually we'll have a movie as a team or something together, so I think being with everybody before can help alleviate any kind of stress or anything you have before, and then when the time comes, yeah, everybody locks in.

Q. Luke, you mentioned -- Josh had mentioned about using tight ends is the most important thing in this offense. Is it harder to throw to the tight ends? In other words, scheming to get tight ends open, teaching quarterbacks to find the tight ends because they tend to be in the middle of the field, is it about getting the ball to the tight end that takes a little extra expertise?

LUKE SCHOONMAKER: Honestly, no. I think -- and that just goes to our abilities, our athleticism. I think just because we can move so well, and again, Coach Gattis does a great job with that game planning with the quarterbacks, I think it's similar as receivers, just kind of being able to get us open. We can make that happen because of how well we play and our abilities, too. Yeah.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports