

Stanford University Football

Media Conference

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David Shaw

Postgame Media Conference



Colorado - 35, Stanford - 32

DAVID SHAW: So bottom line for us, we took too long to get going. Really took too long to get going. I thought defensively, initially early on, we played pretty well. We gave up one big play. It was inexcusable. And, but for the most part we played them pretty tough early on. And then offensively, we were out of sync. For obvious reasons, Davis Mills with one day of practice, missing throws he can make. There's no other way to say it. There's nobody to be mad at. It just happened. It's an unfortunate situation. And the longer he played, the better rhythm he found, the better our guys played. He also was a the dropped pass, that should have been a touchdown. Had a couple other balls that were close. But as he got going, he got back in rhythm and was great. Bottom line, it was too late for to us play. We need to play at that high level the entire game. Running the ball-wise, we never got, never got it established. Coming off a really good game last week and didn't play as well up front. Too many errors. Too many guys losing their man and our running backs never got a chance to get going.

Defensively, we just got to get more stops. Too many long drives. Two really easy plays we gave them. One on a long catch and run pass early on and then another a guy's by himself running for a touchdown. You take out those two plays and we play a little bit better, yeah, maybe it's a different game, but it wasn't because we made some errors. We let some guys go free. Nobody's ever going to question our fight or our toughness. We stayed in it until the end, came back and fought really hard to fight our way back in, got some great plays by our quarterback and a couple of our receivers, got some great stops on the defensive side to get the ball back, and we just, it was too little too late. This team is talented, but it doesn't matter. We have to play better and we have to play better for an entire season. There's no corona to blame. There's nothing to blame. We're on the same page as everybody else, same situation. We can play better and we must play better.

Q. You guys aren't used to going into the home locker

room after a loss. Can you give us an idea of the initial reaction from the players in there?

DAVID SHAW: They're upset. They should be. I'm upset. And I should be.

Q. You talked about the play of the defense in the first half and I think especially in the third quarter Colorado took the advantage and got the better of the defense. It's been a somewhat similar story line for the first two games, obviously not exactly the same. Are you seeing any commonalities in terms of why things kind of start to turn against the defense?

DAVID SHAW: I can't tell you right now. I'm not sure. Oregon was, they didn't change much, and we didn't change much. They just out-executed us in the third quarter. They ran a lot of the same running plays and our guys that were in position the first half and in the third quarter we made some errors that cost us. This game, I haven't seen the film yet. It's tough to see. But we just, we didn't get off the field in the third quarter and that's something we have to look at and change.

Q. A follow-up on the defense. It seems, to my eyes at least, on first feeling that there have been some issues with the outside linebackers playing the read option. Your thoughts on that and the ability of quarterbacks now on two straight weeks to keep and have relatively easy gains if not touchdowns.

DAVID SHAW: That's an issue.

Q. As you look at these last two games, it seems like an awful lot of things were even between you and your opponents, and one of the big differences has been third down. Is anything particular standing out to you on either side of the ball in terms of that down for you guys right now?

DAVID SHAW: Different, two different games, really for us early on, third down in this game, or third down in the Oregon game, we had some opportunities and we didn't make some throws and catches. Same thing happened early on in this game and then we kind of were much better



in the second half. And third downs can be misleading when you go for it on fourth down because if you get it on fourth down, really third down for us was, once we're in a fourth down mode, we're just trying to get some more positive yards to go for it on fourth down. So second half, I thought we were much better, and particularly the fourth quarter. But I'll even add one. It's third down in the red zones. If we come out of the first couple drives with touchdowns, which we had opportunities to have, we come out with 14 points instead of six, it's a completely different ball game.

Q. Can you first take me through the sequence with Isaiah Sanders, bringing him in on third and one, had to call the timeout because the play clock was down to one, then Mills threw incomplete on the next pass. Can you take me through that sequence of things you guys were looking for?

DAVID SHAW: We got Isaiah as a grad transfer from Air Force. It's something we have been working on for awhile. He's got a great package of plays. And went out there and the clock expired and so that was a difficult situation. We got to be faster getting him on the play, getting him on the field, and he's got to recognize that and get the snap off before the clock runs out.

Q. I know you said that you're in the same situation as everyone else, but you did not have your quarterback available last week. Just what, how difficult was it to not have him in practice this week? And did you notice anything that would have been different if you did have him? And just how would you evaluate his performance overall?

DAVID SHAW: That's what we don't know. We don't know how the Oregon game goes if he's able to play. We don't know how this game goes if he's able to practice all week. Those are things that are unknown. I think it was obvious that he was rusty. He was in isolation essentially from Saturday afternoon until Thursday night, was able to come in and get one practice, and it showed. It's unfortunate. I'm not happy about it, by any stretch of the imagination. Not much we could have done about it. But to say that it didn't affect his performance, I think would be inaccurate. So hopefully we'll play much better from here on out. We're capable. I think we showed that. I know he's, he is what you saw late in that second half. Our guys, our receiving core, our running backs, they are their best plays over these last couple games. Bottom line is we got to be at our best for sixty minutes and if we can do that, we got a chance to be really good.

Q. There was a lot of discussion, understandably so, during camp about how this off-season was going to

affect play on the field and how much we were seeing in the NFL and other college football games in terms of missed tackles and just poor execution. There have been several touchdowns now, I would say, in both games that were left on the field that were there to be made, and some issues on defense as well. To your eyes, as you're watching your players kind of make these miss-steps, how much of it are you kind of thinking, Okay, now I'm seeing how much it affected our prep?

DAVID SHAW: That's just unknown. It's just unknown. We can't diagnose that. All we can do is look at what we, how we practice, what we install, how we teach it, how the guys perform it, and then what we do on game day. So the what-ifs are really, it's too hard to go down that rabbit hole because you never come back out. We have the ability to be much better than we performed, got to look at all the things we're doing, to make sure that we're getting our guys ready to go. That's the coaching side. Our guys got to go out there and execute. We're in this thing hand in hand. When we're at our best it shows and when we're not it shows.

Q. How would you sum up your initial read on Austin Jones' day?

DAVID SHAW: It was tough. Colorado did a good job, a lot of movement, a lot of inside pressures and they made it tough for him to get through. Barely got back to the line most of the day. That's them out-scheming us and outperforming us. We'll see what it looks like after watching the film, but loved a lot of things we had in the running game a lot of things that we believed we were prepared for what we saw, we didn't execute them. We believe that Austin's got a chance to be an outstanding running back, but we got to get him to the line of scrimmage. That just didn't happen with any regularity today.

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