

Stanford University Football Media Conference

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Tanner McKee

Postgame Media Conference



USC - 41, Stanford - 28

Q. Just what did you see on that -- maybe not what the refs called, but just talk about that play that was reversed, a touchdown to Brycen. Just talk about that play call and kind of just that whole sequence there.

TANNER McKEE: Yeah, just roll out to the right, check the flat. They covered it pretty well. They kind of had a linebacker that was kind of floating in the end zone. Brycen did a good job of finding that back end line.

Just really unfortunate that it's a game of inches, that we didn't hit that.

But regardless, we've got to come back and answer. Sometimes we're going to get calls; sometimes we're not. We've got to come back, and we've got to score it regardless.

Q. Tanner, this USC defense, it seemed kind of unorthodox. Did they like show anything that maybe caught you guys by surprise, or would you say everything you guys saw on film, it came into fruition on the field?

TANNER McKEE: Yeah, I think they kind of run an interesting defense as far as like their defensive line are always stemming, looping, doing tons of different games.

So I thought our O-line did a good job of picking that up.

As far as coverages, they changed a ton of it. Knew coming into it everything was going to start looking like cover four and they were going to change from there.

So got a pretty steady dose of cover one, cover four, clouding the field, boundary, cover two, things like that. So just changing things up on us. But, yeah, they definitely switched up their looks throughout the game.

Q. I guess what was the feeling like at halftime? You guys did put up something like 300 yards of offense,

but to still be down 21 at the half, I guess what was the feeling at halftime?

TANNER McKEE: Yeah, it just felt like we were beating ourselves obviously with turnovers. Coach Shaw said it: you can't turn the ball over and expect to beat anybody.

It didn't feel like we were getting stopped at all. We felt like we were moving the ball totally fine. We've just got to eliminate the turnovers. Just do what we do as an offense. There was a few times that maybe the adjustment was different or on an option route things were different. Like we've got to practice like -- execute the play like how we do it in practice all the time. It's just those little details that make a huge difference.

So like I said, it didn't feel like they really stopped us at any point, but definitely that we were hurting ourselves a lot.

Q. Tanner, we saw a lot of different things from this offense -- empty sets, different formations, tempo, run early. Just kind of take us through some of the things that you guys would kind of throw at USC and just kind of what sort of things you were trying to emphasize with the game plan out there today.

TANNER McKEE: I think today we tried to throw everything at them honestly, like you said. Had a few empty packages, had a few get up to the line, snap it quickly, and then our normal huddle, call the play, make adjustments. So just changing up the tempo, trying to catch them off guard.

They were changing so many things, trying to keep their defense vanilla, eliminate different subs or stunts, things like that. So definitely changed up the tempo.

I thought we did a decent job, but definitely something that we can press the gas pedal on or try to go fast, try to go slow to catch the defense off guard, have their guys off their hips, and explode off the ball.

Q. If you have the two throws back that were tipped, how would you execute them differently?



TANNER McKEE: If I had those two throws back? The first one to Ben, I'll have to watch it on film because I didn't fully see where the ball ended up. Reading that mike linebacker, maybe I could have come down to the follow inside. I'll have to check that on film.

I think to Elijah just put the ball outside a little bit more. He's a big body, so letting him go use his body, attack the ball. That's just one more thing that we're going to rep a hundred times at practice. We're going to get it right.

He's shown we can do it in the past. I've shown we can make the throw in the past. We're not going to shy away from that by any means just because it didn't work out one time.

But we just have to be just a little bit better because, like you said, it's a game of inches. If it was six inches more outside, if it was a little bit higher, then maybe the result would have been a little bit different. So we're just going to have to rep that out through practice.

Q. That slow mesh kind of concept that you guys ran, what was that like from your perspective? Do you think it's something you guys would be able to continue? Like how effective do you think it was?

TANNER McKEE: Honestly, I thought it was great. A good mix of pass and run. I felt like it was the most balanced we've been running the ball and throwing, but mainly I thought it helped our run game a lot. Definitely stretches the defense, makes them change things.

I feel like everybody knows that Stanford makes a lot of different calls and changes before the snap. So just solving them post snap I think has been great.

Q. You had a couple of rushing plays to Yurosek and Higgins. Just talk about kind of utilizing that particular aspect, particularly seeing Ben do that was something I'm not sure we saw last year.

TANNER McKEE: Yeah, we're just trying to get the ball in our playmaker's hands. I feel like that's my job as a quarterback, is to really get the ball in the playmaker's hands. So whether that's a reverse, a handoff, a shovel pass, a seam ball, a go in any way possible.

So it's just changing up the different looks and trying to let Ben and Elijah run in space because they are very good at it.

Q. Just thoughts on the bye week? What are you guys hoping to focus on during that time? And just the thoughts on timing of the early bye, if it's going to

help you guys? Just thoughts on that.

TANNER McKEE: I don't know. I'm going to control things that we can control. Bye weeks after two games, that's fine. We definitely have enough film. So we're going to work on it.

I was kind of telling the guys it can't be a normal bye week that we take off because it is so early. Everybody else is getting an extra week of practice and games, so we have to work, and we're going to work like it's an actual game week.

So I'm really excited about that, and a lot of things I feel like we showed this week that we can watch on film and change. Like we said, the different tempos that were great. USC showed so many different fronts. So just a lot of adjustments and a lot of really good film I think we can watch after this game.

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