

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

Saturday, October 26, 2024  
Stanford, California, USA

## Coach Troy Taylor

Postgame Media Conference



Wake Forest 27, Stanford 24

### **Q. Coach, just opening thoughts? How would you overall evaluate this game for your team?**

TROY TAYLOR: Yeah, I mean, we were a couple plays short. I thought it could have been in any of the three areas, special teams, offense, defense. We make one more play on any side of those balls, on the ball, and we probably come away with I know. Zero sum game. Didn't happen. They made one more play than we did and walk away with a victory.

### **Q. What went into the decision to start Elijah and to move to Ashton?**

TROY TAYLOR: We were going to play both of them and then utilize them both and Ash just got hot. I thought he played well in the run game. Ran the ball well. Didn't miss a ton of throws or many throws.

Made good decisions in the pass game. So when he start playing well and we start getting in a rhythm, I just went ahead and stuck with Ashton.

### **Q. What goes into the decision making going for that fourth and six on that last touchdown drive. Do you look on the team specifics, general stats?**

TROY TAYLOR: We do. We have the analytics is a factor which told us to go for it. I don't think we're 100% on the analytics. There are times we don't follow it.

That one was definitely said that we should go for it. Obviously it worked out. Yeah, it's a tool. It's a really good tool. But there are certain things it doesn't take into account.

The rhythm of the game, weather, those type of things. Sometimes you have to adjust.

### **Q. Just talk about the interception that Ashton threw at the end of the game. Obviously hoping to get it to**

### **Elic. What went wrong there?**

TROY TAYLOR: Yeah, we had him earlier on a double move one or two plays before and the ball just kind of faded on him. We came back to it. I thought the free safety did a nice job. Tried to hold them with their eyes and just probably faded a little bit too much.

He didn't miss many throws today, but I thought played his butt off and obviously of it a nice play by 45. He's a tough kid.

### **Q. How would you evaluate the defense today?**

TROY TAYLOR: I thought they did a pretty good job in at that area. Second week in a row we've had hands to the face on a quarterback after we stop them on third down that resulted in points. That kind of stuff has to improve.

But we had a scoop and score six points. We had a tough goal line stand on the one yard line. Kept them out of the end zone there at the end the game and heck of an interception by Brandon Nicholson. I thought we did some good things on defense.

Obviously we can play better but I thought it was a pretty gutsy performance.

### **Q. In some ways is it more frustrating or harder to bounce back from a loss like that versus the last couple losses?**

TROY TAYLOR: They're all painful to be honest with you. That's the nature of the game we're in. You put everything you can into a week both as coaches, players, everyone. Our ops people, everything.

And then to come up short, I understand your question. Sometimes when you're closer it can seem like it hurts more. When you're trying to build a program and do those things all the losses hurt. You just got to be able to respond and be resilient and come back the next week.

### **Q. Second straight week getting Sam Roush more involved in the passing game. Had that one**



**touchdown. Can you talk about what you've seen in him and the emphasis moving forward?**

TROY TAYLOR: Yeah, Sam was always a guy that we thought could be really good in the run game and wanted to see him develop as a receiver and a pass catcher. We've seen the growth, really tough catches in traffic. The touchdown was one of the best efforts I've ever seen as a player or coach. Was an unbelievable play and effort. So he's really come around. He's going to be a really good player.

**Q. Second straight week where you guys have gotten off to a slow start. Just what do you think is accounted for that and what do you need to do?**

TROY TAYLOR: Great question because that's a point of emphasis, that we need to start fast. Obviously had a break down in protection and the ball sailed and they got the pick; made a play on the -- sometimes I don't see the other side of the ball's touchdown because I'm talking to the offense.

So I didn't see that one.

Just not clicking right away on offensive and putting our defense on a short field hoping to go down and at least move the ball. They got off to a good start, 14-nothing. I thought our guys responded. Obviously we scored and then the defensive touchdown was big.

Missed field goal. Just did some stuff that it's hard to win. Bad coverage on the punt. Missed a field goal. And then missed couple throws. Turned the ball over. You know, even if your defense makes those plays, if you're not on all three cylinders, you know, it's going to be difficult to win.

**Q. You guys have a fourth trip to the east coast coming up. Are you concerned about that affect that might have on the team?**

TROY TAYLOR: I haven't thought about it. I know it's an early kick so get out there a day early and acclimate and get ready to play another good team.

So just it is what it is. I don't put a lot of thought into that other than try to get our you are guys fresh and ready to play. Hopefully we're healthy. Hopefully we didn't lose anybody will and we'll be able to bring our full team. Hopefully get a couple running backs back next week as well.

**Q. Just talk about the value -- I know you guys came up short -- the value of playing a close competitive game like this.**

TROY TAYLOR: Yeah, no, that's why you play. If you're not winning you want to be close or have a chance to win. Our guys I thought they looked tough. I said all along they're super resilient, always respond. For that, I'm really proud.

Now, they don't want to hear about how hard they played all the time but I'm proud of how they responded and to a deficit and coming back and next time we got to win that game.

Thank you, go Card.

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