

Southeastern Conference Football Championship Game: Alabama vs Georgia

Monday, November 27, 2023

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Alabama Crimson Tide

Jalen Milroe

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Give us your general thoughts on the upcoming game against Georgia.

JALEN MILROE: It's very exciting. Definitely we have to embrace the challenge that's ahead of us. They're coming off of more than a 20-game winning streak, so it's definitely a challenge for the guys in the locker room. But at the end of the day, it's all about doing our job, and we're just excited for the challenge.

Q. Just wondering when things settled down for you and when you truly felt comfortable. I know at the beginning of the year when you were named starter, Nick even said, just because he's the starter now, that doesn't mean he's going to be the starter. But even after the South Florida game when he named you starter again, it seemed like everything had settled down a little bit more. How comforting was that and when did you feel as comfortable as you do now?

JALEN MILROE: Honestly, I felt comfortable all season. I can't say just one particular moment. I think the biggest thing was being prepared, and I think preparation came from the off-season, trying to be as much prepared for the season that was ahead of us.

I see every opportunity to get better, and I see every moment as a growing moment and not linger in certain things.

Early in the season I seen as a learning moment, and that goes for anyone. No one is perfect in this world. To me, that's the biggest thing. I know I'm not a finished product, and I just constantly try to be the best version of myself on and off the field, and the biggest thing that I can say that contributed to that was my support system, my support system meaning my teammates in the locker room, my coaching staff and my family.



I think that's the biggest that I think has truly uplifted me through this journey during the season. I can honestly say that.

But the biggest thing, it's just constantly trying to work towards the common goal, and the common goal is to be successful.

Q. You experienced something Saturday night that most people on this planet will never get to experience. How do you get your head out of the clouds? I would imagine you still can't help but think about how that transpired even though you've got the magnitude of this game. How do you get your head out of the clouds from what happened Saturday night?

JALEN MILROE: You know, it's funny with that moment, I just seen it as a repetition throughout the off-season. My dad and I trained constantly through the off-season, and the biggest thing my dad is big on is repetition, so I might throw an out route probably 30 times or a go ball a lot, constantly, until it's perfect, until I can't miss. That was something in the off-season that my dad and I just worked on was just throwing every throw on the field until I can't miss, until it's time to move to another throw.

I think that was the biggest thing with my dad, and I think that just truly contributed to the last game throw, and it just was just falling back to your level of training.

Q. Have you moved on from that, though?

JALEN MILROE: 100 percent. It's over with. That game is over with, and now it's about refocusing and working on cleaning up some things from Auburn and then focusing on what the task is, which is today.

Q. I wonder what you saw in the moment Saturday night with Isaiah coming open. The best thing for a quarterback to do is to throw a guy open. What were you doing there? When you got a chance to watch what you did after the game, the replay, slow motion, what went through your mind?



JALEN MILROE: Honestly, with that play, it was all about finding that one-on-one, and it worked out perfectly for us finding that one-on-one. Isaiah did a great job getting open and getting enough space to get the ball. That was all a group effort. They rushed two guys, so I had enough time. The offensive line did a great job holding up their blocks and just being sound and fundamental within their blocks. All the guys that was on the field was doing their job and getting to the end zone.

There was a lot of key factors into what exactly happened as far as Isaiah getting the ball, but it just came from -- and then another thing, too, that was mentioned was we work that play every single week, every single week throughout this whole season. So that I honestly can say contributed to that play. Whether it was completed or not completed, we can honestly say that we repped it and we were prepared for the moment.

Q. Also after the game Isaiah said the name of the play was "Gravedigger." What's the significance of "Gravedigger"?

JALEN MILROE: Well, it was a name that took place because we have a dig in the play, and so it was just a common name for it.

Q. I'm just wondering, obviously there was a moment after the game that kind of went viral of you sort of shouting about the Heisman Trophy. I'm wondering -- obviously it's something you're passionate about. Is that something that's on your mind, in the goals that you keep for yourself for this year or for the future?

JALEN MILROE: First off, that was an emotional moment, so things came out that was all through emotion, so that's number one. But the biggest thing was I was just so proud to be in the moment. The biggest thing I just want to do is just be the best teammate I can be and worry about the task at hand, and the task at hand is trying to improve from Auburn and trying to build on the good things that won the game and also improve on some negative plays that happened in the game. Just moving forward I think the biggest thing is just refocusing and then just worrying about the task at hand.

Q. Following up on that play, and I know you want to get away from that play because you've got a big game coming up, were you surprised at Auburn's choice not to pressure you?

JALEN MILROE: Well, I don't want to get into strategic plans because everyone plans out differently. It helped us that they were in that particular look, but it was just something that -- it was all about taking advantage of what

they gave, and that was exactly what happened.

Coach Rees, credit to him, he called a great play, and we executed it perfectly.

Q. Could you just talk a little bit about how you kind of define yourself as a leader kind of away from the field or in practice, away from the moments that everybody sees on the field? It seems like you really have this infectious ability to motivate not just yourself but all those around you.

JALEN MILROE: Yes, sir. I think the biggest thing I try to be is be a servant leader. My mom taught me this when I was younger. She said to me, the goal in life is not to seek the blessings but be a blessing to other people, and that set with me as I played the game, and that was something that honestly stuck with me. That's how I try to influence other guys.

Then another thing, too, is try to lead by example as much as possible and do things the right way, be seen as someone doing things the right way, and that's something that motivates me. That's something that's a part of my burn, as I like to say, that gets me going, and I can honestly say that I gain more joy from other people's success and other people working toward a common goal than any personal success.

Q. Did you kind of have to fall back on that approach earlier this year when things weren't going maybe the way you wanted?

JALEN MILROE: No, I've been the same person since started playing the game. The situation that happened during the season doesn't define who I am. I've been the same person since I entered college. Nothing has changed about me except the opportunity to play the game I love.

Q. My question is about size and your self-comparisons. They list you as 6'2", 220, but to the naked eye you seem bigger than that. Kirby Smart basically made the comparison to Lamar Jackson today. I asked him to compare you to Tebow, and he took it another step and compared you to a video game player that's playing faster than everyone else. Is there an NFL guy you compare yourself to, and what is the true tale of the tape?

JALEN MILROE: Yeah, I would say I look up to every NFL quarterback in the league because they all had a process to get them to where they're at. I think as any quarterback that's looking up or that's inspired to play the game for a long time, you've got to look at the guys that's all starting

for the NFL teams, so I look up to all those guys because they all had a certain journey to get them to where they're at, and it takes hard work and takes facing many challenges that was placed in front of them. So I look up to every guy that's in the game. I learn different things from different quarterbacks, to answer your question, but with that comment, I only can just try to build and continue to be who I am.

Q. As far as the 6'2", 220, is that accurate?

JALEN MILROE: No, that ain't accurate. I'm much bigger than that. That was like freshman year.

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