

Louisiana State University Football Media Conference

Monday, October 12, 2020

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Ed Orgeron

Weekday Press Conference

ED ORGERON: All right, guys. Obviously a very disappointing loss. I think I told the players to put it on me. Told the coaching staff this morning that we gotta coach them better, gotta get better. We identified things that went wrong in a big meeting yesterday. On offense, I thought our guys played very good most of the game, very impressive Myles Brennan, 4230 yards passing, four touchdowns. No interceptions. The biggest thing he took the big hit down there on the goal line and they kept oncoming. He's not going to practice today. He's sore, but he's going to be back tomorrow. Very proud of Myles. Very proud of Terrace Marshall, 11, catches 235 yards, three touchdowns; Arik Gilbert, freshmen, six catches, 97 yards, one touchdown. I thought those guys played very well.

Very disappointing on the third downs, zero of 10. Gotta get it fixed. We gotta take the accountability as coaches. We gotta get it fixed. We gotta have a better scheme, and then we gotta have better execution. No excuse on the goal line. None whatsoever. We need to get our best personnel in the game. When we're driving, we should get our best personnel in the game that fits the plays that we're calling. We should have had a better plan on the goal line, and we're going to start on that today.

On defense not a very good performance. We had a long meeting yesterday about communication, about missed singles, about all kinds of stuff. And I just put it on the coaches. That's all that is. I'm not going to put it on the players. We gotta execute better, but we gotta practice better. We gotta simplify. I told both Steve and Bo to simplify, make sure that our players can do it. I don't care if we have to play one defense and one coverage; play it, play it right, do whatever we need to do, put our athletes in a good position and let them make plays. I know the players are hurting today. I'm going to talk to them today, and we're going to get it fixed.

On special teams our guys did a good job. Zach Van Rosenberg is doing a phenomenal job of punting. I was disappointed in Cade's block. It was low, hit the guy in the helmet. That could've been a game-winning field goal for



us at the end.

Kickoff team, we need to look at personnel, we need to look at our kicks. Avery is kicking it deep, but is he kicking it in the right position? And some of our guys got out of position on our kickoffs. So we're going to look at personnel and some of the things that we are doing.

Overall we're going to stay positive within this program. It's my job as the leader. I take accountability of everything to get it fixed. And we're going to get ready for Florida. A very good football team. Just couple things on Florida, Dan Mullen, outstanding game day caller. I've known Dan for a long time, been against him, and we got our work cut out for us. He's an excellent coach. He has an excellent staff, one of the best staffs we're going to be against and one of the best personnel we're going to be against. I've got a lot of respect Florida Gators and who they are.

Kyle Trask is an excellent quarterback. Kyle Pitts is an excellent tight end; you can call him a tight end, but a receiver, one of the best players in America we're going to see. And then Tony is an outstanding receiver. They got a lot of speed. We know Florida has got a lot of speed. I'm very impressed with their running backs. They run hard, yards after contact. It's the biggest and best offensive line we've played so far. Big challenge for our defense. Big challenge to go toe to toe with them, make the proper calls, make the proper adjustments and cover the wide receivers and tackle their backs. It's not a hard game plan.

On defense, Todd Grantham is an excellent defensive coach. They're not playing the defenses they usually play, but I know against us they're going to play great defense. He's a great defensive line coach. They always have speed on the defense. Brenton Cox, Jr., defensive end; Ventrell Miller, those guys are good players, but they have good players all over the field. This is going to be a big challenge for us. Our third road game in a row, we can't blink. But we gotta fix LSU first today, and it's going to be a big day today. We got goal line; we got short yardage going in. We got corrections; we got red zone. We're going to make a couple of adjustments in personnel throughout the week, put our best players in the position we can to get this thing fixed. Any questions.

Q. Coach, good morning. When a team gets in a situation like this, a lot of times people say two things



are going to happen. Either they're going to come out and play above their head and give an amazing effort or it's going to spiral out of control. There's nothing in the middle. Do you think that that's kind of the case for you as you go to Florida this weekend?

ED ORGERON: I just think we need to play up to our capability. I don't think we need to play over our heads. We got some good players and coaches. We gotta do it right. And I don't see the other one ever happening.

Q. When you guys had dropped a couple of early-season games before, you rebounded after Troy and went to Florida and won. You said that team, those losses gave them some grit. I know it's different teams, but what about this week does the team need to do to kind of match what happened following that Troy loss?

ED ORGERON: We'll find out. It starts with practice -- it starts with the coaches. I'm not going to put it on the players. It starts with the coaches. We gotta coach them better. There are some things going on in that film, some busts guys running wide open. Not the right calls on the goal line. We didn't block some people. So as coaches we gotta clean stuff up, man. It starts with me. We gotta be accountable. We gotta be detailed. So I want to put it on the coaches first. Then the players gotta go out and they gotta understand. They gotta come in and work extra. They gotta look at their iPads at night. They gotta study and be committed, which I think they are. And we gotta make sure that they understand the game plan that we want them to execute and for them to go out and execute. That's all that is.

Q. I know last year when the defense had struggled against Ole Miss, y'all simplified it and kind of rebounded. Are there some parallels from last year having that turnaround to what could happen with simplifying this year?

ED ORGERON: Yeah. I hope so. We're definitely going to simplify it. There's no question about that. I'm going to make sure that any defenses called, bow's going to call the defense. I'm going to make sure any one that's called that we run it right all week and our guys understand it. If we don't understand it, we're not running it.

Q. I don't think we saw Apu Ika on Saturday. What's his status right now? For someone like me who doesn't really understand, would you say it was just too complicated and guys weren't really understanding or what is the problem exactly?

ED ORGERON: What was the first thing you said?

Q. I don't think we Apu Ika at all Saturday. What's his status right now?

ED ORGERON: I think you're going to see him more this week. He didn't have a good week against the zone team, the first week got cut out of his gap. This is a big stretch team, so we wanted to put maybe a little quicker speed in there. He's going to be on second team this week. He's going to play a little bit more.

I do believe that there was some complicated stuff going on. I do believe there was some miscommunication going on. Guys were out of position. Guys didn't play stuff right. We go back in the second half, we said we're going to blitz more. We have a blitz coming from the field. We had a miscommunication. They let the receiver go right down the field. That's on us. That's on the coaching staff. We gotta make sure our guys know everything that we're going to do. If not, we're not going to run it.

Q. Coach, you said in the off season that the defense looked better than it did at any point last year. What were you seeing in practice that you liked and what has not translated to the field in these games?

ED ORGERON: Yeah. I saw a defense with a lot of pressure. I saw a defense running around, making plays, eliminating explosive plays. That's why I said it. I know some of you have tried to burn me on that. I get that. It ain't no big deal. But that's what I saw, and I told the truth. I didn't think we played great defense last year. And I brought Bo in. I still think we can have an outstanding defense. I know there's not a lot of great defense being played in the SEC right now. That's no excuse. I don't want to hear that. I want to play great defense at LSU, and we're going to play great defense one way or another. So the things that I saw, like I always did, I told you all the truth. I thought we were pressuring the quarterback more. I thought we were flying around. I thought we were fitting the run. That's what I saw in practice. That's what I told you all.

Q. Moving just a little bit to the Florida side of things, you mentioned Kyle Pitts has had such a great start to the year, their tight end. Would you all consider moving Derek inside to cover him or would it still be on a linebacker, safety? What's sort of the approach for that?

ED ORGERON: We're still early in the game plan, but a guy like that you may have to double. You may have to put Stingley on him. But what happens is when he lines up on tight ends and he lines up on a lot of places, you get a lot of misalignments and you get a lot of confusion. So I don't

know if that's a possibility. If it is, I'm not going to say it. You know what I'm saying? But he warrants that. He warrants putting your best player on him. He warrants double teams, he's that good.

Q. Shifting over to offense a little bit, you mentioned those third downs. I mean, what is kind of the common thing that you notice that maybe is not working there? Is it getting to third down, the plays before in? What did you all kind of review there?

ED ORGERON: First of all, we're getting behind the chains on first down. We gotta run the ball better. We gotta have more manageable third downs. We gotta be a third down and three, and sometimes even third and three we're not making it. So I can't put it on that. So it's a combination of running the ball, being more manageable third down. And when we get there, we gotta have better schemes, better protection and we gotta execute. And that's not being done right now.

Q. You mentioned just a second ago about defenses struggling in the SEC. I know you're not making excuses. But is there something you're seeing as a common underlying? Is it just that offenses are getting better or is there something underlying that's causing defenses in the league to really struggle right now?

ED ORGERON: I haven't studied anybody well enough to tell you that, to be honest. I don't get to watch a lot of games, but I see the scores. I did watch some of the Alabama-Ole Miss game when I got home. I saw both defenses struggling on both sides, and that let me know that offenses are changing, man. It's basketball on grass. I think it has a lot to do with the offensive schemes. That doesn't mean we still can't play great defense. Our guys are going to score points. But I think when you're playing good defense, you're making it hard for them to go down the field. All these explosive plays have to stop and that's by the mismatches, by the calls or missed assignments.

Q. You mentioned the defense and the guys being out of position, but is there some things you've seen from that that you can build on? Obviously we see the guys forcing turnovers and making plays. What can you build on?

ED ORGERON: Thank you, Amos. Thanks for bringing some positivity. I appreciate that. And, really, we're plus six in the turnover ratio. Man, we're plus six in the turnover ratio. We scored 41 points? We need to win the game. Okay. So there's a lot of good things. Our guys are causing turnovers. Our guys are going after the football. Just like I saw all camp, our guys are rushing the passer;

we're putting pressure on the passer. So those are some good things. Those are the things that we have to build upon. I really think that we're beating ourselves. I think when you look at the film, it's not the other team that but us, we beat ourselves.

Q. Coach, good afternoon. A couple of questions, if I could, please. Do you think that the fix on defense is going to be easy or difficult? And two, I went back and looked at the tape, and there was a lot of those runs where the backs weren't even getting contact until they got to the second level. What can you do to fix that specifically?

ED ORGERON: Okay. First of all, I think the first question, I think it's somewhere in between. First of all, we have to simplify and put our players in the best position that we can be; and I think when you do that, our players are going to make plays. So I think it's somewhere in between. It's not as difficult as it may look, but it's not easy. I think it's somewhere in the middle. And it just starts with us. It starts with coaching.

Second of all, they're running a lot of counter plays. All right. And sometimes we're spilling that and the linebacker was going too wide, and the defensive tackle, the end was supposed to shove him down the line and let the linebacker come free. He wasn't getting that done. His eyes were in the back field. Poor fundamentals. So there's some things that you saw there. We're going to make some personnel changes, maybe get some bigger defensive linemen in there that we can play the run better. Obviously I think our pass rush is pretty good right now. But we gotta be able to stop the run. I think it's all about playing bigger guys up front and playing better technique.

Q. Coach, I'll try to be positive and ask a question at the same time. The relationship that Myles and his receivers, Arik coming along and Terrace really have that connection, that go-to ability. Could you talk about the positive nature of that and what they're feeling? But then, also, the linebackers and coverage. Again, that's just something that I wonder about. Is Jacoby better served maybe not playing as close to the line as he has been? Is there a compromise there that you see?

ED ORGERON: Yeah. First of all, very proud of Myles and his receivers. Going into the season, that was the big question. Well, I think he's answered that. In the three games that he has, he's played pretty darn good. He's gotten better every week. So I'm really proud of him. I'm most proud of him taking that hit on the sideline and coming back. You know what I'm saying? The question was was he tough enough to take a hit. I thought he was,

but I always said we gotta wait in the game and see if he can do it. And he came back. He stepped up in the pocket, he made great decisions. The receivers like Terrace Marshall and Gilbert, those guys are answering. I think they played very well.

Jacoby Stevens did have some miscues, but we're trying to find him the best place to play. Jacoby is an outstanding rusher. That's one of his best attributes. Last year we rushed him. Had a defense called Saw Dog, and he was playing outside linebacker, and that's where he was most effective. I had a meeting with him today. He knows there's some things that he has to work on. I had a meeting with the coaches. They know that we need to put him in better positions for him to make plays and use the talents that he has.

Q. Coach, I know you mentioned the running backs and just trying to get the running game going. I guess kind of through your meetings and through maybe some conversations you've had with those guys, how do you think you can kind of get that off your mind and get it a little bit more consistent?

ED ORGERON: Well, first of all, we have to call it more. Okay? And second of all, people are loading the box up on us, and we need to take advantage of it. Need to take advantage of it, and we did. Ended up running the ball well. We scored 41 points. I'd rather not run the ball well than run the ball well and score 13. So we gotta take what they give us. All right. What we do have to, we do have to be more creative in the run game, I do believe. I believe that when we get our guys outside, especially John Emery, Tyrion, we get outside. Guys are loading the box or they're starting, we could get outside and run the football. So it's a combination of both. We gotta take what the defense gives us, but we gotta be able to run the ball better on first down, because as we all know you throw the ball on first or second down, then you're third down and 10 and it just makes it tough on offense.

Q. Coach, is Myles Brennan playing better than you thought he would so far, just the numbers he's put up and the deep ball and his accuracy?

ED ORGERON: Well, he's playing as good as I hoped he would. I can tell you that. And I believed in him, and I always believed in Myles. And I always said that. But I knew he had some stuff to get better at. I think the coaches have done a tremendous job of coaching him up. He's a coachable kid. He's in here every day. He's the first one I see here every day. He's studying. He's getting better. He's got a lot of want to in him. So, yes, he's playing as well as I'd hoped that he would play.

Q. You mentioned the possible personnel changes on defense, defensive end, meeting with Jacoby Stevens. On all the meetings that you guys had yesterday how much difference can this defense look in the weeks to come?

ED ORGERON: I don't think you're going to see -- yeah, not letting people run by us and score touchdowns uncontested. That's a good start. That would be a great start. I mean, I think it's all on mis-assignments, and we gotta stop the run. So it's not going to be like you're going to see a different defense out there. We're still going to be a 4-3 defense, but maybe we can put people in better positions and play better. Like I say, if we have to play one defense, I'd rather play one defense and get it right.

Q. Back to the offensive side of the ball, with Terrace, he's off to an incredible start this year. What is it about him that it makes him such an effective wide receiver?

ED ORGERON: He's a competitor. He's a great young man. Always has a smile on his face. I played with his uncle, Joe Delaney. He comes from a great family, and he reminds me a lot of Joe in his demeanor. Everybody loved Joe on the team. Everybody loves Terrace on the team. He came off the field, Coach, I'm getting one on one. Give me the ball.

He's just in that zone. He's worked hard, and just a tremendous young man. He has a great character about himself, great family. I'm glad he's a Tiger.

Q. Coach, was Derek Stingley not 100 percent as the game went on?

ED ORGERON: No. He sprained his ankle on the down marker coming off the field. He was playing, I don't know what part of the game that happened, but after that he was playing on a sprained ankle, and he played, you know, he didn't look the same. That was the reason why because I guess some people would have been out of the game but he wanted to play. Just a freak accident on the down marker.

Q. It does seem like Myles Brennan has been getting better each week and whatnot and progressing. So obviously here's a big test going into the swamp. It's a whole different environment. So how do you think he's ready for that?

ED ORGERON: We're going to find out. We're going to find out how we handle the crowd noise. We're going to have to have crowd noise this week. We're going to go against the best defense we've seen, the fastest defense

we've seen. We gotta protect it. The windows are going to be tighter. There's going to be more hits. I think he's ready to do it.

Q. Coach, we can obviously see that Brennan just looks so much more comfortable week one to week three. Who are some other guys that when you watch the film sort of made those strides across the first few games?

ED ORGERON: Yeah. You know, he's the one that stands out. Obviously Terrace and Arik Gilbert are playing well. Tory is playing good for us. I thought Tyrion had a good game. The more you give Tyrion the ball, the better he's going to run the football. John had a good game the second games. So those guys are showing out for me.

On defense we got a ways to go, man. We got guys that we gotta get better; and I don't want to single anybody out on defense. When you give up 45 points, nobody is playing well.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports