

# University of Kentucky Football Media Conference

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Lexington, Kentucky, USA

## Mark Stoops

### Press Conference



Kentucky 42, LSU 21

MARK STOOPS: Greatly appreciate the support. Really appreciate our coaches and our players. We just have had a good, quiet confidence about us from the preparation that we are doing, a lot of hard work preparing hard, guys are sacrificing and doing things that are necessary.

Coaches are putting out great game plans and we've really had good, hard disciplined practices and felt like we were getting better and better and really feel like our guys are playing exceptionally hard and we are executing better.

Offensively looked really crisp I thought early, and against a quality football team, but just overall, very proud of our whole group, the whole program, whole organization. Been a lot of fun. Same message as last week when I sat here: Enjoy it for a few hours and back to work tomorrow. We are excited about the opportunity that we have from us next week.

**Q. You said you would like to experience one that wasn't so close. You got it.**

MARK STOOPS: Yeah, I didn't like it, they started getting a little close for my comfort in the fourth quarter, but we had some guys nicked up and some guys up front and got to get back and get healthy and look at some things.

Yeah, it was nice. It was nice to offensively win. LSU did have one of the scores, we responded right away and came back with a touchdown and gave us a little breathing room.

**Q. What was the play, the four and four --**

MARK STOOPS: I felt good. I felt with the turnover, starting the game with a turnover and having great field position, I just wanted to play aggressive. I wanted to score. And if we didn't, I felt like we could keep them backed up there.

**Q. What was your evaluation --**

MARK STOOPS: I really thought he played exceptionally well. You could tell early on, just to me his comfort level was there. You know, he looked really poised, really confident and just going through his progression, making some really nice throws.

Maybe the numbers aren't overwhelming you but I thought he was very clean and what Liam has been working with him, being calm in the pocket, and you could see that, carrying over and you could see his confidence stepping up.

Then the way he plays it on the line and he runs so physical, that just gives everybody a great boost as well. He's a tough kid and just getting better and better.

**Q. How important was it being turnover-free?**

MARK STOOPS: That's a big -- did we win the turnover battle tonight? What was it? Come on, you guys don't know that?

**Q. Liam was saying you were waiting until the offense -- was Will the reason? What was working so well?**

MARK STOOPS: We rushed for 330 yards, so when you are doing that, now you get them off-balance. That's when you saw some of our playaction game showing up and that was good to see. You know, stayed ahead of the chains for the most part and had them off-balance. When you can get a defense off-balance, you've got a good chance.

**Q. Talk about the offensive play; was that a pride thing, and on the defensive end playing so well?**

MARK STOOPS: I think there's none of that. It's just such a team. It's such a team. No thought of that. I think we all have a lot of confidence that the offense is just getting better and better and tonight, that's pretty impressive to get them, like I said, the biggest thing to me is the defense has got to have them so off-balance with running the ball and being able to throw.

**Q. You said Monday you would put your foot on the gas. Did the team adopt that attitude this week?**



MARK STOOPS: There's no doubt. As I said in my opening statement, I thought they prepared really well and were very just confident in their preparation and worked really hard and doing the things necessary to put us in this position.

**Q. You said several times, if you want to play good games, you have to take care of business. Doesn't get bigger than undefeated Georgia and Kentucky next week. What's the mentality?**

MARK STOOPS: I just discussed it briefly, enjoy it for a few hours and get some sleep tonight and they know, punch the clock, come back Monday morning. Players, we can't see them till Monday. So they need to rest up, heal up, get some treatment and be ready to go to work.

**Q. Inaudible.**

MARK STOOPS: He took a shot to his leg and -- but he fought through it. It seemed like he bounced up and really fought through it and played hard.

**Q. Is there anything big --**

MARK STOOPS: I don't know. I don't know. He took a good lick, as well.

**Q. Certainly played well beforehand.**

MARK STOOPS: Yeah, that hurts us. We're getting some guys beat up in there.

**Q. Not only did you run the ball well but it seemed like up the middle -- was that something you planned?**

MARK STOOPS: In the run game or pass game?

**Q. In the run game.**

MARK STOOPS: We had some -- we had some art schemes where we were putting their ends in a bind and it was good play calls. Some of the ones he pulled were good pulls and so we had them a touch off-balance like I said. That's what we do. We are going to run the ball between the tackles and being physical and we did that.

**Q. You said before the game, this will be a test for your secondary. How do you think they did?**

MARK STOOPS: They did a good job. They really competed hard. I thought we had some really good covers. I thought late, some of that was time and operation, too much time and it broke the pocket and

contained and got the ball and pushed the ball down the field with some talented guys. That was a bit -- when the game was out of hand, too, so when the game is in the balance, I thought the guys really stepped up and had some good covers against some talented guys.

Again, it got a little messy, a little off-balance late and a lot of that is, again, the execution of game stunts contained. You can't let a quarterback have that kind of time and break contain.

**Q. The sixth win used to be --**

MARK STOOPS: It does because my equipment manager, TK, said he had some shirts -- it's a push for Bull season campaign, and he put them out today. That's good. They got a new tee shirt. We want more.

**Q. Sometimes prosperity can be as tough to handle as adversity --**

MARK STOOPS: They did. I just felt good about it. I told you guys in the meeting, or in the press conference right here on Monday, that I felt confident that they would just have a great week. And I really did, when I went in there Monday afternoon with the team, they were really locked in. They just were ready to get forward or look forward for this week, and I feel the same way in the locker room right there.

They are happy. They celebrated a little bit but they are excited about a big opportunity next week.

**Q. When you look out on the field --**

MARK STOOPS: Well, I'm not going to lie, I was concerned and happy that it doesn't appear to be anything major.

**Q. Do you think you'll get Josh or any of those guys back this week?**

MARK STOOPS: Northbound. I'm really not sure.

**Q. Inaudible.**

MARK STOOPS: Yeah, we felt like, again, with that run game, some misdirection, some of the play-actions off of that run game was good. You know, created some explosive plays. It still comes down to being able to run the ball and sets those plays up.

**Q. Some of those throws -- looked like he was moving around a lot more. Was that by design? Do you think he's more comfortable?**

MARK STOOPS: Well, I think that there was a little of both. I noticed him being very clean and poised in the pocket at times tonight, I did, but there were times I'm sure he was on the run as well. Overall I felt like he was more comfortable.

**Q. When you play so well the first half, what do you see to the team at halftime?**

MARK STOOPS: I told them that I was excited to watch them in the second half because I was confident that they would continue to play well, and they did.

**Q. LSU closes to 21-7 and the team takes it down the field, scores. You hear the term imposing your will; do you think your team did that tonight?**

MARK STOOPS: I do. I felt like we had a strong will and a strong desire to win, and a strong belief that we were going to take care of business tonight.

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