

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Illinois 38, Rutgers 31

GREG SCHIANO: Thanks for coming out. Appreciate you guys covering us.

Obviously a really tough, tough loss. I feel awful for our seniors. Senior Day, we have a group of young men down there that gave so much though program. Believed in us when there was no reason to believe in us.

We came back and this is the group that we signed in 11 days, and we're very blessed to have those kids. We have potential NFL players in those guys we signed in 11 days.

But more importantly, leaders that we built this program on their hard work and their example. And they are definitely leaving a legacy. We have one more game, a regular season game to play and we have a Bowl game to play.

But this was our last game at SHI Stadium, and I really, really wanted to send them out as a winner at home in their last game. But they are winners. The things they have done here, the things they have learned here, they are going to be big-time winners in life, and I guess I just wish that we could have done a little bit more.

Illinois, hats off to them. They made one more play than we did, and as I said to the team, in the Big Ten Conference, it's really good football that's played, and they coached a little better and the played a little better; literally a little better, and they won the game. That's what we have to deal with. It's not easy, but you know that when you get into it.

So I will try to answer your questions. But I am really, really proud of what these seniors, these guys that came in and really, really built this program, rebuilt this program. We're forever indebted to them.

Q. With the conditions and the distance on that 58-yard field goal attempt by them, how does that weigh into the decision of whether or not to call time out at that spot?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, certainly, retrospectively, I wish hadn't, right. But been doing this a lot of years. Sometimes I do. Sometimes I don't. We were going to make sure -- we were going to call time out, anyway. Maybe I should have done it before he kicked the ball, so it wouldn't have told them, oh, geez, that wind is strong; we can't make that kick.

But we had to make sure we went over what we were doing. I said, we have a timeout, there's no more media timeouts, so we've got to go. So that's all right, we're going to call a timeout here in a second.

But again, you do it and win the game, it's right call. As I've said to you guys over and over and over again, that's what makes sports great. People love to talk about and debate, and certainly, it's worthy of that, right, because it had a part.

But there was so many things in that game, so many. Like that game had more twists and turns, and I tell you all the time, every game has a life of its own. This one certainly did.

But you know, I'm not going to sit here and say I wish I hadn't because it didn't work out. If it worked out, I would sit here and say, yeah, I'm glad I did. I've said before, it was a good call because it worked. I've stood up here and said it's a bad call because it didn't work. That's the way it goes. You have about 12 seconds to make decisions, and you make them.

Q. What happened defensively on that last-second touchdown?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, you know, we came after them and they got the ball off and then a really good player ran through our guys.

Now, could we have had more guys? Yeah. I mean, that's another debate you could have, when it works, and it has before. You know, you're great; you came after him. If you lay back, what are you doing -- the No. 1 thing fans like to talk about is the "pre-ven," right.



Again, it's right when it works and it isn't when it doesn't. I'm not going to sit here and tell you that I wish we could do it again because it didn't work today. But again, you make the decisions with the information at the time. Didn't work out. I feel bad for the guys.

But again, I always say this, if a guy drops a pass or a penalty, you know, that one play didn't decide the game. There's a whole list of plays that make up the game, and they take on a life of their own.

I don't defend, nor do I pat myself on the back when they are good decisions. That's your job is to make the decisions. You're a decision-maker. I just feel, like I said, the biggest things I feel pain for is those guys, it was their last game in that stadium, and they couldn't leave with a W. They accomplished a lot, but I really wanted that for them. But we don't always get what we want in life.

Q. They scored a touchdown in the last four drives, touchdown in five of their last six drives. What were they doing to be so successful offensively and what were you doing defensively to stop them?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, I'm going to watch the tape, but as you look at it, it seemed like the quarterback, they protected better in the second half. The quarterback throughout the game is a slippery guy. You know, he's a good athlete. He was able to get out of some trouble. We had some unusual things happen in the secondary that usually don't happen to us.

You know, we had six penalties. That's unlike us. I'm not sure, you know, when you look at it, you make your own decision what you think. But it is what it is. When they are called, they are called. I don't argue because they are called. What are you going to do? Once in a while I get heated but that's not going to change.

Q. Was the defense ready on that last play? Looked like there was a lot of scrambling around before the ball was snapped. Was there a decision to call a timeout before that play was snapped?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, first off, you can't in college football call back-to-back time-outs, so had (already) called in on the -- but no they were a hundred percent ready. That's a stem; so what we do is we were off, and we shifted into a blitz. So everybody ran into it for effect and for positioning.

Q. I guess on the field goal attempt, is the situation part of it in the consideration for you when you are making that decision? What goes through your head when you're calling that? And the fact of the length

and wind and all of the conditions and rush time, was there anything that snapped up and said, you know what, this is a go?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, no, because I did it. But yes, you consider all that. I never have said, I think you always ice the kicker, nor do I say you never ice the kicker. I think there's a feel thing involved in that, and you've got to go with what you think at the time.

You know, the wind had switched during the game. So right at that point it was teetering back and forth. So I just felt like all those factors, and the other factor; I wanted to make sure that our block, everything was sound in case they ran a fake or something. Just go over it.

You know, like I said, maybe if I had to second-guess myself, it might be do it before he kicks the ball. There's no reason I have to let it get that late.

But you've covered the games when I've done that back in the day when you could call back-to-back timeouts. I've iced guys three times and they have missed kicks, and man alive, what a strategic move that was. Just you've got to do what you feel, and sometimes you win, sometimes you don't.

Q. What did you say to those guys in the locker room when you walked in?

GREG SCHIANO: That stays between us, you know that. But I care about them deeply. I love those kids. Now they are young men; they are not kids anymore. They came here kids.

That's it. That's what I feel about them.

Guys, I appreciate you covering us. Again, thank you.

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