

Wisconsin Football Media Conference

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Head Coach Paul Chryst

Postgame Press Conference

Wisconsin - 17; Michigan - 38

PAUL CHRYST: First of all, you know, give credit to a good Michigan football team. They beat us. And, you know, what do we do and how we go forward, that's on us.

And I appreciate them, like I said at the beginning of the season. And I like this group and I appreciate them. And a lot of this is who they are. And I have confidence in that group.

And, obviously, there's things that, you know, you come after every game and you talk about, and they're not corrected, that -- you know, we've got to do something about it, right?

And, yeah, but I am proud of the way -- you know, as a coach, yes, guys put it out there. I thought we had a number of guys that put it out there.

And, you know, great compete level. And there will be some guys that looked and played really good football. But hard to celebrate that in a loss.

And, certainly, we've got to -- you know, there's things we got to get better at to give ourselves a chance. And we're going to keep working on that and we're going to -- we'll get it straight. In a way, how do you respond? You respond by going forward.

Q. Obviously, one of the things that you think needs to be tracked or worked on is the overall play of the offensive line. And I know it's more than five guys. But at this point, what do you think your options are, continue to roll with the same guys or do you say at some point, These guys aren't getting it done and maybe we need to shake some things up?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, it's -- I understand, you know, the question, right, Jeff. And yet I think part of the -- part of the inconsistency is what gets us in trouble, right?



And as you go -- you know, certainly you're playing -- the guys who are playing, they're playing because you think they give you the best chance. And I still believe with that group, right, if we're talking specifically, you know, the O-line.

But, really, you can apply that across the board. And together, you know, we've got to be more consistent, right? That has to be the endgame.

And that's -- you know, there's one component, that's us. And then every week, you play and you're challenged against others.

And so, that's -- where each week, you know, Okay, first game, and then you did something the second game. Well, it's a different team. And then the third game and the fourth game. But it's -- you know, I think the -- it's in them. And we got to bring it out in them.

Q. Paul, are you angry right now? What's a good word to describe emotionally where you're at after this start?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, I think that it's -- I think, Jim, the first thing you do is -- I do, is you look inward. And so, you're always -- you know, every time that you don't -- I think those -- I should start by going, like, I appreciate this group and the way they put it out there.

And therefore, you want to do everything you can to help them have success. And when it doesn't happen, you look at -- I look inwardly and what is it that I have to do different. Have to do better.

And I think that's -- you know, it's driven by a lot of things. Driven by competitiveness, it's driven by care, it's driven by -- you know, that's your profession.

You know, I've got no problem of people that want to bitch about me, right, because this is my job, this is where I'm at. I want to take it and not project it on the kids.

Q. Paul, where do you think you -- what kind of schemes are being spread, weren't you able to get back to after you got the momentum late in the second



quarter after Graham went down?

PAUL CHRYST: Say it again. I'm sorry.

Q. You got some momentum there in the second quarter. Were the things that you weren't able to get back to after Graham and Jake went down in that first drive of the third quarter?

PAUL CHRYST: I mean, yeah, sure. You know, didn't have a good start to the second half, you know, offensively. And then, you know -- then it does change a little bit, right, kind of the way the game plays out.

And, you know, we don't do anything, and then, you know, a couple turnover changes. The type of game that you get to play, you know?

And so, that's why it's always -- you got to play each play, right? And they're all different. Yeah, we didn't really get back into a rhythm. And there's -- I think there's a lot of reasons for that.

Q. Well, there's a reason that you recruited Graham. And I'm wondering if those two series back-to-back, the field goal drive and the touchdown drive, did you finally feel you were seeing a guy perform at the level he believes he can perform at and you expect him to perform at?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, I think there was that. And then it looked to me like he was playing. And that's really what you want all of them to be.

I don't know at times if it's freed up enough to play or certain enough or confident enough. You know, confidence gets thrown out there a lot. But I think there's just a -- I thought -- and you look at it, some of our very best players, you know, they're playing -- maybe it's a bad thing to say, but it looks like they're playing the game.

I watched Jack Sanborn and he's playing the game. I know he's got responsibilities on every play, but he's playing the game.

And I think that's -- you work towards that. And the good players can. And I thought there was glimpses of that happening today.

Q. Paul, this is a program that's succeeded behind strong offensive line, good run game, not turning the ball over. Do you think this team is struggling to find that identity? What would you say the offense's identity is right now?

PAUL CHRYST: You know, I think that's fair to say. You know, what -- if you're asking it, you don't know. And a good team, you know what it is, right?

And right now, I don't -- I think that's fair, right? Absolutely, that we -- what are we going to hang our hat on?

There's been times where, you know, it's been good at running the ball. There's been times where we've thrown it efficiently.

But I think that we are absolutely -- there isn't a strong identity right now. And that's something that we got to work towards getting.

And, you know, confidence, all right -- or I should say that will come with consistency, not the confidence. But you know what I mean?

And you got to be consistent to -- if that's who you are, right -- right now, I don't want us to be known as an inconsistent group. And that's what we have been. And maybe that is our identity right now. We've got to change that.

Q. Paul, in terms of the pass protection calls, how much of that is on the center for you guys versus the quarterback and how is that affected when you're switching guys at center and quarterback?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, you've got your base rules. And there will be some things with it, but it's -- I don't think that part's a challenge, certainly.

Q. Paul, does the sloppiness, the muffed punts, the kick out of bounds, the turnovers, does that frustrate you at this point in the season? And how do you address that?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, you don't want them to happen, right? And, you know, I heard this a long time and it's true, I mean, you want to be able to outcoach the fans. And when you do those things, you're not doing that.

And you know how big of plays those are. But I also -- you know, did Jack go up there and say, Hey, this is the one I'm going to kick out of bounds? Did a guy go and do that? I don't believe that to be true.

So you just continue to coach and work with them. And that's -- you know, we want to play good football. And we're not doing that consistently. And that, we got to work on and continue to work on. We all got to own it.

But, you know, I'm not going to get -- if -- shame on us if

we're putting someone out there if they're trying to do that. I don't think that's the case at all.

Q. Coach, right after the game, do you have any idea of the severity of the injuries to Graham and Jake?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, just talking real quickly afterwards and we didn't have -- he's at -- he went to the hospital just because equipment. You kind of look at it and check on it, on Graham. Yeah, and for -- he was out there, so saw him. But don't know much more right now.

Q. Just on the other side: What's the difference you see in Michigan's defense this year versus the last couple years when you guys kind of ran wild on them?

PAUL CHRYST: Well, I think they're a really good defense right now. And I think they're playing -- I think they got a good team and that -- let's face it, that helps our -- you know, our defense, I think we've got a good defense. But not often are they able to play with a lead.

You know, that changes the whole dynamic, as well, there. But they've got really good football players. And I certainly think what they do is good football schematics. But they got good players.

You know, each year is different. You know, we did not go in thinking that we were playing last year's team or the one before. And we're different. You know, our team's different, too.

So those never kind of enter into your mind. You know, this is -- you know, we're not playing the helmets, we're playing the individuals. And a lot of respect for who they are as players and coaches, their unit.

Q. Coach, you know, not the result that you may not have wanted. But a day to recognize Barry. What does he mean to you and the program?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, Coach Alvarez has meant a ton to me personally. And I felt fortunate to have been able to be where I could work with him, you know, three different times. And so, individually, it means a ton.

And, you know, to say that it's deserved is almost -- sounds like, really, an understatement, you know, what he's meant to this program, this university, this state. And you could, I think, make a good argument nationwide.

You know, it's -- I grew up and it -- it's very different, you know, because of -- not just Coach Alvarez, certainly under the charge of Coach Alvarez but all those that came before. And you appreciate that.

That's where -- you know, the seat that I'm in right now, and the players, we want to do that justice. And that's -- you know, there's a part of that that feels like when you don't, you're letting the whole group down.

Q. Paul, I know your defense was under stress, especially with the offensive isn't moving, along with turnovers. But do you and Jimmy think there was some times they had a chance to get off the field, whether it was on third down or fourth down and didn't execute as they're accustomed to? I'm thinking of that -- I think it was 13 to 10, that long pass, and then it was 38 to 7 to set up that touchdown.

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, I mean, those are -- that's part of the game, either one. And I still think we're playing at a really high level.

And like I said, maybe in other things. But you're going up against other good players and other good teams. You know, and to think that they're not going to get some plays, that's a big ask. And I think it would be false, you know, on that.

And, you know, I just think that -- you know, kind of what I talked about earlier, like, who we have and the however many -- you're putting us in some tough situations. And the ball's on the five, and I think they get a field goal out of that, another turnover.

I mean, you're talking about three, really, you know, sudden change, short fields. And, you know, there's some schematics and there's some, you know, play to it. But there's, I think, a resiliency and as much of a -- kind of reveals the character as much as the players when they do.

And that's why there's a lot of guys that I thought played really well. But I get it, right? It's -- they don't feel better right now and you -- it's hard to celebrate them. But I recognize it and you appreciate that a ton.

Q. Paul, I know everybody's probably different. Are you practicing well? Would you say you're arriving on Saturday thinking, Yep, this will be the day everything changes around because we've practiced well during the week? Are there things during the week that give you concern?

PAUL CHRYST: No, I have -- I actually do believe that. You know, when you come -- and I think it's a fair, good question, right?

But it's -- I've liked the way that they've gone into it. And I

liked last week. You know, I liked the way they kind of responded and attacked, you know, the week leading up to this game.

And so, like, generally, it did feel, you know, that they're doing what they can and liked where they're at right now and let's go. And so, I think that's been authentic.

Q. I know you haven't had a chance to watch the film. But what do you think the issues were there when they would blitz the defensive back like the one where they injured Graham and the other guys were coming in untouched?

PAUL CHRYST: Yeah, I mean, I think in -- like you said, I don't know -- on one of them, you're talking about a numbers game.

And part of that is just kind of knowing that. And, you know, I'm curious to see if we could have gotten into something that we were trying to get to if we had that -- those type of situations.

We didn't in that. But, you know, that was a big part of their -- what they were going to do and kind of some of the overloaded pressures.

And so, I thought on the field that might be one. I thought we had a couple of those that we didn't get to. I'm anxious to see if my gut was right or not.