

Stanford University Football Media Conference

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Stanford, California, USA

Coach David Shaw Postgame Media Conference



Stanford 24, UCLA 35

DAVID SHAW: Good evening everybody. Tough loss. Our calling card is how hard we play. That was obviously -- that was out for display today. Execution was not at a high level. It was a mixed bag for us.

UCLA's level of execution was better than ours. They did what they did. We are missing tackles, you know, we left some guys open. We got beat in man coverage.

And then for a while on defense we played really stout. Really stout. Couldn't stop them at the end. Offensively just a terrible start, absolutely terrible start, inexcusable. Throw it on me. It's my fault. We did not start well. That's my job. Did not start well.

Not going to rattle off what we did wrong because it was pretty obvious. Didn't run it, didn't throw, penalties, inexcusable. Once we settled down, pretty doggone good. Pretty good. When we got our protection and did our jobs you see how explosive we can be, how many guys that can make plays for us. A lot of guys that can make plays for us.

But if we don't hit our landmarks up front, hard to run the ball. You know, we don't block the guys we're supposed to block it's hard to run the ball. We missed a couple pass protection identifications. Quarterback is running for his life. We had some guys that could make some plays for us, but we need the time.

Am I encouraged? Absolutely. Am I upset? Absolutely, because we can play much better than we played today. We played against a team that was very serious in what they were doing and executed at a high level. We were about 50/50. When we executed all three phases we were really, really good. When we did not and got we got out played collectively, individually, made it tough.

This team is capable of much better than we showed today. That's a good UCLA football team, but we're also a good Stanford team. The goal is to play better better than

we played.

Questions.

Q. (Regarding Bryce Farrell.)

DAVID SHAW: Yeah, Bryce had a really good off-season. We picked up some spots for him during the course of the year. He's played, I don't know, between 5 to 10 plays a game with the guys that we've had. The guys have played really well. We put him in some positions. We had a big pass to him last week, got deflected, but we knew at some point he was going to make his presence felt.

Today, especially with a couple guys getting banged up, Elijah was out for a little bit, Brycen Tremayne was out for a little bit.

We put Bryce out there and he made some plays. You see that speed. He can really, really go. We been working on that screen with him for the last couple weeks trying to perfect it. Got it really down and he knew what to do, linemen knew what to do, and that was a big thing for us. We had to have somebody to make a play and put him in position to make a play.

And then later, gosh, Tanner did a great job of avoiding somebody and moving, sliding by in a little bit more time, and you saw Bryce, he got that ball and he can really go. Add him to the list of guys that we have that can make plays for us. I'm still encouraged about what we have up front.

You know, this is was a tough matchup. UCLA blitzes more than anybody we will play all year. A lot of different looks, internal pressure, weak-side pressures, strong-side pressure, corner pressures, safety pressures, cover zero pressures, more than anybody we'll play.

And when we got them up front, we made big plays. When we didn't, we didn't. So it's a tough matchup. Wish we could have made some more plays and made the game more interesting. We fought back to get it tied then let a guy go long distance on us.



So there is a lot of encouraging things out there. We can play at a much higher level.

Q. In the fourth quarter with nine minutes to go you faced a fourth and two on the 30 yard line. Can you talk about the thought process behind whether or not to go for it or kick a field goal?

DAVID SHAW: Yeah, the decision was to go for it or kick the field goal. Go for it, you don't get it, then you give them great field position.

Our field goal kicker, got a lot of confidence in him. Put him out there and he made it. It wasn't three minutes to go, like you said it was nine minutes to go. There's a lot of football left.

Kicked the field goal, made it a one-score game. Kicking off with a one-score game with nine minutes to go in the game. It's not even a question for me. Take all the analytics you want. Analytics don't matter. Football matter. One-score game with nine minutes to go and that's what we did.

Q. I notice you guys were able to get some pressure on the quarterback in some situations. Thomas Booker got a sack. What do you guys need to do to make that a more consistent part of your defense?

DAVID SHAW: With this team getting pressure on the quarterback and getting the quarterback down are two different things. We were able to get him down a couple times, but couple times we got pressure on him and he got out. He the most athletic quarterbacks in our conference, one of the most athletic quarterbacks in the nation, right. He's really fast. We got in his space a couple of times and he got out of trouble.

The biggest issue is we were not able to stop the run with any consistency. When we did, we got in third and long, we got off the field. But a team like this, you let them play in second and four, second and three during the course of the game, it's really, really tough.

Talking to Coach Anderson before the game, you look at all the statistics and tendencies, and pretty much every tendency they have situationally outside of third and long is to run the ball. They ran the ball over and over and over again. When they threw it we did a decent job. We didn't do great. We let one big one get out, and that one really hurt.

Q. An as an extension of that, how nice was it to see Thomas Booker get his first sack of the year and kind of get him going in that department?

DAVID SHAW: That was great. Thomas has been working really hard all year. He really has. He's forced some holding called. Guys trying to drag him down. But he was able to get through there today.

Got close again. Besides that, great to see him get that sack and I think there are more to come. I think our guys really played hard. They really played hard. We got to make more opportunities for ourselves.

Q. Tanner seemed out of rhythm early I guess to say the least. I think you didn't get a first down until midway through the second quarter. You think it was too amped up at home or getting different looks? How was he able to overcome that? Obviously finished really strong.

DAVID SHAW: Yeah, it wasn't just Tanner early on. There were multiple mishaps early on. It's obvious when you play quarterback. First two passes were thrown really high and really tough to catch, like two out of the first three.

So he settled down, we made some mistakes up front, made some mistakes at different positions, and then we settled down. Problem is we settled down and we were with behind, so we were playing catchup most of the game. Now, with the guys that we have, we can play catchup. And we caught up.

So that's encouraging as a coach, that no matter what the score is, we can come back. Once we come back, now we got to play them even and don't give up big plays and don't shoot ourselves in the foot, and we did both after we got the score tied.

Q. Your initial thoughts on Gilman and what he was able to do out there today?

DAVID SHAW: Yeah, he's a very, very good football player. He ain't the biggest guy, but he plays big. He's got a great feel, a great knack. Throughout spring football he just seemed he was always around deflecting passes, making tackles for loss. It was great to see him out there. He got healthy for us right at the right time because we needed him.

Same thing with Nicholas Toomer. It's been a hard road for Nicholas. Looked like he was so good in training camp last year before he got hurt and missed the entire year. Had a really difficult off-season. Trying to get healthy. Worked really hard. Did everything that was asked of him. Had a couple setbacks, but worked really hard to get back out there and go out there and play.

Both those guys showed up at the right time and they both played well.

Q. I'm just wondering how difficult was it with your backfield situation today, and I know you they went for it early, fourth and two and got it and scored a touchdown. You had two situations like that. Did the runningback situation play a role?

DAVID SHAW: It was what was. That doesn't go in the stat book. Nobody gives you any credit for not having all your guys healthy.

You know, but then especially when we lost Isaiah Sanders. He was not able to come back, so we lost our running quarterback as well, which made a lot of those third down and short things different for us because we had a plan with him. We have other plays of course that we went to, but that was tough.

That was tough. Not having the other guys and not having Isaiah. Once again, it doesn't go in the book. We have enough guys to play with out there. Nate Peat ran hard. He ran hard. He still broke tackles. He had to account for too many guys. Three times off the top of my head he got to the ball and there was somebody in the backfield. That's not Nate's fault.

But when he had a lane and he got a crease, then he got through there. He's been a big-play guy for us, which is great. If you watch Nate, he gets a lot of tough yards, too. He runs through contact, he drags guys, he gets positive yards after contact. Too many times today he got the ball and had to deal with somebody in the backfield.

Q. Do you have any update, do you expect any other people to be back for Oregon, especially the runningbacks?

DAVID SHAW: We expect Austin and Casey Filkins to be back, and we'll see for sure by mid-week. EJ will probably be another week, maybe two. But we expect Austin and Casey hopefully to be back for Oregon.

Q. (No microphone.)

DAVID SHAW: There are multiple things. First of all starts with their head coach. You know, Chip does a great job and has always done a great job against us. A lot of little wrinkles in there, different ways they pull guys, different ways they down block. They're dedicated to the running game. They make subtle adjustments. You have to account for the quarterback on every single play, so it's not that you can overload one side because they can always get back and hurt you the other way.

So that's where it starts. Bottom line is when you do have guys there, now you got to bring guys down. They got two big runners that drag tacklers, drag people for positive yards. Like I said early on, if you can run the ball like they were able to and play the game in second and five or less, that's a tough one.

That's a tough one.

Q. I was just curious what changed for the offense? There were moments where you guys got that going, offense clicked. What shifted and accounted for this sudden switch offensively?

DAVID SHAW: It's a couple things. The biggest thing was we're able to pass protect. Early on all their blitzes and all their movement, and the quarterback didn't have a chance to set his feet.

A little bit later when we got the pass protection, and even if it was leaky, we see what kind of athlete Tanner is. He can still slide. As long as we're engaged on guys up front he can still slide and make some throws, and he made a couple big time throws on the move.

I don't know if you noticed, couple of those were NFL throws. That though he made to Bryce Farrell was an NFL throw, a big throw. Half the guys in the league can make that throw.

So that's a big thing. Pass protection is tough. Once again, we played against this UCLA team that blitzes more than anybody we'll play all year. It's the variety of blitzes, and you have to recognize it one of our big keys through the week. We have to recognize it and execute our pass pro. Early on we didn't, and after we did and settled down, we did a good job.

If we can pass protect with the quarterback and receivers and tight ends that we have, we got a chance to do some special things.

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