

Stanford University Football

Media Conference

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Stanford, California, USA

Elijah Higgins

Postgame Media Conference



Stanford 31, Oregon 24

Q. Can you just describe the touchdown play to tie the game and just what the mood was like in the huddle on that drive? You guys hadn't done much at all in the second half and then obviously came through when it mattered.

ELIJAH HIGGINS: No, I can't describe it perfectly, but I can say that when you see dudes making plays, when you see Ben Yurosek making a play, when you see Brad Archer making a play, when you see John Humphreys making a play, it's one of those things you know we're all just ready to go. Everybody is ready to catch the ball, and we're driving down, driving down, driving down.

Then when it came to it, Coach called the play at the end of the game, Tanner peeked over and we knew that it was going to come this way. I mean, it just happened, and then after that we said we've got to lock up on defense, do our thing, and we win the game. That's how it went down.

Q. Elijah, talk about the toughness of your quarterback Tanner McKee. Have you seen his toughness go up another level, especially on this stage?

ELIJAH HIGGINS: He's a gritty dude. I think he knows that. He's established himself as one of the top leaders on this team, and he knows that if he's able to play, if he's able to be on the field and he's able to contribute, we need him on the field to win the game. That's just him being him. He's not doing anything extra. That's what we expect out of him. That's what he expects out of himself. He gets on the field, he does his thing, he leads the team, and you see what he did out there at the end of the game and throughout the game, as well.

Q. Going back to the fade you caught at the end of regulation, when you see the fades going to John, do you say to Tanner, throw one my way?

ELIJAH HIGGINS: I mean, no, it's his look. Whatever

looks best. It's not a designed play for anybody. But when John got that penalty, I felt like he was going to switch it up and come the other way. Looking at -- I saw that look on the defense, I saw the safety go inside and I knew the ball was coming. I saw Tanner peek over, like I said, right before the snap, and I knew I had to do what I had to do on the route and body up the corner and just go up and grab the ball. So yeah, it's not really a designed play for anybody, it's just his look and who he trusts.

That time he went with me, and I helped him out in doing something that Brycen Tremayne does every time, just filling in that spot and just playing like him.

Q. Elijah, what does this win say about this team?

ELIJAH HIGGINS: I think more than anything, it says that we do what we preach. Last game after the loss, we came together and we talked about putting our head down and going to work, and I feel like that's what we did, and I feel like that's why this win means so much to us is because we did what we said we were going to do. When the game got tough, I feel like we still fought. Sometimes we kind of lose track of what our goal is in the game, and we stayed on top because we know that losing feeling feels like, and I told everybody that we don't like that feeling at all. Nobody likes to lose, and if you do like to lose, you're playing the wrong sport.

I feel like more than anything, we just adopted that mindset of we've got to do whatever it takes to win the game, whatever it takes, and the game is not over until it's 0:00 on the clock. So I think that's something that we've got to continue to preach, something that we're going to adopt as a team, as a program, especially after this win, that anything is possible. If we're down by a touchdown, whatever, with a minute and a half left, we've still got what it takes to do it because we've done it before. We've done it against the No. 3 Oregon team.

We know what we're capable of now, and now we understand we can go into games when it's close, we can go into it with that confidence. I'm excited for our team and what this means for us, as well.

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Q. Shaw said he didn't really have a good answer for this one, maybe the players have a better answer. You guys got off to a 10-0 start, very different from last week where you guys got down. What was the difference this week in terms of getting off to a good start early do you think?

ELIJAH HIGGINS: I mean, we just came out and did what we do. Last week we didn't do what we do, obviously. We went five drives in a row with three-and-outs. That's not what we do. That's not what we do at all. That's not how we practice. That's not how we play.

What we did today was we came out and we showed and we put on the field what we do, and it's not a hoax, either. To tell all of y'all in here right now, it's not a hoax. That's what we do. So last game when we went five in a row three-and-out, we were pissed because that is not what we do, and that's not who we are. What we did tonight is who we are. That is who we are.

Q. At the end of the game, you had your student section come out on to the field, you were able to celebrate with them. It's been a couple years, no fans last year, so what was it like to have that emotion after the game to be able to celebrate with the fans?

ELIJAH HIGGINS: I mean, more than anything it's celebrating with each other I feel like. It was cool to see all the people on the field. That's good for them. They're going to be there when we win. They're not going to be there when we lose.

We've always got each other, and when we get in that locker room, that's when we have the most fun. It was cool to see everybody -- historically the pictures are probably going to be with everybody on the field, but to us like we're the only people that truly matter because when we're down we've got each other and when we're up we've also got each other.

It's cool, though. It was cool. It was cool. But like I said, we play for each other, and that's what we do. We play for each other.

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