

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

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Stanford, California, USA

## Coach Brian Kelly Postgame Media Conference



Stanford 14, Notre Dame 45

BRIAN KELLY: 11th victory. Certainly one that we feel like we controlled the game from start to finish. 24-nothing at the half. That's 100 points now if you guys weren't counting over the last two weeks to 14.

It's a really good football team. I think it's one of the best four teams in the country. We controlled what we needed to control. And that was the theme over the past six seven weeks, and we've done that.

We made our case. We'll now sit back and see what other people think. But we got one of the best four teams without question in my mind in the country. We're ready to prove it. We'll take the week off and get this team ready for post-season action.

Questions.

### Q. Did you know your guys were confident this week going into tonight?

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, we knew we had to control this situation because we don't control anything after this. So it was control the controllables. That was the theme all week, because after today we don't control anything.

So we were going to make sure that today we were going to control the outcome. Whatever happened out there today, we made it happen.

That was the sense that I had from our team all week.

### Q. Michael Mayer set a single (indiscernible) record for receptions.

BRIAN KELLY: He sure did.

He's not on the Mackey Award list, which is a -- I don't know, maybe it was just an oversight and they're going to get back together and revote. Maybe that's what happened.

But he's one of the best, if not the best, tight ends that I've ever coached at Notre Dame, and we've had some great tight ends. He's complete in every facet. He's a beast in line blocking, he's a guy that you double, he finds himself open, he's a leader both on and off the field, he's a difference maker down the field, vertically, option routes.

I don't know what else to say. Thank you for the question.

### Q. You mentioned like it's out of your control now.

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah.

### Q. Whatever happens next...

BRIAN KELLY: We're going to play BYU next Thursday in Las Vegas. Jack set the game up. We didn't want to come in here and just tell everybody -- no, you're right.

### Q. How will it impact how you view what you accomplished this season?

BRIAN KELLY: Wouldn't change anything. It really wouldn't change anything, because this football team has grown and developed and matured in all the areas that you want to see your team mature from an offensive standpoint, a consistency standpoint, defensively we've seen -- you saw how well they tackled tonight. We were a sieve at times as a tackling team, so it's really easy to evaluate this football team and see the growth.

I have officials come up to me that had us earlier in the season and go, I've never seen a team get to this level later in the season. So it's not just us. It's not just me. We just to have wait and let other people make those decisions.

### Q. (Regarding Ramon Henderson.)

BRIAN KELLY: Hamstring. So we had two. Pryor went down with a hamstring, and there you go. Other guys stepped up and came in and played.

### Q. (No microphone.) What we see from this point,

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**where it is week 1 to week 12, what really goes into that?**

BRIAN KELLY: You know, trust in them and then they have to trust in themselves. So building that trust in practice, the confidence that we believe in them and that we'll put them in the game and say, You're ready for this. You're built for this.

You know, I think that is probably the most important thing. When they know that you believe in them they'll go out and compete for you.

**Q. (Regarding Kevin Austin's last four, five games.) He's a third down weapon now.**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, Tim, look, and the question is valid, but we probably put a little too much on him after not playing for almost two years.

Put a lot of that pressure on him and maybe him on himself in terms of what you wanted to do, and I think it weighed heavily on him. He relaxed, worked hard in practice, and then started making some plays.

That confidence came back, and I think we saw the real version of what Kevin Austin can be and will be moving forward.

**Q. Brian, Stanford wasn't great against the run, you guys were leaning on the pass. (No microphone.)**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, they were in a double eagle, they really pressured the run. They didn't want us to run the football today. I think they felt like this sort of would have gotten out of hand quickly if they stayed in their three down front.

So they sunk both -- you know, Aaron is down, walked up the outside, and gave us cover one and favorable matchups across the board. It's one thing you give up, you gave us something else, and then when we went to Buchner they jumped back into four down and gave us some favorable looks there and we were able to run the football.

**Q. Braden Lenzy, when he's playing like this, enormous stats, been pretty consistent for you in making some plays. How much does that improve...**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, the speed on the perimeter. Obviously he slips on the reverse, but that kind of confidence and speed that we have with him, he's been really a quiet, consistent performer for us the past month and a half.

It's really helped us. When we lost Avery we had to rely on more balance throughout that entire receiving core. It couldn't just be Lorenzo. Hey, go be Avery Davis for us. It had to spread out, and that's where it picked up a lot for us.

**Q. You mentioned the defense and the tackle. Seems like ever since Navy about a month ago it's been leaps and bounds better than at the beginning of the season. What do you point to for that turnaround?**

BRIAN KELLY: Practice, practice, practice, practice. We do practice. Do you know that? We just don't show up on Saturday. We do this for a living.

A lot of work. You know, Marcus every day starts off practice with run support and tackling drills, and he's committed to it, and we have to be committed to it. We've worked really good early on in the season, and those guys are really sure tacklers now. You saw Houston Griffin make some really fine open-field tackles.

He was not making those tackles earlier in the year. That's a commitment on his part to really be 1% better in the areas that we asked them to be.

And good for Houston. Those kids really took to it and worked hard.

**Q. I was going to ask about Lenzy. You mentioned Austin. What was the mindset about Lenzy going into the season? (No microphone.)**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, I think more than anything else, when we came into the season it was -- and I said this publically, that we were going to rely on those guys. If we were going to have the kind of season we wanted, they were going to have to step up for us.

We were consistent with our praise and confidence in them. Gentlemen, we had to be, because we were going to be reaching into some youth if we didn't.

And we just stuck with them and were confident and got them the ball in the areas where they can be effective, too. I think Tommy did a hell of a job finding ways to get those guys the ball where they're really good.

Kevin Austin one-on-one in third down is a nightmare matchup, and he consistently goes to them in third down situations to move the chains.

I think Tommy deserves a lot of credit for being really smart in the utilization of that.

**Q. And Tyree, he looked healthy tonight.**

BRIAN KELLY: The speed, we missed him on the up, you know. We got him matched up. He's been electric we felt even in practice the last two, three weeks. Really good to see him going.

**Q. (Regarding control the controllables, being distracted.)**

BRIAN KELLY: Team didn't. I was distracted. I was distracted because you got to stay over the top in that courage one on one. How do you give that up? Sorry. No, our guys were totally locked in. They don't follow that stuff. They're locked in. When it gets to Friday they'll hear a little bit of the buzz and the noise, but they're getting ready for performance.

**Q. You watched that play...**

BRIAN KELLY: Well, I'm standing in the middle of the field. They got it on the JumboTron. I try to stay out of the way of most things, but that was on and that was pretty...

**Q. (No microphone.) What's had to happen to make that work and what makes to fit you guys?**

BRIAN KELLY: Oh, boy. There is a lot into that. You know, getting the five to be together in Friday meetings. Like our quarterback runs a Friday meeting with the offensive line. He sits up here with the offensive line and he directs a meeting.

That communication consistently over six, seven, eight weeks with the same five guys as he's identifying fronts and talking about the run plays and communicating with them as he's identifying where they should be moving, it was just piling on effect of communicating and being on the same page.

And it just happens that over a period of time you break through, that's what we saw happen.

**Q. Brian you've had some great teams now. Where does this one -- you don't need to tell me where it stands, but how does this one stand out?**

BRIAN KELLY: So this one has unique features in that there is a young group of players, freshman, that played prominent roles and seniors in one instance, and two, there is a six-year senior.

He's a prominent captain on our team. You have a six-year senior and mid-year enrollees meshed together is unique in that that doesn't always work well. You have a

freshman that comes in with his resume from high school. He thinks that because of the success that he had in high school with that resume that that works when I go to college.

Then you have a six-year senior who has been in this program who has had success and won to our standards and looks at him and goes, That doesn't work here, the stuff you did in high school. You do it the way we want you to do it.

And that -- bringing those two together is a tricky feat, and this one went seamless. That was the dynamic of this team that was really neat.

**Q. Coach --**

BRIAN KELLY: He kind of had a half question.

**Q. (Regarding chugging in the locker room.)**

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, yes, after each game I chug a fifth of Jameson Irish Whiskey. Oh, you guys didn't know this? More folklore for you.

We put some Gatorade in the Legends Trophy. Started doing that a few years back. And I like to chug the Gatorade out the Legends Trophy after a win. You guys are now up-to-date.

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