

Stanford University Football Media Conference

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Stanford, California, USA

Troy Taylor

Postgame Media Conference



Arizona - 21, Stanford - 20

Q. Just opening thoughts on this one, just general thoughts on this game.

TROY TAYLOR: Like I told the guys, great week of preparation. They competed really hard in all three phases. It was not perfect. We left some stuff on the table in all three phases, had our opportunities.

Really proud of how our guys played, though. This is a mentally tough group of guys that competes in every single thing they do. Really proud.

Now, having said, we've just got to play a little bit more clean. As you guys watched, we had opportunities to win that football game, and it didn't happen. I know our guys are heartbroken over it, but they'll respond. They'll be ready to go next week.

Q. Troy, what goes into the times when you make the switches at quarterback? Is that just a feel? Are there certain plays for certain QBs? What goes into that?

TROY TAYLOR: Some of it is that, and some of it is just how they're playing. They both did some good things, and they both did some things they could have done better.

Maybe a guy will emerge. They both have potential. They both need to be a little bit more consistent, but they were under some pressure as well.

It's a tough position, toughest position in sports. We've just got to be able to play a little bit better amidst the pressure and those type of things. We've got to make good decisions. We've got to make good throws.

Q. What went into the decision to start Sedrick Irvin, and how would you evaluate his game?

TROY TAYLOR: Sedrick has been a guy that's really physical. It's really important to him, tough. He's got some quickness to him. He's got some suddenness to him.

Yeah, we just thought we wanted to get an opportunity to see him. We've got some really good young guys, and you want to see them play. Now part of that is the inexperience in getting out there on the field. It's a challenge for young guys, but they've got to do it.

For us, we want to continue to grow this year, and we want to be a different team by the end of the season than the beginning of the season.

Q. Aidan Flintoft and Connor Weselman both punted today. What went into the decision to give those guys two punts each? Is that a position that may be up for grabs in the future?

TROY TAYLOR: Yeah, I think every position, no one has the position sewn up at all. It's a competitive group of guys. If you want to push for the position -- I tell our guys all the time, you don't have to accept your role, but you've got to attack your role.

If a guy's doing a great job in practice and has the opportunity -- those guys are both obviously talented, but it's about performing on the day of the game.

Q. If you look at the numbers, the last three weeks your defense has gotten progressively better, certainly today. One, do you agree with that, that the defense has gotten better? And two, if so, why?

TROY TAYLOR: We've gotten better as a football team since the beginning of the year. Now it's not going to always show on the scoreboard or whatnot, but our guys are working to improve and getting better. They're very inexperienced, but they are hungry, hungry to get better.

So to answer your question, defensively we have gotten better. There's no doubt about it. Now we've got to play a little bit better than we did tonight, but I do love to see the improvement.

Q. The schedule doesn't get any easier with Oregon coming up and a bunch of ranked teams ahead. How do you prevent this from snowballing?

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TROY TAYLOR: There's no easy games on our schedule. This is an incredible conference. This is the best it's been in, I don't know, maybe 20 years. Really good quarterbacks, really good coaches, experienced teams.

You like those. As a competitor, you like those challenges. So we'll be ready to play next week. Obviously a top ten football team coming into town, and they're rolling. They're hitting on all cylinders. We'll be ready to go.

Q. Just talk about what you got from Tiger Bachmeier tonight. Had a drop in the end zone but made up for that with some really nice catches. Talk about what he gave you tonight.

TROY TAYLOR: Tiger is a really competitive kid. He gives you everything he's got. Smart football player. I'm sure he's broken hearted over that, but he did make a lot of plays with the ball in the air.

That's what our guys have got to do. On those 50-50 balls, we've got to come down with the ball. We're not necessarily going to run by somebody every time. So those balls that -- our quarterbacks did a really good job of giving those guys a chance.

I was telling them, you don't want to overthrow those balls. You eliminate opportunities for pass interference, and guys can come back and make the play. Quarterbacks did a good job of that, and our guys did a nice job of making plays on the ball.

Q. When Joshua Karty missed a field goal attempt, I kind of did a double take. Just hadn't seen it in a year and a half. How did you react?

TROY TAYLOR: He's human. They're long kicks. He struck them well. We expect a lot out of him, and I think he had a couple that got away from him.

They were struck pretty well. That guy's been incredible for us. We've got to do a better job of converting when we get down across the 50 and get in a little bit tighter than relying on him being able to hit 50-yard field goals.

Q. Can you take us through the decision when you're down four, to kick the field goal knowing you might not get it back, and then trying the onside after?

TROY TAYLOR: It was really -- I think it was after the illegal pass, right? So we got packed up to it was fourth and 14. That's a tough one to get, tough to protect. Not a ton of field space. So the percentages aren't super high.

I've got so much confidence in Josh. I feel like he makes the field goal, maybe we get a shot at the onside. If we get a stop, we'll get the ball back, and then he'll be kicking a field goal to win the game.

So I felt pretty good. I still feel pretty good about the decision. It just didn't work out. That's what we did.

Q. And on the decision to not go for the onside kick?

TROY TAYLOR: In our onside kick, they were positioned really well. They were offsides on the first one, and it looked like they were playing it really well. So we decided to back them up. It's one of those things you could go either way with it.

So we wanted to pin them inside hopefully the 10. I think we were pretty close to that. And then get a three and out, get great field position, maybe get ten yards and then kick a game winner.

Q. No rushing yards for E.J. Smith or Casey Filkins. Why weren't those guys more involved in the run game for this one? What could account for that?

TROY TAYLOR: Part of it is we wanted to see what Sedrick could do. I think Sedrick did some good things. We've got a lot of confidence in E.J. and Casey. We're going to need them all.

We wanted to give Sedrick an opportunity. He's earned it. He's done some really good things. We wanted to see him play. I think he responded and did pretty well.

Q. Thoughts on Ernest Cooper. I don't think he played last week, and then he and got some hurries and a sack or two this week. What went into the decision to not play him last week and play him this week?

TROY TAYLOR: I haven't talked to Coach April about that. To be perfectly honest, I'd have to ask Coach April.