

Stanford University Football

Media Conference

Saturday, October 21, 2023
Stanford, California, USA

Ashton Daniels

Postgame Media Conference



UCLA 42, Stanford 7

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Ashton Daniels.

Q. Your thoughts on your performance, what you guys could have done better offensively.

ASHTON DANIELS: I'm pretty sure coach came up here and said it. He told us same thing at halftime. We just got to start faster.

I don't really think that the first half we were as competitive as we needed to be. We left a lot of things out there on the field. We got to convert on some of those third downs in the first half. We also have a lot of penalties holding us back when we do make big plays.

Yeah, I mean, it's extremely frustrating, but at the same time if we want to be great, we have to take accountability and be ready to move on to next week.

Q. UCLA has one of the better defenses in the country. Can you talk about what they do so well.

ASHTON DANIELS: Yeah, their guys up front, they're NFL pass-rushing guys. Both the twins, 11, 12, and 15, they're extremely hard to block. I think throughout the game our guys did a pretty good job of establishing protection. I think we got better and better as the game went on.

But yeah, I mean, if we're not able to establish the run and establish our protection, it makes it really hard on us. So yeah, I mean, I think we had a lot of opportunities. I'm not saying that they weren't a good defense, but I'm giving a lot of props to them. They fly around. They play fast. They're very physical. We knew that coming into the game, but we just didn't take advantage of the things that we needed to.

Q. It seemed last week's game that you kind of maybe separated yourself from Justin. Have you discussed that in practice over the last week? Has Coach Taylor talked to you that you are the No. 1 guy now?

ASHTON DANIELS: No. At the beginning he told us that no matter what, throughout the rest of the season, it's going to stay a fluid competition. I know that. I'm not really worried about who's going to be playing. I think we both know we have a job to do, that's to go out and lead the offense no matter who's playing.

Yeah, we're not worried about that. We don't talk about that. We just go out at practice and work on what we need to work on and then come out on Saturdays and do our thing.

Q. You targeted Tiger and Elic 24 times, 16 catches combined. Talk about the connection you have.

ASHTON DANIELS: Yeah, it's not necessarily just the connection between us three. I think I have a really good connection with the whole wide receiver room. Those guys do a great job of getting open, all of 'em do. Our coaches do a great job of the schemes that we run to get them open.

I'm starting to build a lot of trust with them, starting to build a lot of trust with our protection. But yeah, when we get our pass game going, I think we're a really dangerous offense. We had sparks of it all throughout the game.

I think if we want to be great and we want to win, we need to be consistent in both the pass and run game. That kind of hurt us tonight. Yeah, I mean, they're great guys. They put in work every single day. I can trust on 'em and I know that they're reliable.

Q. How nice was it to see Tiger score his first career touchdown?

ASHTON DANIELS: I think it was long overdue. I'm extremely proud of him to be that young and to come in in the spring and just put your head down and work. He doesn't really care how young he is. He doesn't care about how old the guys he's going against are. I just know that he's going to come in and put work in every single day. He's done that from the jump.

He's impressed me and the coaching staff. He's gotten



some opportunities throughout the season. I love targeting him. I know that no matter what, he's going to go up and get the ball.

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But yeah, I'm extremely proud of him. It was awesome to see that he got a touchdown today.

Q. Coach Taylor talks about how you're the faster quarterback. Do you think maybe you could help the run game more and take off?

ASHTON DANIELS: Can you say that one more time.

Q. Do you think you could possibly help in the run game more, scramble a little bit more?

ASHTON DANIELS: Yeah, I think a lot of our big plays, a lot of our chunk plays this weekend, last week, came off the scramble. I think our guys do a great job of getting open downfield when the pocket collapses.

But, I mean, yeah, it's not something that I look forward to doing. I don't want to scramble. I want to sit in the pocket. But sometimes defense brings an extra guy, all this kind of stuff. It ends up working out pretty well. We have guys that get open down the field.

Yeah, I mean, if I need to take off, I will. But at the end of the day it's nothing something I look forward to doing, but yeah.

Q. Talk about Tristan Sinclair, what he brings to the defense.

ASHTON DANIELS: Tristan, ever since I arrived on campus, he's been a guy that I've looked up to, even though he's on the other side of the ball. He's a great leader. People tend to rally around him. I know that no matter what, he's going to go out on the field on Saturday and give it his all.

I was walking off the field at halftime a little down, a little upset, frustrated. He came up to me and said, Hey, like, we're still in this game. You saw what we did last week. Keep your head up, go out there, lead those guys. All that kind of stuff.

Hearing that kind of stuff from a guy that's older and experienced gives me the confidence to go out there and be the leader that I need to be.

But yeah, he's a great player. He's a great dude off the field. Yeah, he's a great teammate to have.

Thank you, guys.

