

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

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Stanford, California, USA

## Coach Dave Clawson Postgame Media Conference



Wake Forest 27, Stanford 24

DAVE CLAWSON: (In progress. ) ...of our football team. The defense did a phenomenal job of getting turnovers, you know, especially the one at the end. A lot of the turnovers set up our scores. I thought we got decent pressure on the quarterback and we got them off schedule a little bit.

Offensively we executed well enough. We took advantage of some short fields in the first half that were two of our touchdowns. You know, guys made explosive plays. Mike Mays made an explosive play. Tate, obviously Demond is a difference maker for us.

You know, there is plays that I think we're going to lose two yards and they become 12- and 14-yard plays and the play he made on the screen after like a first and 25 was huge.

And our special teams contributed. Matt Dennis hit his kicks. Our kicker was perfect. Theirs missed one and that proved to be the difference in the game.

But I think you got to give credit to Stanford and Coach Taylor. After their last four games, that's a team that is still playing hard for their head coach and staff. They're a good, physical football team.

We made a bunch of mistakes. The penalties we had in this game were very uncharacteristic. The turnover which led to a score or it resulted in a score.

That cost us. But, again, football is an imperfect game. You don't mind making those corrections after a win.

With that, I'll take any questions.

**Q. (Indiscernible) did you feel like your guys were getting downfield that much?**

DAVE CLAWSON: No, no. And what happens now is you have the videos you can watch. On one of them we were down the field but the other ones, again, I'm -- that was

called differently. That was a little bit of a different crew that -- we have guys in that crew that were Pac-12 officials and they're on the west coast.

You know, they to me call things -- some of those guys called things differently than we're used to. That's on us to adjust, but we have been running RPOs for how many years. We had more illegal men downfield called in this game than in the last three years combined.

I'll go back and watch the film. I'm sure in some cases they were right. I think in some cases that thing was called -- was officiated very differently than we're used to.

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**

DAVE CLAWSON: It's really hard. And then you look at the video and your O-line coach is saying, Coach, he was three yards down the field. Again, we've been running these RPOs for ten years. We've never had it officiated like that.

You know, again, we'll watch the film. I may show up next week is say they were right on every single call. If that's the case I'll tell you that. I didn't watch it, but our coaches were saying that one was close. Usually they only call that when it's egregious.

**Q. (Regarding top three corners.)**

DAVE CLAWSON: We were out really our Top 4. You know, it always kind of works out. Like when you go to a season the position you're most concerned about going into the season is always the one you end up getting hurt at.

Jamare had a fever and you can't -- if you have a fever you can't play. Then CD Kelly practiced all week and we thought he was going to play and then he didn't look good in pre-game. Then Capone was out from last week and Tre'Von is going to be out for a while.

But I give Jackson and Zamari credit. These guys competed. They competed. They played hard and gave us everything they had. So we were able to win the game



with them.

I thought Coach Lambert did a great job adjusting his calls because of that. I don't think people realize how hard this is, that you go all week and you have a game plan and all of a sudden you show up game day and your two corners you think are going to play can't play.

So you're making calls to protect those guys that you haven't really had to prepare for. I really give Coach Lambert and the defensive staff a lot of credit. We defended them differently than we had worked on all week.

You know, that happens.

**Q. (Regarding Daniels.)**

DAVE CLAWSON: You know, I think -- and I've been a head coach at four different places. I think sometimes in year two you're tempted to say, okay, there is where we're heading.

You know, they started the freshman and then he struggled and then Daniels played great. I'm sure Daniels just went out there and said, hey, I'm going to cut it loose. We know when he's in there you got to defend the quarterback runs.

I thought he threw the ball really well too. He played really well. He really got them back in the game. And 24 of 31, he's a good player.

That receiver, holy cow. He's good. Like I'm glad we don't have to play against him anymore. I don't think we play them next year. I hope he's a sophomore, so I hope he goes to the draft before we have to play him again.

**Q. Defensively, two straight weeks playing pretty solid ball. How do you keep that going? (Indiscernible.)**

DAVE CLAWSON: Well, I think as the season goes on, right, you get a better feel for your personnel. So I say this all the time: After pre-season camp you think this is your identity and then after four games you figure out a little better what your identity is.

Because maybe a guy that you thought was a good player in camp just went against a bad player every day. Or maybe a guy getting beat is going against a guy that turned out to be a heck of a player. And so I think we've adjusted.

You know, we've got off to some fast starts here in the past; this year we didn't. I think all of our players and all of our assistant coaches deserve a lot of credit to start out 1-3 and kind of to be left for dead and then last four weeks we're 3-1 with three road wins in the fourth quarter in

one-score games.

That's not easy to do.

**Q. We've just talked to Hank about the difference between the team now being able to close out or hang on to the one-run game versus what happened earlier in the season. Putting aside for a minute the fact that he quoted a Christmas movie to explain it, how do you explain the fact that this team is different?**

DAVE CLAWSON: Well, sometime it just comes down to making a play. You know, like NC State if we don't convert the one fourth down, now we lose another one-score game. Last week against Connecticut if we don't get off the field on fourth down.

I just think the more you're in those situations the better your football team handles it. We've had eight games this year and five of them are one-score, last-play games.

I don't feel there is as much panic in those situations as there was earlier in the year. You know, great example was just in the fourth quarter. You know, we got the ball at mid-field after the punt return and our offense moved the ball but really struggled in the second half.

I just didn't feel any panic. We're becoming an older team on the O-line. I think some of those receivers are starting to grow up. The tight ends, having all three of those guys healthy has really helped.

And we kind of have a little bit of thunder and lightning in the back round there about Demond and Tate. Demond got banged up but you put Tate in there, who's also a good player and has fresh legs, and he got us some really, really hard yards.

So I'm always careful to declare that, okay, now we have the secret sauce to win one-score games. The second you do that as a coach you'll lose your next 15 one-score games.

I'm going to enjoy this one. I've said this 50 times since the start of camp: This year our ability to execute a two-minute drill on each side of the ball is going to determine how many wins we have.

Three out of the last four weeks we did that.

**Q. Does it help or how much does it help having that sixth year quarterback who has played so much football to keep the panic level down?**

DAVE CLAWSON: Yeah, but I think it's the whole group. I

think a lot of it -- it always starts with our O-linemen. You have so much experience with the O-line, with Luke Pettibon and Matt Goldman and Nick Sharpe and George Steih and DeVonte Gordon and Keegan Trost has played a lot of football, too.

And Cam Hyde is a sixth year guy and Taylor Marin is a sixth year guy. Those guys have played a lot of football. At Wake Forest we're probably always going to be in a lot of close games and I think they're used to it.

I think there was a lot of valuable lessons that they learned last year that are helping us this year.

**Q. Walk me through the decision to go for it at the one yard line late in the third quarter when a field goal would've given you a two-score game at that point?**

DAVE CLAWSON: I just -- the ball is on the one yard line and I thought our defense was playing well. You know, I just have ghosts of Virginia. You know, having a two-touchdown lead and a two-score lead is a lot different. With the ball on the one yard line you should get it in.

You know, I take responsibility for the call. There was a certain look we knew we were going to get. That was a play we really liked against that look. We've run it before with a lot of the success; it didn't work.

They got a lot of penetration and their linebacker plugged and they did a good job. I also felt the way our defense was playing that butting them on the one yard line, again if we end up not winning this game that's the dumbass decision of the week that cost us the game.

So it's just you make those decisions, those calls, and the ball on the one yard line, the way our defense was playing, again, just you're a yard away from four more points.

You know, I would probably do it again. We have to look at what we called. But we went into the game saying if we had that look and we got the exact look we wanted, and we just didn't execute the play.

So it was the same play we ran against Memphis in the bowl game with Jaime to win it. We had the same exact look. You know, when you execute it it's a great call; when you don't, not so much.

**Q. Part of running Hank there as opposed to handing it off to Tate means you have an extra blocker in the box, right?**

DAVE CLAWSON: Yeah, you have an extra blocker. They were going to be in a gaps defense and cover

everybody and have an extra hitter.

So, you know, you either can stuff it up the middle and know you're going to have are will really bad angles and if they get any penetration it's going to cut back.

You know, all of those calls, right, if they work they're great. If they don't, that's a dumb call.

So that's on me. I take responsibility for the call. You know, didn't work out, but we survived the head coach's decision.

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