

CFP First Round: Ohio State vs Tennessee

Saturday, December 21, 2024

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Ohio Stadium

Ohio State Buckeyes DC Jim Knowles

Postgame Press Conference

Ohio State - 42, Tennessee - 17

Q. Once again the defense was pretty airtight. They had the two drives the second quarter and that was pretty much it. What was the priority for you guys in terms of game plan for this team?

JIM KNOWLES: No explosive plays. Make them -- if they're going to score, I think the one play, one score it was like a 16-play drive. We had our shots. And a really suspect quarterback-roughing penalty. And make them go the distance on us.

I thought we had a great plan, early three-and-out, score, early three-and-out, scores. Got us out in front.

Q. Jack and J.T., this felt like this was one of their most productive disruptive games. What did you see out of the two defensive ends in this?

JIM KNOWLES: We knew they were going to have a good game. The setup with their quarterback was a little different. It was a lot tighter. We thought we would be able to change up coverage enough to make him hold the ball. So we expected they were going to have a good game.

Q. How much are you looking forward to a rematch against Oregon, where you guys kind of took some hits there. But now you get a chance to redo. How different is this defense? We've talked about this. How different is this defense now compared to then?

JIM KNOWLES: I don't know how different it is. I think there's been adjustments. There's been some different calls, but I think it's confidence. And we're looking forward to the opportunity because it was not a great game for us.

Quite frankly, I think the guys got a little pissed off. And it led to a run for us in terms of defense and where we're at statistically, which has got to be number one or close to



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number one in categories.

They used that game as a motivation. I'm sure they're looking forward to another opportunity.

Q. There's been a lot of SEC chest pointing, let's say, from pundits, even a few coaches on Twitter; I won't name names. But why does the SEC have that air of superiority around it, do you think?

JIM KNOWLES: I have no idea. I don't know. Today we played pretty well. That's all I know.

Q. They get the ball to start the second half. It's a tight game. What were you hoping to see? Obviously I know what you wanted to see, but what did you say, what was the halftime like?

JIM KNOWLES: I got after them pretty good at halftime. I did, to be honest with you. I felt like we were rolling in the beginning of the game. And then I just felt like we took our foot off the gas a little bit.

So, I got after them at halftime and challenged them because I knew the way the game was going that as long as we did our job everything was going to turn out all right. I thought they came out. I thought they came out strong in the second half.

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