

CFP First Round: Miami vs Teaxs A&M

Saturday, December 20, 2025

College Station, Texas, USA

Kyle Field

Teaxs A&M Aggies

Jay Bateman

Taurean York

Dalton Brooks

Daymion Sanford

Postgame Press Conference

Miami - 10, Texas A&M - 3

Q. Jay and Taurean, it seemed like they only had two really sustained drives. What were some of the break downs you saw on the sideline and on the field on those two long drives that led to the scores they have?

JAY BATEMAN: The first drive of the second half, they went some tempo on us, got some easy throws. We missed a tackle. I thought we settled in pretty good. Then I think on the touchdown drive we kind of messed up a rotation and kind of let the ball get out on us. Then we had a chance to stop them on third down and didn't get it done.

TAUREAN YORK: I thought we played defensively sound football for the majority of the game. These guys are elite players as well, so they're going to have two good drives at the bare minimum. They go to University of Miami. They're going to recruit well as well.

They're going to make good plays and have good drives. I thought we did a good job of minimizing them. 10 points in a playoff game, it is what it is. We didn't score enough points, but at the same time, we gave up too many points.

Q. It seemed like their most success was in between the tackles with Fletcher. What did you see that enabled them to be successful that way?

JAY BATEMAN: We kind of went into the game with a little bit of a light box mentality, trying to defend some of the other things they did really well. I think it took them a while. I think they finally hunted it up. Then we were able to -- credit to Taurean and Daymion for handling a couple



PLAYOFF FIRST ROUND

of the adjustments to how they were doing.

They gave us a little bit more pistol back than we had seen from them, and I thought once we settled into that, they actually did a pretty good job.

Q. How do you hope people remember this season with how it started and also how it ended?

TAUREAN YORK: You know it's a foundation setter. We have high hopes for our team. We're in year two, though, you've got to realize that. I think Ohio State won their first championship with Ryan Day, and he's in year eight. College football, it's a hard world to win in and especially winning at a high level.

This is just a start. We're in year two, headed into year three. It's going to be all right. It's a small bump in the road. But we have finally gotten to this stage, so we know what it feels like. So when we get back here next year, those jitters shouldn't be how they were today.

Q. Dalton, when you forced that fumble, how much did you feel like that could be a momentum shifter in this game?

DALTON BROOKS: A turnover is always a momentum shifter. You want to go down and score. That kind of would have flipped the game. Once you get the fumble, I feel like it's just a turnover and then keep playing.

Q. Taurean, you talked about kind of about the trajectory going into year three. How does the end of this season, does it feel any different? Is there a different feeling than how last year ended and how you guys ended this year?

TAUREAN YORK: I feel it's unreal for sure. You have your first ever playoff game on a college field and then you drop it, but there's so much to build on top of this. We're really just scratching the surface of who we're going to become in the future.

Q. For the three players that will be returning, what do you feel are the biggest steps you have to make this off-season to take that next step?



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DALTON BROOKS: Keep the culture. That's the big thing. You've got to keep the culture together, keep the players together, and really come back and start rebuilding just like we did last year. Keep it going, keep pushing, keep fighting, and keep everybody in it.

DAYMION SANFORD: I'll feedback on what he said, play for each other. This year we played for each other. We had a lot of guys return, and we had a pretty good run this year. I feel like going into next year we've got to do the same thing.

TAUREAN YORK: It's not the end all be all. It's unfortunate that we lost the playoff game, but we have so much to build on top of. We're going to have a lot of returning players. We're going to be alright. Texas A&M will still be on the rise. We're still going to be up and coming. We've got to focus on the right now. It sucks right now, but once we get back in January, we start meeting and it's just onto the next thing and that's how life work.

Q. Mr. York, you mentioned that there were jitters at the end of this season that you don't expect to be there next year. What do you believe contributed to those jitters this year?

TAUREAN YORK: I mean, this is like the first time we probably played on the biggest stage. Like this was a do or die, all or nothing type of game. So we played in a lot of big games, but we haven't played in a game to this magnitude yet.

I don't feel like there were many jitters. It's natural when you play a big time game. When you get out there, yeah, but when you take your first hit, you're like, yeah bet, we're playing football. Maybe leading up to the game we had some jitters, but just execution aspect on us is why we dropped the game.

Q. For any of you guys, any of the players, when you have such a great start and the ending doesn't go the way you want obviously, do you still feel like you had a great year, or does the ending change that, that feeling at all?

DALTON BROOKS: I feel like we still had a great year. Honestly this is something that hasn't been done at Texas A&M. We stamped something in history forever.

I feel like we had a great year, but you could always build off of something knowing that you could have done more.

Q. Taurean and Jay, today included, especially the way the game ended, what's going to be your

takeaways about the run defense as a whole, and what you would want to change if you could change it and how you would have addressed it going forward in the future? At future schools or whatever.

TAUREAN YORK: I'll answer that question. Honestly it's just more so about knowing who you're in the fit with. Like it's all about leverage, numbers and leverage. You're tied at a certain number, certain player, that type of deal. If you know football, it's all about leverage and angles, it's that sort of deal.

It's about communication as well. Looking back, are you in the fit with me? If not, who's in the fit with me? Just like last year it was our pass defense, and we weren't communicating well. This year we sharpened up on that, and it kind of tanked our run defense. Now it's like, okay, heading into year three, how about we communicate in the pass game and the run game, and let's see how truly elite we can be.

Q. Taurean, what was the confidence level down the stretch? You guys are down 10-3 and Marcel's leading the offense down the field. What was your confidence level? Did you guys feel like you were getting ready for overtime?

TAUREAN YORK: For sure. We had a 1:50 left. How much time did we have left? 1:44. We work two-minute drill every Wednesday against the offense. They had a good offensive drill against us this past Wednesday. We had faith in the offense for sure, but at the end of the day, that's out of our control. All we can do is hope and pray that we score a touchdown and tie it up and go into overtime. It's like, yeah, we got scored on, but we gave them time to get the ball back and it's two-minute drill. It just didn't go our way. That's just how it went.

Q. Jay, obviously your last season here ended sooner than you likely expected, but what do you think is the biggest takeaway that you'll have from your time here in College Station as you move on?

JAY BATEMAN: I think the biggest takeaway is the ability to coach these players and how fortunate I am to coach the guys I've been able to coach here. This is a great place and a lot of great players coming back.

Q. For all three of the players, what is the conversation like when you guys are in a close game like this considering you guys have been in close games this season?

TAUREAN YORK: I would say do your job. Like I mean, it's not a secret. As long as you do your job, you're 1 of 11,



the defense will be executed how it's supposed to be executed. I would say it's that short and simple.

DAYMION SANFORD: Our leaders on the team, they always preach do your job. He always said DYJ in the huddles and that sort of thing. Do your job.

DALTON BROOKS: And to piggyback off of that, keep it going. Once you do your job, keep doing your job the whole game. Don't make it one play. Keep the same focus and keep the same intensity the whole time.

Q. Jay, can you speak to kind of holding off the dam. They were in y'all's territory a lot, especially in the second half. To their touchdown, Toney, I know they got him involved in a lot of ways, but did that play catch you off guard thinking maybe they would run to set up a field goal?

JAY BATEMAN: We ran that exact same play on Thursday afternoon. I think we were ready for it. That kid's a really good player. They kind of got us blocked, changed the perimeter a little bit, and cracked on Dalton.

That kid, look, I think we did as good a job on that kid as anybody in the country's done against him this year. I think there were a couple times where they got some short fields and the way we responded, I thought was awesome. I think they missed three field goals. We were able to hold them, and that was the story of the game going into the final 10 minutes or so.

Q. Taurean, have you made a decision on whether you're coming back or going to the NFL?

TAUREAN YORK: That's probably going to be -- you know, I've never been through something like this before honestly. Nobody in my family has ever been into the NFL. We really don't know the ins and outs about it. That's what this week is for. When we get back from Christmas, I'm sure we'll meet about it again.

I'll just going to pray to God honestly. He's going to lead me in the right direction. Who knows what the future holds for Taurean York?

Q. If you do come back, what gives you confidence in your last year that you'll come back and sustain the success you had this season?

TAUREAN YORK: Because I trust Coach Elko. I really do trust him. I trusted him since I met him when I was 15 years old. Everything he told me was going to happen, he's made it happen. So my trust in Coach Elko ultimately.

Q. Taurean and Dalton, I know you guys are really close with Marcel. What did you maybe say to him in the locker room after today's game and maybe the biggest areas of growth you've seen from him overall this season?

DALTON BROOKS: I told him honestly it's over now. Keep your head up. You can't beat yourself up about it once it's over. Once it's over, it's over. I told him don't beat yourself up about it.

Well, I live with him. So once we get home, we'll talk about it. We'll talk it out, see what we could have done better on both sides of the ball. That's really how we do after every game. This one will be much different. We'll both be down about it, but I always try to keep him up in good spirits because he does, he runs this whole thing. If I could keep him up, I feel like I could keep the whole program up.

TAUREAN YORK: We're basically neighbors. They live together, and I live right down the street. We spend a lot of time together. Honest to God, I just told him I love him. I know you did your best. It didn't go our way, but it wasn't like you threw the game away on purpose. It just didn't go away, it wasn't our time yet. That type of deal.

You just have to learn from it. You got to remember how it feels. This is terrible. A Texas loss hurt, but this one hurt times ten because it's at home. Just words of encouragement for sure. Give him a hug, tell him I love him, and just we'll be back.

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