

CFP First Round: Tulane vs Ole Miss

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Oxford, Mississippi, USA

Vaught Hemingway Stadium

Ole Miss Rebels

Bryan Brown

Postgame Press Conference

Ole Miss 41, Tulane 10

Q. It's now two games that you shut them out on fourth down attempts. How do you feel you matched up in the front line against their offensive line when it came to that?

BRYAN BROWN: I think our guys did a good job of responding to the fourth down challenges we faced, you know, this game. When we talked about it all week in practice, and that was the turning point of the last game as well.

Our guys were focused on fourth down. We have big bodies up front. Big Zxa and Big Will and those guys, they did a good job of pushing the pocket back and making sure -- especially on the sneak play. That was awesome to see those guys knock it back and TJ and those guys top it off.

It was a great job. I think they feel really confident up front that they can knock some guys back and get some pushback and stopping them on fourth down.

Q. Pete and Will mentioned that it wasn't a perfect performance for you guys, despite just allowing one garbage time touchdown. What improvements could have been made?

BRYAN BROWN: Absolutely. I think when you think about starting in the back end, some guys were turned loose from a coverage aspect. We need to make sure we clean that up, and just some eye control things, guys are not looking at the right things, their keys. That should put them in good position.

We have to get that cleaned up, and we'll do that this coming up week on Monday, get those guys some time off for Christmas, but I think that was one of the biggest things.



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I think up front just some run mechanic things that end up creasing us a little bit in the run game, and I know Coach Joyner up front, those guys will get those things corrected.

Q. What's the biggest difference between Pete, the defensive coordinator, and Pete, the head coach?

BRYAN BROWN: Nothing. It's just now he has a bigger room, you know. I think he's done a phenomenal job being a defensive coordinator, and I have seen that my two years being here with him.

He just has that head coach, that swag about himself, and he controls the room. He controls the narrative in anything that he wants to control, but the guys believe in him just like they do defensively, and you can see it turning over to our full team.

He just is a great human being, great coach, great motivator, you know, knows football inside and out and is going to be a heck of a coach for a long, long time.

Q. The total yards difference in this game wasn't much, but it seemed like every time Tulane crossed the 50, their offense couldn't function. What went into that tonight?

BRYAN BROWN: Well, I think the guys just ended up bowing up, and sometimes you may need to be a don't-break defense. We ended up executing a little bit better as we got our backs to the goal line a little bit. That shortened the grass a little bit as well.

Was able to come away with some turnovers, get them behind the sticks a little bit once they crossed the 50. That's always huge anytime you can do that and not allow field goal attempts and things of that nature. But I think that was the biggest thing. We started executing better once we got towards the goal line.

Q. Pete talked about this earlier, and we can also ask you. He talked about the difference of winning the turnover margin and how important that would be in winning this game. How would you assess that in terms of what you guys were able to do defensively in winning that, that margin, and how did that accel you



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to win tonight?

BRYAN BROWN: Absolutely. Anytime you can win the turnover margin -- we do a study each and every week who is in the plus margin and the turnover margin, and a lot of times those are the teams that are winning.

If you can do that each and every week, you give yourself a really good chance to win. Tonight I think we had two fumbles as well as an interception in those fourth down stops. We count those as turnovers as well. When you are plus-7 in the turnover margin, I think you should have a really good chance to win.

So we harp on it each and every week, the turnover margin is really key. If we can keep doing that, that allow us to continue to play in these playoffs.

Q. Will Echols was just in here, and he was saying I was talking with TJ 30 minutes ago already about the Georgia game and them not punting the first time. Has that matchup crept into your mind at all? What's your first impression?

BRYAN BROWN: Well, it will now. Our whole focus has been on Tulane because if you don't win this one, the next one don't matter, right?

I think as we move forward, we'll celebrate this one tonight. You know, probably tonight when I go to sleep, I may be thinking about it a little bit, but tomorrow we'll turn our attention to cleaning up the mistakes and then turning over to Georgia.

But, yes, those guys not punting, it does drive you a little bit more. Hopefully we can get that corrected and make them punt it a little bit more.

Q. Jaylon Braxton had a pair of pass breakups tonight and an interception. What have you seen him so far this season in his improvement and tonight and his week of preparation and everything?

BRYAN BROWN: JB had a horrific injury last year at Arkansas, and for him to be able to come back off the surgery that he had this spring, it took some time. It took some time for him to come back and get that knee stronger so he could come back and perform the way he's performing now.

I think anytime you've been out of the game of football, if you're not practicing every day and you don't have that strength in your leg that he needed, especially playing defensive back coming in out of his breaks, it's going to take some time.

He's continuing to develop, but he's a smart, high-Q football guy. So he don't need a lot of reps, but he does need that cognitive motor skills and things for him coming in and out of his breaks that he needs.

He's gotten so much better, and I'm so proud of him, and he'll continue to get better as the season progress.

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