

CFP First Round: James Madison vs Oregon

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Eugene, Oregon, USA

Autzen Stadium

Oregon Ducks

Mailk Benson

Postgame Press Conference

Oregon 51, James Madison 34

Q. Your emotions on the balance of a big win but also maybe a second half that was disappointing for most of you guys.

MALIK BENSON: First, I just want to congratulate the guys. Winning in the playoff game, winning a game in general is really hard, but when you win, you can look at things and clean things up, it's exciting that once we fully put the pieces together, we're going to be even better.

Q. Just following up on that, how would you describe the mood in the locker room right now?

MALIK BENSON: Normally you hear the music but we're kind of down right now just knowing we didn't play to our standard.

Q. You guys connected on four passes of 40 plus. You brought in a couple of those for touchdowns. They allowed a good chunk of 40-yard plays this season. Was that something you guys saw on tape that you might be able to take advantage of like you did?

MALIK BENSON: Just really knowing we're Oregon. We got speed on the outside and just going out there and attacking match-ups and knowing when Dante puts the ball in the air, we got to go win our one-on-ones.

Q. What gives you the confidence that this team can grow from this and know that the standard is better?

MALIK BENSON: Like I said, normally when we come to the locker room, we're playing music, dancing all that, but when you come to the locker room and it's almost like we feel like we lost, that's just a sign to see that we're not outcome-driven.



PLAYOFF FIRST ROUND

Q. I know it wasn't huge snap counts for either, but what was it like to see Gary and Dakorien back and what that lift gives this offense going forward?

MALIK BENSON: It's really exciting when you get your guys back. A guy, his last season, you don't like any injuries but for him to come back now, just making our offense even more special.

Q. Kind of just a unique experience we've been talking about all week, hosting a playoff game, just what did you think of the crowd tonight, the atmosphere and the way the community rallied around this game today.

MALIK BENSON: Man, just knowing that we've been out of school for some time, just seeing how the student section was. It was very electric. But for us to have this first playoff game in Autzen, just nothing but a blessing and shout out to JMU coming in and being a good team, things like that, but I feel like just as a whole community, they brought the juice.

Q. Kind of just talk about how you felt attacking JMU's defense tonight, whether it was deep down the field or just throughout the game as an overall wideout.

MALIK BENSON: Really just all year just been winning our one-on-ones in the run game and the pass game. Just like I said, just being the spot for Dante knowing he's a great quarterback and if I just run my routes, us receivers, tight ends, running backs, get to our spots, he's going to find us.

Q. There's a couple times here tonight where just clear. You get one-on-one and you beat a guy. What's in your head at that moment where you know the pill's coming?

MALIK BENSON: Just make that play, get in the end zone.

Q. What positives do you take from tonight? What you say, the standard is much higher for how you finish the game, the first half, you guys were clicking on all cylinders offensively, what do you take away from this game positively?



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MALIK BENSON: That in the first half, we weren't on the field as an offense that much, so just us being efficient and doing what we need to do. That's a good positive.

Q. Two touchdowns tonight. Fun for you, I'm sure. What will you remember about tonight?

MALIK BENSON: Just getting another opportunity to play in Autzen. Just an electric crowd, and it's just been a blessing this whole season the way it's turned out coming to Oregon, everybody welcoming me with open arms to just finely get another opportunity to play in this special place. It means a lot.

Q. How much have you seen of Texas Tech and your thoughts on just driving to the Orange Bowl and that match-up.

MALIK BENSON: I haven't seen too much. I've just been worried about James Madison. I'll probably get on to that tonight. Just very excited to go down to Miami and go against them.

Q. Malik, you had a terrific month of November yourself but another guy that's come on strong is Jeremiah. Obviously you've been seeing him. As a veteran, seeing him as a young guy, what has been key do you think to his emergence for this offense?

MALIK BENSON: Just him knowing that he has to step up. We have a lot of great guys in that receiving room, so it's really just next-man-up mentality but we're getting our guys back and when we're all clicking on all cylinders, it's going to get very scary for whoever we got to go against.