

Rose Bowl Game presented by Prudential: Alabama vs Michigan

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Pasadena, California, USA

Alabama Crimson Tide Malachi Moore

Press Conference

Q. Did you know Damani the first time he was recruited? What was your reaction?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, actually I hosted him when he was a recruit and when he came to 'Bama, we had a good time. We definitely cool. Talked to him and yeah, I saw him at practice yesterday and I was thinking like yeah, that would be a good addition for our squad.

Q. What sort of player is he from what you know about him?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, he's a good player. He's explosive. He's fast, quick and he definitely can tackle and cover really well.

Q. What stands out about the Michigan run game?

MALACHI MOORE: I would just say how patient their backs are. That's a big thing, like, with the holes, kind of clogged up there, just sit back and wait a little bit. But also they see a little gap, they hit it downhill pretty fast. Just their blocking schemes, they work well as a unit on their O-line and definitely one of our challenges in this game.

Q. Do you like playing the snaps -- than Ole Miss, same tempo?

MALACHI MOORE: I don't know. It's kind of just like whatever week it is, like I really don't have a preference because when the fast tempo, yes, I would say fast tempo is something that could get you if you let it.

But I think every team is going to tempo us at some point in the game, so it's kind of been coming like a natural reoccurring thing.

Q. Michigan is a team that runs a lot of trick plays almost every game, they have some sort of fake, some sort of running back throw. How do you prepare for



that?

MALACHI MOORE: Making sure I have good eyes at all the right times. Make sure that my man covered when that's my responsibility, and also, just staying in the deep part of the field, if I'm in the deep part of the field, just that's the biggest thing with trick plays is just your eyes and eye control. That's the biggest thing when it comes to trick play.

Q. Can you predict when they come or is it hard to predict?

MALACHI MOORE: It's kind of hard to predict when it happens because they kind of do it just like throughout their offense. Like you said, they have one almost every game. They sprinkle it in here or there, so you never know when it's going to come.

Q. A Sugar Bowl would have been cool but is it a little more fun that you guys are out in California playing Michigan?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, it's definitely a lot of fun. Ms. My first time being in Cali. Definitely a fun experience, and to be playing in the Rose Bowl is like a dream. It's one of the biggest Bowl games there is. I'm looking forward to taking the field on Monday.

Q. How beneficial has this year been to prepare yourself for the next level?

MALACHI MOORE: This year has been a great year for me, man. Just learning as much as I can. Also helping and encouraging my teammates along the way. Definitely getting more football knowledge.

I'd say that's the biggest thing for me is just knowing what my opponent is going to do, and knowing what I have to do and knowing what everybody else around me has to do.

Q. Has anybody nudged you, a fifth year?

MALACHI MOORE: No, no.



Q. How is the personality of this team different from the last two?

MALACHI MOORE: I would say we just a close bunch. Everybody just talks to everybody in the locker room. Everybody speaks to each other. We always have fun with each other, like yesterday we on the bus ride back from practice and we all just turn the speakers on, singing RAW waves together, and just bonding together, man.

And I think that's one of the most important things and that's something we've been harping on since the end of the year last year is just got to spend time with each other and get to know each other more on a personal level.

So I think we have done that, and I think it's been great and we are going to continue to do that.

Q. Is that something you weren't doing as much?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, we weren't doing it as much and this year we kind of like put emphasis on it, and it turned out good for us.

Q. Who was behind that?

MALACHI MOORE: I would say everybody. Everybody I talked to, like Deontae, J-Mil, Dallas, Kool, like Terrion. We all just wanted everybody to be close and know that they are important to what we have going on and what we want to accomplish; and that we need everybody in this room, no matter what your role is, to be successful.

I think we do a good job of not really trying to exclude anybody from us being successful. I think that's one thing that everybody likes. Like even to the walk-ons, they are close with us just as much as they would be if they was on scholarship. I think that just says a lot about our team and how close we are.

Q. Do you feel a difference because of that on the field?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, I think this my most fun year I've had playing football. Just taking the field with those guys each and every Saturday, just the energy we bring, the energy that our teammates have on the sideline for us, it's definitely a great experience. Like I said, it's the most fun I've had playing football in my lifetime.

So it's definitely just a blessing to be a part of this group.

Q. Said you are the misfit of the Alabama team -- is that something the players talk about, being a misfit? Is that something you rally around?

MALACHI MOORE: It is something we rally around. I think we just take each game personal, I would say. Like when we go out there, we know we have something to prove each and every day because like I said, like we got -- we still had doubters out there and I think that's one thing about us is just earning our respect this year, and that's something we take a lot of pride in.

Q. How have your in-game responsibilities changed going against the quarterback?

MALACHI MOORE: I think we just have to definitely keep him contained in the pocket but also we have to cover people twice. After they run the initial route, if he scrambles or something like that, we have to make sure we stand on our guys and lock on and don't leave nobody free running.

He does a great job of controlling their offense. He does a great job of getting the defense to show their look, show their hand, and then changing the play to play his offense in the best situation possible. I think that's a great thing that he does. But he also gets the ball to his play-makers a lot and knows when to make the right play and does make the right play for his team.

Q. The guys on the defense said that Tyler Buchner has kind of filled in and played on scout team. What have you seen from him?

MALACHI MOORE: He's been going a great job for us. J.J. is a mobile quarterback and Tyler is definitely a mobile quarterback for us and he does a great job of giving us a look each and every day. I think he's doing a great job of getting us prepared for the game.

Q. How crazy is it that you have a starting quarterback on scout team now and then even LT Overton coming in on defense for the scout team?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, it's different, but it makes us better to have good competition and someone that's actually going to give us a great look instead of going through the motions so to say. It's definitely challenging in practice but you always want practice to be harder than the game. I think it's good for us.

Q. Dallas talked about Tyler's speed. Is that something can that give problems in practice but make it better for the game?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, definitely, whenever he scramble, Coach got to tell us to break on the ball or stay on our guys. So that's kind of him just getting us prepared

for the game every day.

Q. That's something Michigan is struggling with, but can you imagine trying to find a scout team player for Jalen?

MALACHI MOORE: No, I don't think you can do that one. J-Mil, he's kind of a one-of-one. Yeah, I bet they having a hard time trying to simulate that.

Q. When you watch film, what stands out about their running back, Blake Corum?

MALACHI MOORE: He's a tough runner, but he's also very smart and very patient and he follows his box. Yeah, he's a great player, very quick, very fast and a very tough player. No matter how many times you hit him, he's still going to run the ball the same way each time. Yeah, he's going to be a challenge Monday.

Q. Does this offense remind you of anybody?

MALACHI MOORE: I would say just the element of the way that you get tight ends and they are running, I would say Georgia. Just by the way they use their tight ends and motion, it's kind of similar.

But I think Michigan's motion is a lot more than Georgia does, and they also line up in different formations a lot. Different personnel, so to say?

Q. Justin was talking about how this time, he was watching you go to the Sugar Bowl. What does it mean to have him back?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, it means a lot, man. We definitely missed Justin last year. I'm just happy for him and proud of him of the way he's handled his situation and the way he's came back stronger than ever, playing some great ball for us.

You know, I'm really proud that he back with us and I'm really happy about how he's been playing.

Q. What was the first time like when Jalen and Terrion approached you guys with LANK and what was your reaction? Did they tell you right away this is what it means or did you figure it out yourself?

MALACHI MOORE: I think it was from the summertime, even the spring, them just saying LANK and some people knew what it meant and some people didn't. I had to ask, "What you talking about, 'LANK'? What is LANK?"

He let me know and so I was like, okay, I can mess with

that.

As the summer kept going, it kept building and building and building, and then probably after the Texas game, that's when it really resonated with all of us for the rest of the season for real because didn't nobody expect us to be where we are at today.

Q. When you found out you were playing Michigan, what was your reaction? Did you know anything about them?

MALACHI MOORE: I ain't going to lie, I didn't know anything about them for real. But I knew that they had a great running game and a great quarterback. But other than that, I haven't watched Michigan this year.

Q. What's the perception, the idea of the -- (indiscernible.)

MALACHI MOORE: I don't know, have I played a Big Ten team? I don't know. I don't think I have. But it definitely a challenge but on film, they definitely look physical on film. They do a great job of trying to impose their will on their opponents. That's one thing we're going to have to do, what we talk about all the time is changing the way people think throughout the game for 60 minutes and that's going to be the test on Monday.

Q. Do they look like an SEC offense?

MALACHI MOORE: They look like an SEC offense. Like I said, they have a great O-Line, great skill players and a great quarterback. It seems like they play with a lot of chemistry as well. When J.J. scramble, the receivers know where to go on the field for him depending on where they are already at when he scrambles, yeah.

Q. Did you get a chance to talk about Jalen when he came in as a recruiter or anything like that, and what is your overall impressions of him coming in?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, Bobway [phonetic], we actually trained together with Woodall and stuff like that and Clay is like two minutes from my high school. I definitely stay in touch with him and talking to him. I think it's great for him to come in and have an opportunity to come in and play.

Yeah, he's a great player. He very, very fast. Actually when I met him, I didn't know he was that fast until I actually seen him run. I didn't know he was sly like that. Yeah, I'm excited for him.

Q. The last Big Ten team you played was Ohio State in 2022.

MALACHI MOORE: Facts. Facts.

Q. What do you think of California?

MALACHI MOORE: I like it. It's smooth out here. A little different but it's smooth.

Q. Did you hang out at Disney?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah.

Q. Favorite ride?

MALACHI MOORE: Probably Space Mountain. Space Mountain, pretty good.

Q. Y'all have the young bucks coming in that do Bowl practice with you guys. What have you seen from any of them and what's it like seeing the young guys come in?

MALACHI MOORE: I would say this group that just came in, obviously they are very eager and willing to learn. They just excited about being in college. They also know, at least they are trying to find their way around, how we practice and this and that. I think they are having a great time and I think it's great that they are getting to come in early and witness what a College Football Playoff Bowl week practice entails. It's probably definitely an experience for them.

Q. Did you learn anyone's name?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, yeah, I learn everybody's name. We got Payne, Xavien, Dre, Jameer and Red [phonetic spellings]. Yeah, those guys are great. I don't try to get them a hard time or anything like that. I try to help them as much as I can. I take knee pad level and try to give them the little jams I know of while I'm still here.

Q. Does it make you feel old?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, it does make me feel when they start stalking about they was born in '04, '05, stuff like that.

Q. The vibe of the whole team, making everybody feel together, is that different from past teams? Seems like you've taken it to another level?

MALACHI MOORE: I would say different, it's been much more of an emphasis this year. This summer we actually got together and planned out stuff to do as a team, whether that's going paint balling or everybody going fishing, four

wheelers, like everybody just need to spend time together. I think that's been fun for us.

It's different when you are always at the facility and you're always doing football with your teammates. You're not really talking about what they are going through in life or how they are doing in life. You just talk about football when you're at the facility. It was great to get away from the facility, get away from football and just have fun and do stuff that you enjoy doing with your brother.

Q. That could probably be hard at a school like Alabama, everybody coming in as a four-, five-star prospect, have a lot of things going on, hard to remember to be college kids and do fun stuff?

MALACHI MOORE: Definitely you can get caught up in it. But you've got to make it a priority, though. When you make it a priority, you tend to act on it more, and that's what we've been harping on.

I credit Ha Ha Clinton Dix a lot for that, they have been doing a great job of organizing stuff for that and giving us ideas and stuff to do. That's Ha Ha biggest thing since coming in here. He's told us, we got to bond with each other man, y'all got to watch film together. Y'all got to do something outside of here together. He said that's what they did back in the day. I definitely see what he's talking about when he talking about close-knit togetherness.

Q. When you had the tough stretch against Texas, probably that bond helped you?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, definitely, because we all know what we working for and we all know how much work each of us put in, and we just want to see each other succeed and we want to be at our best.

So we playing for our brother.

Q. And you see the results at the end?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah. Yeah.

Q. I know it worked out for you in the end but what did you learn from week two, the Texas game? What did you take from that point to say, here is where we need to go from here?

MALACHI MOORE: Just finishing, and I think in that game, we shot ourselves in the foot a lot. So that's been our biggest thing. When we get in games like that, like don't shoot yourself in the foot. Don't have unnecessary penalties that you don't need to have. If you eliminate those, then you're probably going to end up on the win

side.

Q. In Houston --

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, I thought about it once we got into the playoff, once I seen the teams. But I just think about Michigan right now, yeah.

Q. What's it like playing your head coach's position?

MALACHI MOORE: I think it's great. Like you said, he pay a lot of attention to it, so he's not going to miss anything. He's going to show you good plays, show you bad plays, and tell you you did a good job here but also telling you that you need to do a better job over here. But I think that's a great thing. Like, you know, the greatest coach in college football is in my position room and I'm learning from him each and every day.

Q. How did he change, or not, after weeks two and three, lost to Texas and then not so good against USF?

MALACHI MOORE: Yeah, that's a great question. I feel like Coach allowed the team to come together as a whole. You know, he still coaches us hard no matter what, but just with the leadership that we got to take this on or what went wrong or here or there or what we going to change to not have this happen to us again. I think everybody jumped on board to his plan, and yeah, here we are today.

Q. I asked Dallas this. In your recruitment process to now, how often have you heard from rival recruiters, fans, friends, how long is he going to go? He's not going to be around when you graduate; did you ever hear that?

MALACHI MOORE: I did hear that throughout recruiting and something like that. But being around Coach, I don't think he going anywhere any time soon. I think he still having fun with it.

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