

TransPerfect Music City Bowl: Missouri vs Iowa

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Nissan Stadium

Missouri Tigers

Kirby Moore

Offensive coordinator

Corey Batoon

Defensive coordinator

Coaches Press Conference



didn't play our best, but then adapting, adjusting, and improvising and finding ways to win.

Coach Drink talks about having grit. That's one of the things the last few weeks I believe the stat -- someone brought it to my attention -- we've been in 11 one-score games, and won ten of them. Part of that is having belief that you can get it done.

THE MODERATOR: We have defensive Coordinator Corey Batoon and offensive coordinator Kirby Moore. Questions, please.

Q. Coaches, for both of you, coming out of bowl practices here, curious who maybe some young stand-outs have been on both sides of the ball and who has been impressive the last few weeks?

KIRBY MOORE: Yeah, I think there's a ton of opportunity in this game for our guys on offense. Some senior guys too. Up front Mitch Walters. Drake has done a great job down the stretch.

Within the tight end group Tyler Stephens, Jordon Harris, and then at receiver Marquis Johnson, Josh Manning, Daniel Blood. James Madison is going to get some time out there, and Logan Muckey. Really excited to see those guys go out there and compete.

COREY BATOON: It's an awesome opportunity. You kind of get a bonus spring ball. We had 15 practices in I think, 14 or 15. You get a chance to really see some of those young guys back up on the varsity. We work some good on good early on. It kind of kick-starts you in terms of spring practice. It's been awesome for those guys.

Q. Coach Moore, how would you evaluate year two, and then for you, Coach Batoon, how did year one go, and what went well, and what didn't? What would you want to improve on?

KIRBY MOORE: I'm very appreciative of our guys' consistency, doing the work, having belief, working through adversity, the offensive staff being very collaborative, solution-oriented. There were a couple of games there we

COREY BATOON: Yeah, I spoke to some of the seniors the last true meeting we had, and was so appreciative of through the transition their buy-in. I think that that really helped us not fall back in a transition year. Super appreciative of those guys, the work they put in.

Things that I was really happy about this past fall. I thought, again, like Kirby said, the amount of close games that you play, one-score games. You talk about the camaraderie and the brotherhood, the belief in one to the other. Those are things that I'll cherish as I look back on this season.

Being able to win those tough games, and really you're one possession away from being in a great situation, but super appreciative of those seniors and what they mean to us and our program.

Q. You talked about the opportunities that are going to be created in this team. For you, Kirby, can you just talk a little bit more about kind of the trio of sophomore wide receivers that might be given more opportunities? Then, Corey, Nick Rodriguez and Jeremiah Beasley.

KIRBY MOORE: Yeah, first, Josh Manning from the start of the season to where he is at right now has done a tremendous job of growing, playing faster. A huge part of our offense when Mookie went down, Daniel Blood is a glue guy. We can move him around at different positions throughout the offense.

James Madison has grown with the extra practices going with the first and second group, rotating in. Then Logan Muckey, a guy who has played a ton on special teams, who we will use within the offense in this game. It's going



to be a challenge, right?

Iowa has set the standard for defense and college football, and they don't give you anything easy.

COREY BATOON: Those two freshmen you mentioned, Nick, both of those guys, and Beasley, again, those 15 practices have an opportunity to be up inside run, going against the ones. Both those guys, you know, will springboard into bigger opportunities with the after amount of seniors that we have walking out the door at that position.

Every opportunity, every practice, every inside drill, every skelly, buying in and really trying to bonus those reps is going to help with their momentum going into spring as they compete for a different role in next fall's team.

Q. Kirby, with Luther and Armand having played their final game as Tigers, can you speak on what they've meant not just to your offense, but to the program as a whole too?

KIRBY MOORE: Yeah, very appreciative of those guys buying into the offense. Consistency I know overall as an offense that's one thing that really grew throughout the season last year, carried into this season whereby.

Then overall everyone, the emotional consistency that they showed. It's hard within the realm of college football right now. There's a ton of ups and downs, and they stayed the course and continued to work and were a huge part of our success.

Q. For Coach Moore, I'm curious what the last couple of weeks looked like for you working with a quarterback who is about to be in his last game and also going out and signing a pretty big quarterback for next year. What does that balance have to be?

KIRBY MOORE: Yeah, that's the calendar in college football. Building for next season while finishing this season with the bowl game. Really want to finish the right way for Brady Cook. Just extremely appreciative of what he has done for me. His wife watches our kids, so on a daily basis helping out my wife. He's a winner. He has been consistent, emotional consistency. Just his ability to win 20 games in the last two years.

Q. For both of you guys, what has this senior class meant to you? Corey, in your first year and Kirby obviously with a bit more experience. What have they meant to this program?

COREY BATOON: I think the continuity that they bring,

there's a couple of new staff members. There's always change in the locker room, especially with the portal, but those veteran dudes have been a bridge for us from what's expected to what becomes in terms of the transition piece.

Their ability to come in to work every day regardless of situation, good, bad, coming off a win, coming off a loss. Every day is the same day, and I think that consistency is huge. That's what we're going to miss, right.

As this next group transitions in, high school transfers, that's going to be another opportunity for the rising seniors to establish that role. It's always cool to see that, right? There's that void that it's neat to organically see those guys fall into those roles, but the guys leaving, just so thankful for the type of work and mindset that they carry in that building.

Q. Coach, you talked about the seniors, you but how is Kris Williams grown as a leader, and what has he meant to this defense as a captain?

COREY BATOON: Who are you speaking of?

Q. Kris Williams. Kristian Williams.

COREY BATOON: Oh, Kristian. We don't call him Kris in the building. Kristian is awesome. He is different. He sets the tone on our defense in regards to attention to detail. He's the first dude in the building. He's down in treatment, a model of how to do things the right way and be a pro about your business.

I think he's helped these younger guys transition-wise, what it's supposed to look like, being able to model those things. Tremendous leader. Tremendous in regards to just being able to actualize those things that as a coach you try to hold them to a standard, but the peer leadership that he demands I think has been awesome for him.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, both.

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