

Valero Alamo Bowl: Texas vs Colorado

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome

Casey Thompson

Texas Longhorns

Texas 55, Colorado 23

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions for Casey.

Q. What went through your mind when you found out you were going in?

CASEY THOMPSON: Yes, sir, actually once I heard the word at halftime coming out that I was most likely need to be ready to go in, my thought process was very positive. I had positive self talk. I felt very comfortable with the moment, confident, believe in what we can do, what I can do.

I've been preparing for this moment since I set foot on campus. To me it just felt like high school. Football is football. Obviously it's at a higher level. But I felt prepared. I was ready. I really trust my teammates and everyone for believing in me.

Q. Were you surprised you were as productive as you were with four touchdown passes? Does this give you a leg up on the starting job for next year?

CASEY THOMPSON: When I went in the game, obviously, like I said, I just focused on one play at a time. I've been preparing every week and every day as if I'm going to be the starter. To me that doesn't matter if I'm first string, second string, third string, or even my freshman year when I was redshirted. That's how I approach every day.

Going into this game, that's how I approached it. It's no disrespect to the other guys in the room, the quarterback room. We do a great job of pushing and competing with each other. I think it will be a very fun off-season.

As far as the quarterback battle, I have no say in that. I can just control what I can control. I think today I did that.

Q. When Coach Herman told you it was you, it wasn't any storybook deal, what did you like about the calls



that coach gave you and tried to get you going early in the third quarter?

CASEY THOMPSON: Yeah, there was not much to be said. At halftime I sat down with the coaches, kind of listened to them talk about the game plan, the halftime adjustments. Once they gave me the word, like I said, everyone was kind of trying to hype me up for the moment. I just like to be calm and cool under pressure.

I went in in the third quarter. I told Coach Herman, he was like, Just play ball. I told him, Hey, let's be aggressive, let's try to put these guys away early.

They basically told me to play my game, trust what you see. Honestly that's all that was said at halftime. There wasn't much that was said. I just think that everyone felt like we could get the job done.

Q. You have the hardest job on the team, you don't know when it's going to be your time. Walk us through that process.

CASEY THOMPSON: That's something that I actually think about every day, believe it or not. I just try to put it to the back of my mind. You can't let emotions or feelings get in the way. Football is a game that we play. At the end of the day we want to win games. It's about success, it's about production.

That's something that goes through my mind every day obviously. There's ups and downs through the off-season, even in season. There's a lot of ups and downs.

On our off days, I try to get in the film room as much as I can. I'm always working with Sam and the coaches, trying to get any tips, a leg up on the opponent we're playing. Honestly, tonight obviously it feels surreal, but with all the hard work and preparation we put in, I know I've put in behind closed doors, it feels good to finally be given the opportunity.

Q. I don't know if you can draw up a better drive than you had to start the third quarter. Walk me through your thought process. How much relief or pressure did you feel off yourself scoring that quick?

CASEY THOMPSON: When I saw Bijan take off, first thing



I thought of was this was going to be six, no way he was going to get caught. As soon as he got tackled, I looked at the sideline, got the play, looked at the defense. From there, like I said, I just played ball. I just trusted my reads, what I see, let my instincts take over.

To your question, no, I didn't think I'd go in the game and be that efficient. When you take one play at a time, you look up at the scoreboard, you don't worry about stats, I was just worried about winning the game, being in the moment.

On that play, that was my first throw I believe of the second half. I had warmed up for a little bit right before halftime ended. Seeing Josh cross the DB's face, give him a good ball where he could catch it, was the only thing on my mind. After that I knew I would be in for a good day.

Q. You and Sam were sitting talking on the bench. What was said? If Sam doesn't return, what kind of statement did you make tonight?

CASEY THOMPSON: Sam and I communicate all the time on the field, off the field, on the sideline. We talk about the game, what we see. Sam and I, we have a relationship that has grown over the years. It hasn't always been easy because we're both competitive guys. We've really grown to become close and to be able to trust one another, compete with one another.

The conversation on the sideline, it wasn't much. Basically we were talking about the game. Sam was, Hey, man, I really appreciate you. It took a relief off his shoulders as the starting quarterback, your backup goes in the game. You can see him be successful. I'm sure that gave the team a breath of fresh air.

I told Sam during the game on the bench, then after the game, Hey, man, I really appreciate you and the rest of the team for just trusting and believing in me.

I don't think everyone would be as confident if they didn't see that at practice and the preparation. That's all that was said.

As far as the off-season, Sam's future in the quarterback room, like I said, that's not up to me. We'll see what happens. I'm very excited. It will be interesting.

Q. Bijan has been a monster the last two or three games. When you see what he's done, the prospect of you handing the ball off to him, how exciting is that for you? How bright does that make the future of Texas football?

CASEY THOMPSON: I love Bijan. I love his game, his energy. He's a great guy. I think we all can see his positivity. He truly is a leader by example. He makes people around him better. He does a great job at practice. He's very humble. That's what I like about him the most. I've grown close to Bijan this season, him and his family, off the field.

He always tells me, I can't wait for you to get your chance, your opportunity. We're going to be great back there in the backfield. The only thing that was really said and went through our minds today was it finally happened. It was very exciting.

It's a relief as a quarterback to have a great runningback in the back, something very special. We talk about it all the time, our game plan going into every game is we're going to be a better team and offense if we can get the ball in Bijan's hands.

Q. How long did it take you to shake off the jitters? What Drake song are you going to listen to you celebrating in your room later?

CASEY THOMPSON: Like I said, once I got the word at halftime, honestly I didn't really feel nervous. I think people don't really believe you when you say that, believe it or not. It just felt like practice, honestly. I just felt like I was ready.

Usually whenever you hear you're going in the game, you're trying to play it cool. When you step out on the field, your heart starts racing a little bit. Tonight that didn't happen to me. I think it helped I played a little bit this season, playing last year in 2019 helped a lot. I don't think that I was nervous. Like I said, after that first throw, I felt like I was going to be in rhythm for the rest of the night.

As far as Drake, that's my favorite artist. Tonight I think I'll listen to Trophies. I think it's very fitting for tonight's win and this season.

Q. Knowing how competitive you are in the quarterback room, how much do you think you made Sam better? How much has Hudson made you better?

CASEY THOMPSON: That's a really good question. I think about that all the time actually. That's a really good question.

I think that I have pushed Sam, obviously being the backup. Like I said, we're all friends. Those are my best friends. Obviously we're very friendly, positive, we try to compete. We'll trash talk a little bit sometimes. At the end of the day I think I've done a great job kind of pushing Sam and being there for him, trying to be a shoulder he can lean

on. Sam has been a great leader for me and the rest of the quarterback room. Some days I feel like I can be just as good as Sam. I know Sam, if you asked him that, he'd want me to be better.

As far as Hudson goes, he's a great player as well. He learns fast. He's really come along very well up to this point. I think he's been able to push me all season. I think that's probably what will continue to happen. Like I said, I'm looking forward to it. It will be very interesting, very fun off-season.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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