

# Valero Alamo Bowl: Colorado vs BYU

Thursday, December 26, 2024

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Alamodome

**Colorado Buffs**

**Robert Livingston**

Defensive Coordinator

**Pat Shurmur**

Offensive Coordinator

**Shedeur Sanders**

**Cam'Ron Silmon-Craig**

**LaJohntay Wester**

**Will Sheppard**

**Jimmy Horn Jr.**

Press Conference

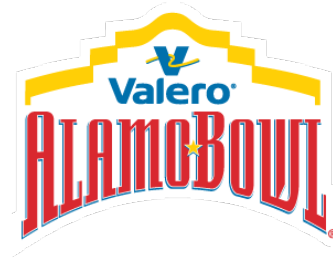
THE MODERATOR: We're going to start out with defensive coordinator, Robert Livingston. Coach, do you want to make an opening statement?

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: I want to thank everybody for being here today and the Alamo Bowl itself for having us. The city of San Antonio is great. It's a phenomenal place to come. I have four young children with me. God knows, we've seen the sights and sounds of San Antonio. Excited for the game.

So with that, any questions. One more thing. Our football operations staff has done a phenomenal job. Reg Calhoun, Tysha Stewart, Ms. Ty, T.A., all those guys, they make the whole thing go.

So we just show up for lunch, and God knows how much work has been put into it and getting to UTSA and all that stuff. Really a special shout-out to those guys. They make everything roll easy. With that, any questions.

**Q. You had spent so much time in the NFL before taking this job. What has the pageantry around bowl week been like for you to experience with your family?**



ROBERT LIVINGSTON: Yeah, it's been a long time. I was of the enough. We were in the Liberty Bowl when I was at Vanderbilt. No airplane. The drive from Nashville to Memphis was pretty easy.

But it's been a great week. Again, that's the special part about being back in college is the family environment and to have my kids around with the bowl practices being when the kids are out of school, they get to show up and go to practice. That's really why you do this.

You invest so much into these young men on the team to show them role models that you are around every day and the Cams and people like that. It's a special thing. It's been a great journey, a great trip for us. Just excited for Saturday.

**Q. When you came in, you clearly wanted to mold your scheme around what you had in place. Now kind of reflecting back on it, did you check every box that you wanted to as far as how you guys played this year and the improvement that is you made throughout the season and maybe what is left to come moving forward?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: Yeah, I think the unfortunate part of this profession is you are never finished, so there's always I wish I would have done this or that moment. It's been a great ride. It's a testament to the players, to the staff. They make my life really easy. We talk about it all the time. Next year's version probably won't look like this because we'll have new players.

Right, wrong, or indifferent, this is 2024 college football. People are going to come, people are going to go. So you have to have the ability to adapt.

I think that's a huge part of what we'll do is look at the guys we have, look at how we did this year, and a lot of it will be the same, but there will be some changes as well.

**Q. You go the some new guys in at practice with the early enrollees. I'm curious how those guys have looked to you and if anyone specifically has stood out?**



ROBERT LIVINGSTON: It's still too early. It's a huge head start for them. It's a great way to get to know them and be around them. I think people always maybe act a little bit different on an official visit, players and coaches alike. To see what they're like when they're tired, when they're working, both in Boulder as well as here. Really excited for the, what is it, six practices they get that are extra going into spring ball. Those are invaluable.

It's a great start for them, and they get to be a part of this as well. I think that's a special thing. I think too often we forget these are 18- to 22, 23-year-old kids. This could be the last time they go to a bowl game, heaven forbid. To go through this and obviously the way they do it here is phenomenal. It's top-shelf. To be a part of this is really special.

**Q. What about those practices are so invaluable for those guys to have to have those six practices?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: I think the best way to think about it is you go from playing in the state championship game and then four days later you're going versus Travis and Shedeur. That's probably a little bit different in itself.

You know, you recruit kids that you hope will come in and play right away, and then they get thrown in the fire with guys that have been doing it for three or four years and in the system for this year alone.

It's a way to see how do they learn? How do they retain knowledge? Can they make adjustments? How do they adapt when they fail? How do they adapt when they have success? Those are all things that hopefully you have a feel for, and then once the spring ball rolls out, you'll know exactly where you stand.

**Q. He was mentioning your NFL experience, but clearly a very different experience postseason here as opposed to postseason in the NFL where you go right from regular season. How have you dealt with kind of the disjointed nature of you take some time off, and there are guys in and out? How do you feel like the team has handled it?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: I thought Coach Prime laid out a great schedule. The players got to get away for a little bit and gives us as a staff. The two few days defensively we just did some self-scout stuff, what have we done well, what is BYU going to see when they see us?

Then welcome to transfer portal 2024. You find yourself watching a lot of kids. Right, wrong, or indifferent, that's the world we live in. That's been key.

It's also selfishly a great way to see what other teams are doing. Everybody has people they respect them in this profession. In college the offseason for me starts with what Notre Dame does defensively because I think the world of Al Golden. It's a great way to get a head start on some of that stuff. What are the schemes that maybe we can implement next year? It's been fun.

With that being said, you get to be home every night and get to be a husband and a dad. You get to see your kids. Gymnastics lessons and things like that, the real world stuff. So we did that for two weeks, and then we got back to it.

It's been a great process. It's a testament to Coach Prime and kind of the schedule he laid out for the guys are fresh once it comes to game day.

**Q. We had BYU in here before you guys. They shared their excitement to not only face you guys, but also the firepower that you have when thinking about what you have seen from them so far on tape and what they've been able to do this season. What are you most looking forward to going up against BYU?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: The best complement you can give them is you feel them every time they play. There's a real attitude with how they play. They play connected football.

Obviously they run the heck out of it. They do a great job. They're physical on all levels. The quarterback is a great athlete. I know, talking to their head coach -- it seems like we've had six crossover games, so I feel like I've watched them play a lot.

They play hard. God knows they play hard. It will be a great challenge. Again, it's a phenomenal venue, Saturday night. Where else would you rather be?

**Q. Clearly with your NFL experience you have a lot of great connections, and you're going to have a crop of guys here going to the NFL who are maybe projected as mid, late, maybe undrafted guys, tweeners. Coach Prime talks about how guiding players to the NFL is one of the bedrocks -- one of the parts of the bedrock of this program. How involved do you intend to be on behalf of some of those guys, maybe getting in touch with coaches, scouts, et cetera?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: I'll vouch for those guys to anybody. Again, they just gave us six months of the hardest thing they can do, and they put us in this position. We're here because of the players we have.

Yeah, I'm pulling for them. I'll pick up the phone and call anybody because they've answered the bell for us. So I think obviously the more guys that have success, the more guys want to come. That's the selfish part about college football. Let's be honest with each other. If you get four guys drafted, then more players want to come play for you. That's the way it goes.

So we have phenomenal young men that I think have bright, bright futures at the next level.

**Q. What are the keys for guys like Vontae and Shane and Shilo and Cam and players of that ilk to make an impression and capitalize on the next couple of months, being a coach that has seen that and what you were looking for? What is important for those guys to handle this time of year?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: Yeah, I think it starts -- at least myself personally, you know, when you are going to scout a player for the draft, the first thing you do is watch their last game because that's the last exposure you have. Then from there you go to an All-Star game, watch the one-on-ones and do that, and then you get into the season.

As I've told those guys, they still got everything out in front of them. You go out there. If you are Shilo or if you are Cam and have a couple of interceptions and a bunch of tackles, then you have somebody's interest. It goes from there.

Once they get their foot in the door, it's all about what you do with your opportunity. If you are playing five games in the third -- excuse me -- five plays in the third preseason game or if you are the PP or if you are the L1 and you make a play, you are going to get noticed. That's the next phase of this journey is, What do I do with my opportunities?

If you are undrafted, you probably don't get as many as the first round pick. That's just what it is, right? Just make the most of what you can, and go from there.

**Q. I remember you said a couple of weeks ago you talked about part of the appeal of this job was building something from the ground-up. Obviously today you mentioned there's going to be different personnel next year on the defensive side. What's the balance for you as a coordinator and trying to set the standard of what you expect out of your defensive while also trying to reinvent yourself based off of your personnel and the guys you have year in and year out?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: Yeah, to me stats are cute and

people talk about them a lot, but at the end of the day the only thing that matters is points. Yards don't equal points for us. If we can play great situationally, so that's third down, that's red zone, and we keep the points low, then that's what we want to do.

In terms of the standard, you want to be able to feel us. That's what we've always talked about. I think we've all watched a game where the defense is flying around, and you find yourself almost cringing when somebody cuts back. That's who we want to be. We want to be the hardest playing team that we can.

Then you are going to have five or six players that can impact the game. How do you get those guys shots? Steph Curry is going to take a three every four or five times down the floor. That's just what it is. If you have a great pass rusher, let's let them rush. If you have a great cover player, let's let them cover. If he gets hot, keep feeding them.

I think we can make this game harder than it has to be. It starts with the people, and it starts with the personnel.

**Q. You mentioned obviously there would be new players obviously on the defense next season. The secondary in particular, it will look a lot different. Obviously Travis, Cam, Shilo, and others. How confident are you in the potential of some of the young guys in that secondary... Colton, Carter, DJ, and some of the other guys?**

ROBERT LIVINGSTON: I'm super excited just to see their growth from the beginning of the year this year to where they're at now and knowing where they can go. I know I've said it before. I think Kevin Mathis is as great a teacher as anybody I've ever been around. I have no problem with the corners. They're going to flourish and do well.

If somebody doesn't mess up the safeties, then they'll do well too. So, no, it's exciting. Any time you have young players that have been a part of it that know what it's supposed to look like, they know how Travis works. We've talked about it before. Any time your best player is your hardest worker, that equals culture. They've just seen that for a year, and now they saw him walk away with the Heisman Trophy.

If you need to be pushed, then you probably haven't been paying attention, right? Now it's your job. We're in a relay race, and the baton has been passed to you, Bud. It's going to be what you do from there.

It will be an exciting spring. I'm sure we'll have had add some more people, and I think competition brings the best

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

out of everybody. So it will be fun.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Coach Shurmur.

PAT SHURMUR: Good afternoon. I would like to echo a lot of the same sentiments that Rob touched on. The Valero Alamo Bowl Committee has been very warm. We've really enjoyed ourselves here. Great events.

The setup for us to practice at UTSA has been awesome. Then our people, there was a lot of organization. There's a lot of organization that goes into spending a week away. Reggie, Ty, and Tyler, and that group did a wonderful job.

When we show up, we get on the bus and do our business, and then we get back on the bus and come back, everything has been organized. The food has been great. People have been warm and friendly. So our preparation week for the bowl game has been terrific.

So as we get approached game day, obviously we're finalizing our preparation as coaches and players, but we're getting ready to play an outstanding football team. I think we had an event the other night, and I think we as coaches really have an appreciation for the other team because it was said a bunch of times how the two teams playing try to do things the right way. That's what you see when you watch them on tape.

I'll take your questions.

**Q. When your contacts from the NFL call you and ask you about Shedeur Sanders, what will you tell them?**

PAT SHURMUR: Well, I've already told all 32 teams multiple times probably what I would tell you, but most players that make it in the NFL obviously have great skill and ability, which Shedeur has, have performed at a high level, which he does, has a true love for the game, which he has. Then he's going to be an outstanding teammate. Really those are the four cornerstones with what makes a great pro.

You have to have talent. You have to perform. You've got to love the game. That's where a lot of times guys fall short. They don't love the game. Then you have to be -- it's the greatest team sport in the world, so you have to have an appreciation for being a good teammate, whether you are a leader, follower, whatever.

So I've been able to just talk about -- I mean, I don't think we realize how good Shedeur is, and we won't until he is gone. I just am really, really looking forward to him finishing this thing out the right way and then watching him play at the next level and just really killing it. I think it's

going to be fun for me.

**Q. Presumably, whoever takes Shedeur, would also in theory have a chance to maybe make some moves and acquire a second or third pick and target Travis. I know it sounds maybe like a little bit of fantasy football, but with the connection that they have and your experience being in the NFL, is that something that should be investigated based upon just the dynamic and the relationship that these two have?**

PAT SHURMUR: If they could pull that off, good for them. That's GM wizardry if you could pull that off. I have a huge respect for both players. I've told all the pro scouts, If you need a quarterback, take Shedeur. If you don't take him, you're taking the second best guy, in my opinion. If you don't need a quarterback and there are some teams that don't need a quarterback, you should take Travis. To me it's a very simple discussion.

When I think of these two players, these are guys that have helped change the course of history for Colorado Buffalo football, along with Coach Prime. I just have a huge respect for them, and I think they're just going to dominate the next level.

**Q. How rare is their chemistry for a wide receiver/quarterback combo? Just from my perspective, I haven't seen two guys in college that have had that much say in an offense or at least be listened to by somebody of your stature with your experience? What has it been like working with those two guys and their relationship?**

PAT SHURMUR: It's been awesome because we go in thinking it's going to look one way, and then the defenses always play us a little bit differently because of our skill and ability. So when we get out there, you know, we get a little feel for what's going on, and then there's a lot of conversation that goes on between Shedeur and Travis. How is he playing you? Let's throw this type of route.

It's a little free-flow, which has been just truly inspiring for me to be able to do that. It's going to be different next year. We're going to have to climb this mountain a little different way because these guys have been just -- and their chemistry. I guess your question was with regard to chemistry.

When a receiver and a wide receiver connect, there's a lot of time and effort that's gone into getting that right, and they're able to do it on Saturday, and that's what makes them great.

**Q. Speaking of Shedeur, obviously with JuJu kind of**



**on campus or here taking part in practices, how valuable and impactful is it for him to kind of be in the same meeting room with Shedeur and take in practice with Shedeur and be around him for this time period?**

PAT SHURMUR: I think it's very meaningful. JuJu has a bright future. He was just playing in a high school championship game here a few days ago, but to be around -- quarterbacks are always looking for perspective. They're always trying to learn from other quarterbacks, how you think about things, how you see this.

So any time JuJu can spend with Shedeur is time well spent. I kind of like this. Rob talked about the defensive players, but this is kind of like an orientation. I love this bowl prep.

We've had a bunch of practices, and for some of the young men that won't be here, this is the end of their season, but the way -- and I've been grinding on them now, for the guys that are going to be here next year in my opinion it's the beginning of their next season.

So for Shedeur as he is going out and any wisdom he can impart on JuJu and also Kaidon is important, and they should listen because he's a terrific player.

**Q. Speaking about facing a talented team in BYU, when looking at the film you've seen this past week, what is it that stands out to say, Okay, we need to be ready for that, or that excites us, We're excited about facing that matchup?**

PAT SHURMUR: Yeah, I think when you look at -- again, this is my first real role going through the roll call of teams that we're playing and watching them play on defense, and I've watched BYU play quite a bit.

We've had a lot of crossover time. I've watched them on tape. They play defense the right way. They're very physical up front, which you have to be in this game. It doesn't matter what level you're playing, high school, college, or pro. Very physical up front. Very fundamental in the back.

They have answers. So they might bring them all. They may drop them all out, and then they do everything in between. So we've got to be sharp with how we run it and how we throw it.

When we're in a position to make plays, we've got to make them. So we can't have any misfires. We've got to block our guys. We have to be physical to try to match how physical they are, and we've got to play good football.

I mean, it comes down to that every week, but this is an opponent that I have a great deal of respect for. I know not a lot, but some of their coaches -- I've coached BYU players in the past. Chad Lewis was my tight end at the Philadelphia Eagles. I look forward to seeing him on game day.

So these guys love the game. They love who they are, what they believe in, and it's going to be a great test.

**Q. Just curious if you got a chance to work alongside Rob this season and what you have learned from him, what's impressed him about you? If there was ever somebody that mentioned him to you from your NFL circles about what you might get to expect from working with him? What has it been like working alongside him?**

PAT SHURMUR: It's been awesome because we have a lot of the same experience. We're tied to Mike Zimmer. We're all tied together in a lot of ways. I worked for Mike obviously at the Vikings.

Hopefully he'll look better than I do, but I'm kind of Rob 20 years down the road, you know. We've had fun conversations about that. Our perspective on things, it's different, right? When you are in the NFL, it's different.

When we come back to college, it's different, but some of the things that we learned about directing a staff, working with players, taking advantage of matchups -- we talk about that quite a bit in the NFL. Those are all things that you learn.

But then on the flip side, as NFL guys, you have seen a lot of NFL guys go to college for a stretch and then go back to the NFL and have great success, like Todd Monken, right, Kliff Kingsbury, Liam Coen. There's this great interaction of things that helps us in some ways gain perspective and keep moving in this profession.

But this guy is going to be a head coach. If not this year, the next. So to be one of his co-workers and his friends, it's been a great year.

**Q. Last time we talked to you was the day before Kaidon Salter announced he was coming here, so you haven't had a chance to talk to you about him. What's your impressions of him and just that quarterback battle with JuJu and him, and obviously right now Ryan Staub is here as well.**

PAT SHURMUR: I'm excited. As we mentioned, when you lose somebody like Shedeur, you need about four or five guys to replace him. We're really thrilled.

Obviously JuJu has a bright future, and he's going to be battling his butt off to be our guy next year. We brought in Kaidon Salter, who is an experienced young man. Got one year left. Really excited for him. He's roughly a 3,000-yard passer and 1,000-yard rusher. He's played a lot of really, really good football. So he's on campus as well. He was out there today doing his thing.

Getting them oriented, right? We're going to play this game. We're going to get back to work, and then as the offseason starts, we feel really good about that.

Then Ryan Staub has done a wonderful job. I think his one exposure was last year against Utah where he did a great job. That was one of those games where we just didn't have enough time, right? Had we gotten back on the field, we might have had a chance to win it, but certainly Ryan played well. He's done that through practice this year as well.

**Q. You touched on this a little bit, but about this BYU defense, one thing that really stands out is their secondary and kind of their ball-hawkingness, I guess. I don't know if that's a word, but we'll call it one.**

PAT SHURMUR: We'll work with that.

**Q. What's sort of your perspective of those guys on the back end of their D?**

PAT SHURMUR: Yeah, they do a good job. I think one of the hallmarks of a defense is getting turnovers, right. As a quarterback, you've got to put the ball in the right spot.

Typically if they're tipped balls or overthrows, then the guys on the back end, especially on the inside, the safeties, have a chance to pick balls off. So we have to throw the ball accurately and catch it when it's thrown to us. I think that goes without saying.

Then on the outside, the corners do a good job in one-on-one situations of getting ball production. That's one of the hallmarks of a good defense is getting the ball turned over.

We're going to do everything in our power when we take the field to score points. As Rob talked about on the flip side, the job of the defense is to make sure that doesn't happen. One of the key ways to do it is to get the ball turned over. They do a good job of that.

**Q. One of the guys that's going to be playing in his last college game is Jimmy Horn. Because of injuries he hasn't maybe had the season he was hoping to. It**

**seems like guys have put their arm around him. How have you seen him respond to maybe not having the season he has? I know you can't force things as a coordinator, but is that a guy you would like to get involved on Saturday?**

PAT SHURMUR: Yeah, we would love to get Jimmy involved. When he was out there this year, we tried to, right? We, unfortunately, have a lot of different targets.

Jimmy can make an impact. The thing about Jimmy is he's fast-fast. We've seen it first series of the game against North Dakota State. If he catches the ball in the back end, he can score touchdowns. I think that's the beauty of him.

Then as you get to know Jimmy, he's got a wonderful spirit. You've got to love Jimmy Horn, and you just root for him to have success.

So it would be a smart thing for us, but we'll try to get him the ball this week -- or this Saturday. If he does what he can do with the ball, that will be good for us. So we would like to send him out the right way.

He's had these little nagging injury things that kind of kept him out of the smooth flow of things for us. So he's back healthy now, and hopefully we can get him going.

**Q. Will Sheppard told us a couple of weeks ago that LaJohntay has been a real leader in that room throughout the season. Just curious from your perspective kind of how LaJohntay's has impacted the rest of the wide receiver room and how much you're looking forward to seeing him try to carve a role for himself in the NFL going forward?**

PAT SHURMUR: I think he's a pro. When guys ask me about it, there's a bunch of guys that I talk about as being pros. We've got four receivers, and we have a quarterback that come to mind, right?

I think LaJohntay is one of those guys. The thing he does -- and this could be a public service announcement for him, but he returns kicks. I'm thinking about when you pick a guy and you're building a roster, he's a kick returner, right? He took one yard this year. He plays in the slot. He does the dirty work, and he blocks.

For the slot corner and a slot receiver, there's a lot more going on when you play in the slot. You're closer to the big guys. There's combinations of things that can happen.

There's obviously less going on for the outside corner as well as the outside receiver. So on the inside you've got to block, which he does a great job of. He makes tough

catches. He shows up in critical times in the game, and he's a tough-spirited guy that I think we forget that I think in his former school he was a walk-on that earned a scholarship.

So I've got a warm place in my heart for those kind of guys, and he's been productive. Just go back to what you are looking for in a pro, right? A guy that has skill and ability... check; a guy that's produced... check; a guy that loves the game... check; and then a guy who understands the importance of being a good teammate... check.

In my mind he's checked all the boxes, and just like the top two guys we're talking about, anybody that chooses to draft 'Tay, wherever they do, I mean, they're getting a baller.

**Q. This is your second year as coordinator.**

PAT SHURMUR: First full, but yeah.

**Q. How does that compare to your stay with Denver and your relationship -- you mentioned chemistry between Travis and Shedeur. What's that chemistry like between yourself and Shedeur, and when did you think you kind of hit your groove there with him?**

PAT SHURMUR: Yeah, there are so many similarities to coordinating in the NFL. We can get to that. It's probably for another time.

With my relationship with Shedeur, you know, it started last year. I was walking my daughter down the aisle a couple Julys ago, and Coach Prime called me and said, I would like you to come out as an analyst and put some pro eyes on Shedeur and help him and what not.

Then as time went on, my role changed quite a bit. Early on, we developed a really good relationship. I think that's the key part of this business that people don't spend enough time on. You just can't start teaching these guys plays. You've got to get to know them. They've got to know you believe in them. I think that's what Rob does a great job with his staff and his players.

So that started for me a couple of years ago. Then when I was put in control of the offense, it just happened faster. I believe in the young man. I listen to him. Even though I'm almost 60 -- I'm a grandfather now, three times. Let's see December 2nd, December 8th, and December 12th, my three oldest children had babies. So I'm going to get the first flight out of here on Sunday to go meet two of them. I can't wait for that.

But, no, that relationship, so whether you are a grandfather or a coach of working with young people, that's where it

starts. So then when we start talking about plays, it's easy, right?

We had a play today we were running in practice that I see very clearly. Well, for whatever reason, it's a really good play. Shedeur just doesn't quite see it the way I see it. We're going to move on to something else. We have a lot of other plays, right? If he doesn't see it the way I see it and we can't get a completion and make it happen, we'll move on.

I think that's one little example of how the relationship works, but this is a relationship business. When coaches lose sight of that, which is easy to happen at times because of the grind of it and the scrutiny of it -- when you lose sight of that, then I think you lose sight of the big picture, and it's not good.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach. Questions for the players, please.

**Q. Just for LaJohntay, obviously you're getting a chance to get the No. 1 now and get to wear it in your final game here as a Buff. What does that mean to you? Kind of what was that process like of trying to get the number kind of all season?**

LaJOHNTAY WESTER: It mean a lot, first and foremost. It's a blessing to be able to get the number that you wanted.

The process, it was a tough process. I had to get my grades up, but I completed it. I got it done. You know, I'm excited for the game on Saturday.

**Q. This question is for Shedeur. Pat Shurmur was in here and talking about the relationship with you. I know you've had a number of different coordinators during your college career, but can you talk about what you've maybe gleaned from all of them and also specifically with Pat and why he has been such a good coordinator for you?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: Each year I would say more and more has been put on my plate. The more experience I got, the more years and tasks on hand, the more ball I played. At this point it's kind of -- he brought a different perspective from the league perspective coming into college and being able to adjust and help me see things in a different perspective, in a different way.

So we could all look at the defense on the board, but we all could have different point of views. So that's why I'm thankful to be in a situation I'm in and have all the different offensive coordinators and ending with him because he's

been at the biggest level, the highest level you could get.

I was able to learn a lot from each and every one of those coordinators to where it all built me into the player I am today.

**Q. This one could be for Shedeur and Jimmy as well. Speaking with BYU earlier, they talked about how excited they are to get to play against such a talented roster, and your coaches came in and talked about the strong defensive front they have. What are you looking forward to most when it comes to going up against BYU?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: For me it's problem-solving. We know they're going to do a lot of exotic things and a lot of different things we probably haven't seen on film, but we just have to always stick to the basics and do what we do best.

They're a talented team, and they listen to their coaches and do everything 98% right. It's defense, so defense -- eventually somebody is going to bust a coverage, and that is what it is. Watching film on them is very hard to find a tell and very hard to find a flaw when it comes to them because of the way they go about their business, the way they get in their stunts, the way they're able to move and react different ways.

You don't know who is doing what, you know, so they have a great scheme. They have a great everything. I'm very blessed for my final collegiate game to go against that type of challenge.

JIMMY HORN JR.: To piggyback off of Shedeur, really we're going -- like what we're looking forward to basically, like, he's really said everything. They're a real good, disciplined team, and we just have to go out there and execute our game plan and play smart.

**Q. Question for Shedeur. Obviously everyone knows you and your dad's tradition from the game just walking to the end zone and walking back. I know Shilo has joined a couple of times this season. How much are you looking forward to that last one this Saturday, and kind of what do you feel like the conversation will be during that time?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: I think the walk is the least of my worries right now. I think they've got a pretty good D, and it's bound to go second round, early second round. So that's kind of my focus right now. I'm not really focused on a walk with him. There are bigger things and bigger tasks at hand.

The main thing is just to win the game and do it in a dominant fashion, do it very clean and precise. That's what our focus is. So in these final days wrapping up everything to get to the game, just cleaning minor things up that we see flaws and watching old games.

We play honestly and just getting back in that -- taking yourself back through those situations, those times since we had so much time off.

**Q. Shedeur, it's --**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: By the way, you know I got a lot of teammates up here too (laughing). I'm just saying because they wouldn't have come if it was just about me. It's pointless for them to come.

**Q. Well, on that note, it's not a question we are used to ask football players, and it's almost crazy to ask a football player this question, but why are you playing in this game? Why did you make you make a decision to play a game that so many other guys in your situation don't necessarily do?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: I don't do what other people do. I feel like that's even from the beginning. We went to HBCU and I had every offer in the country. I don't really care what other people do. I'll say it's about the team, and it's about everything I stand for. You know, it is about equality. Just because they projected X, Y, and Z, that don't mean I can't play with my X, Y, and Zs. You get what I'm saying? I got to play with my receivers. I've got to be able to play with the team, the O-line, everything like that because we may not ever have a chance to play again together on the same team.

So it's about cherishing the moment. It's about knowing this is the final collegiate game, and each and every game we left it all out there. There's no regret. I don't ever want to go anywhere with regret, so that's the thing.

If I felt like anything negative, I wouldn't have played this year. I was going first round last year regardless anyway, so -- you feel me? It's no difference. I would have just went.

**Q. You mentioned a problem-solver on the field. In realtime situations is it just you and Coach Shurmur? Is it you and Coach Prime, or your receivers, your teammates? Who is helping you make those decision? Can you speak to that, please?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: It's a little bit of everything. Like I say, I talk to them on the sidelines and get their perspectives. I ask them, Okay -- well, I'm not going to tell



you too much what I ask them, but anyway, I get the details I need to know from their perspectives to know how to attack the defense, to see if they're seeing what I'm seeing, so we're all on the same page and then we recap.

Of course, we have our own mini-conversations and then we recap with Coach Shurmur and talk about how we're going to go moving forward. So that's what it is in problem-solving.

You can watch a team. We came out a couple of games where we watched the team the whole year, and it was four down front, and they came out at odd. We seen everything. That's what Utah did to us early on in the game. It kind of threw us off a little bit.

We had that challenge. We had that milestone already, so we knew how to adjust. That's why anything -- I'll say pretty much everything now, we have the solution. It's just we've got to get to it early. We can't wait until -- yeah, we can't wait until it's too late or until after halftime to get to that point.

That's what I'm most excited for. We all know what's at stake. We all know what's on the line. We just have to start fast and do it early on.

**Q. I have one more for Shedeur. Whoever drafts you might be interested in adding some of these guys next to you to the feel. Would you mind going through and just if that team asks you, Hey, what is do you think of LaJohntay, Will, Cam, or Jimmy, what would you tell them?**

SHEDEUR SANDERS: So for sure LaJohntay for sure he's going to get open. He is a threat all over the field. It's hard. I haven't seen too many receivers get in and out the breaks how he do. Man-to-man coverage, it's very tough to guard him.

I'm, like, after some plays I ask him, like, Dang, bro, I didn't know you were going to get open on this because it's not supposed to be there, but you still made it happen. So that's for LaJohntay for sure.

Will, definitely 50/50 ball guy. I feel like I know how to get him going. I know how to -- I was going to say something, but -- I was going to say something, but no, I know how to turn that switch on for him whenever through good, bad, through everything. He overcame a lot this season.

At a big stage you can understand there's not a lot of people and players in college football that go through as much pressure as playing for the Colorado Buffaloes. He dealt with pros and the cons of everything. He is

level-headed and understands each and every game I got to go out there and make a big impact.

So definitely going to go up and get the ball, go and make plays. I don't really call him 50/50 ball. It's automatic.

Cam for sure I don't really like going against him that much. Cam, he's going to do his job, and he's Mr. Consistent. That's probably the most consistent player we have. Everything that he does is consistent. The way he practices, the way he goes about his business. We've been doing it since HBCU.

There's no level or anything that could get to him. There's nothing. Fame, lights, money, there's nothing that can get to him because we all came from the same area, that same challenges, the same journey. So we're almost the same, I would say. He's just on the defensive side of the ball. He's the quarterback of the defense.

Jimmy Horn, he's definitely fast. Jimmy, I'm real disappointed right now because Jimmy was playing through a lot of injuries this year, so I take that personal that he wasn't able to get the numbers and do what he was supposed to do because we had big plans, big everything with him and Omarion. That hurt me, I will say, and he hasn't been able to show his best yet.

So maybe it's not the perfect time for him to hit his peak. Maybe it's year three, year four in the league, you know, we're on the same team for him to really maximize his full potential, but he's able to get open. When he's healthy, he is very unstoppable, and it's tough to guard him in man coverage.

Any one of them I'm excited to play with, where I really hope. I really hope it happens, you know. I really hope it does because I know them. I know everything about them. So who knows? I would be excited for it, though. I'm definitely pulling for them, though. I definitely am.

THE MODERATOR: Appreciate your time, Shedeur. Questions for the other players?

**Q. I've got one for Cam. Coach Livingston a couple of weeks ago was almost getting a little bit emotional talking about yourself and some of the seniors that you're going to play in your last game this Saturday. Just wondering if you could speak to just kind of the emotions of getting to work alongside him this season and growing that bond since he got on campus last winter?**

CAM'RON SILMON-CRAIG: Ever since Coach Livingston got here, he just trusted me with defense. He always tells

me, I trust Cam with my kids. That means a lot to me. That means a lot to everyone on the team just because I don't really look at him as a DC. I look at him as a teammate. It's kind of that kind of thing. He's in the grind with us every day.

He's just a wonderful guy, a terrific guy. But honestly he changed my life. He changed my life for the better. When he came in, he came in with no playbook. He told me, What do you like to do? What do you like to see?

We went with, it and I love him for it, and I love him for it for life.

**Q. Kind of building off what Shedeur said there, Jimmy, obviously you've been dealing with those injuries. How have you gotten through that and been feeling in these bowl practices?**

JIMMY HORN JR.: I've been feeling pretty good. The way I got through it, I go to treatment every day, you know. Just got to show up and get the treatment for my body, so I can go out there and perform.

**Q. What would it mean for you to have a big performance on Saturday in your final game as a Buff?**

JIMMY HORN JR.: It would mean a lot. I want everybody to have I great performance. You know, you don't want to finish your last game just wishing should have, could have, you know what I'm saying? Just want to finish out strong with a great performance.

**Q. LaJohntay, this has potential to be the last game you play with your brother. What does that mean to you? What kind of advice are you looking to leave him with as you move on to the NFL and he has another year in college?**

LaJOHNTAY WESTER: Playing with my little brother, man, it's amazing. It's a blessing. Going into this last one I definitely am going to get a little emotional.

All I'm going to tell him is just keep grinding, man. When your time come -- I tell him all the time, When your time come, let them see it. Let them see what we be working on. Let them see what I see, what all our family sees.

He just patiently is waiting until when his time comes, he's going to show the world.

**Q. For each one of you, can you just talk about ending your career in a bowl game like this? For a lot of you, you went through some losing seasons where you were at before, so what does it mean to you starting**

**from Jimmy on down what does it mean to be in this bowl game and finish your career this way?**

JIMMY HORN JR.: It mean a lot. It's been a journey. It's my first bowl game since I've been in college, so I'm real excited, man.

I just want to thank all my teammates and everybody, the coaching staff, the coaches. It's been a real journey, man. You know, we worked real hard to get where we're at. I can't thank nobody enough because I wouldn't be here without them. It's been a journey, man.

I'm just thankful and blessed for this opportunity to be in a bowl game. I cherish this. I'm going to go out there and play real hard. So I'm just ready.

CAM'RON SILMON-CRAIG: Like he said, it means everything, everything to us. Especially for me when I came in Boulder after the 1-11 team, and we had to build a lot of things and go out. A lot of people hated on us, but look at us and where we're at.

It mean a lot to be here, just to be here at this wonderful establishment in San Antonio. It just means a lot. We always pray to be here to be somewhere in the bowl game. It's been great.

WILL SHEPPARD: This is my first bowl game too. It's been a blessing especially to be at one of the best bowl games outside of the College Football Playoff and get to play with everybody on this stage and everybody back at the hotel up with more team.

LaJOHNTAY WESTER: Just piggybacking off of them, this is our first -- this is my first real bowl game. I had a bowl game in the Montgomery Bowl in 2020, COVID season. I'm just taking it all in. It's hard to get here.

This is our Super Bowl. We didn't make it to the College Football Playoffs, so this is our playoff game. We're locked in just like this is our Super Bowl. So we're ready.

**Q. This one for Jimmy and Cam. Both of you being here for the last two years, you have the opportunity to be around some of these younger guys. Cam, Jimmy, we've seen both of you with impassioned speeches in front of the team. How important is it for you both of you to pass down the standard that you helped re-establish? Cam, you spoke about that after the Oregon State game that there was no standard when you got here. Now you guys take a lot of pride in being able to set that. Have you gone out of your way to maybe go to some of the younger guys and make sure that they're getting acclimated?**

CAM'RON SILMON-CRAIG: Yeah, of course, because we didn't get a chance to play for a Big 12 Championship or a National Championship. We still want to see that happen here. We still want these guys to go do something.

I talk to the newcomers, the freshmen, the early enrollee guys all the time because they're building something here. We're really building something. We are the guys that you'll remember that started this.

So when they get to win, it's like, Okay, that's the time for us to come back and be, like, Man, we started all this for y'all. That's what I always think about. I know one day it's going to happen for us. I just make sure I pass that standard down. It's very important.

It's a difference for me because the guys that came in in December, like the early enrollees, I could just tell they're different. I could tell it's a different mentality. Like when me and Jimmy come in in January, we had guys come in. They just wasn't there, but these guys are working their butt off in practice already. They only had like two or three practices.

It's going to be great. It's especially important to make sure you keep passing it down.

JIMMY HORN JR.: To piggyback off what Cam was saying, the coaches got the blueprint. Us players, we set a foundation that the younger kids that come in, and they got to build off of. They come to practice every day to work. Every day they're working and working.

It's good to see younger kids that's coming in that's freshmen that really want to play because when I was at the other program, you could just tell -- you just know who really want it and who really don't want it. You know what I'm saying? We just got to -- I was just talking to them just -- I don't know, man.

**Q. This is for all of you. Specifically you, Cam. You spent a lot of time with Coach Prime and this coaching staff. You're having a lot of success in the portal. Why do you think the coaching techniques and the experience of Coach Prime and the rest of the coaching staff is being so successful?**

CAM'RON SILMON-CRAIG: That's an interesting question. The biggest thing I can think about -- I can't really think too much -- it's just work. You get here, and you're going to have to work your butt off. Nothing is going to be handed to you.

Any of these guys can tell you. When I first got here, when

Jimmy first got here, when Will first got here, when Wester first got here, it was kind of like, alright, it's a different speed. It's different. Coaches talk a little different. They move a little different. So just the work. Just the work you have to come here and put in.

It's kind of like a survival. You get here and are, like, I'm trying to survive. When you get to the season, and that's when LaJohntay go for 200, Will go for 200, Jimmy go for 200. You know what I'm saying? That's what happens when you get through the work. It's all about the work when you come here.

**Q. Both these teams were part of that four-way tie for the Big 12 title, but you're the two that didn't get to go to that title game. Have you talked about this maybe being sort of a secondary Big 12 title game?**

LaJOHNTAY WESTER: Yeah, a little bit. BYU was top of the conference at one point of the season. We was top of the conference at one point in the season. So, I mean, y'all seen the Big 12 game. Yeah, it was cool, you know.

So we're going to give y'all a show, real Big 12 show on Saturday. That's all I'm going to say.

WILL SHEPPARD: We both had to watch other games to see if we were going to get in, so I think it's kind of a personal thing for everybody knowing that we couldn't be in that game and seeing how that game went and just kind of making this one like similar and make it like the Super Bowl for us.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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