

Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: Pitt vs Michigan State

Sunday, December 26, 2021

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Pitt Panthers

Lucas Krull

Press Conference

Q. In the huddle with the new guy running the show in the huddle, what's been the biggest difference in the huddle in calling plays and everything between Nick and Kenny?

LUCAS KRULL: Truthfully, there's not a lot. That's something that as an offense we've known since I've been here is Nick's a guy that, when Kenny is not in there, he steps up and he replaces those shoes really well. He comes in, controls the huddle. He's a general out there. Does a really good job with this offense and getting us where we need to be.

He doesn't skip a beat from where Kenny was. That's something that we're really happy about as an offense because when you have a change, you wonder, can this guy do this? And we've always known he can, and he's shown that.

Q. Coach Narduzzi informed us that Salem will be calling the plays for the Peach Bowl. Obviously a guy that you worked closely with week in, week out, day in, day out. And what's it been like from how smooth it's been and how the practices so far with Salem covering things?

LUCAS KRULL: Similar to what I was just saying about Patti with Turbo and Coach Salem, just stepping right in filling shoes tremendously. He's a guy been doing this a long time, knows how to do it. That's what we know as an offense, we haven't skipped a beat with Patti, and Turbo stepping up. It's just another day, and we're getting back to work, working out things that we have always needed to work out, and improving all things on and off the field. So Turbo is a great leader and everybody respects him. We love him to death. And so we're going to play our hearts out for him, and we know he's going to give us his best too.

Q. What has he meant to your development this year and Gavin as well, just that room that's produced so



much for you guys this season?

LUCAS KRULL: I can't say enough about Turbo and the things he does for me and the tight ends as a whole and, really, just the team. It doesn't matter if you're a tight end or you're a DB, he's always energetic, always knows who you are, knows your parents, know your family. If you've got a girlfriend, he knows everything.

That's what you appreciate as a coach, as a player. Sometimes you don't get that. And that's something that I've appreciated. And I'll never forget just being here and being with him and the things he's done for me on and off the field, whether it's confidence-wise or just working out and getting plays in and out. So it's something I love about him and I'll cherish forever.

Q. Just what you can say about, you made the decision to come into Pittsburgh from Florida. What was it about the program back then, and hindsight 20/20, what can you say about where this program stands in the world of college football in your opinion?

LUCAS KRULL: Yeah, I think you see just a lot of growth. Since I stepped on campus here, I came with a purpose and that was to get an ACC championship and play with Kenny Pickett and this team. And that's something that I'll cherish for the rest of my life and being in the ACC championship with this team.

Every year, every week you see, in the offseason, the guys, we just come together more and more. It's a real unit as a whole and this team and it's a brotherhood that a lot of teams wish to have.

And we have that and that's something I love about this team, is just the unity and how well we play together.

Q. To go off that, but obviously with you coming in from Florida to a program like Pitt, how has being at Pitt helped you be a better tight end and just get better as a player?

LUCAS KRULL: At Florida, I was a special teams guy getting tiger sets with Kyle Pitts. I knew where I wanted to



go which was a place like this where I could come in, be a guy for them and be someone that can be a leader and help this team win week in, week out.

And gratefully, I've been able to do that. So that's something that I love about this team is they accept me with open arms and I came in with a purpose, and I'm exceeding that because that's what we're doing here and we're going for 12 wins, and got the ACC championship but we're not done yet. That's what I told these guys, I love this team because this is something that's so special and not a lot of teams can say they've done. So we're going for 12, and we're not done yet.

Q. You've always had such a special bond with Kenny. You talked about how he was your best friend, how he was the guy who pulled you to Pitt when you talked to him and you've had several big moments this year, not just including the game-winning touchdown in overtime against North Carolina but just several connections. That chemistry that you guys had, plays that you guys could call and he knew where you would be and you knew where he wanted it, how has that been trying to reestablish something like that with Nick? I know Nick Patti can't be Kenny Pickett, but it's important to have that tight end/quarterback chemistry. What's it been like trying to work with that with him?

LUCAS KRULL: That's a great question, and I can't say it enough. He's literally filling these shoes. It's, like, it's his job and he's doing so well. Even in the spring when Kenny would take some reps and we'd let Nick come in, get reps, it's the same thing, hitting me deep or underneath. Wherever I'm open, he's finding me, or any other guy, Jordan, Jared Wayne, doesn't matter. It's something you appreciate as a backup quarterback that's now filling in quarterback one's shoes, that he embraces it and he loves it.

If you look at his high school stats, I think he had like 700 yards with his tight ends so I know he loves them. So that's good for me. And I mean, I can't say enough about Nick. Man, he's a competitor. He's a general. And we have all the faith in the world, and you guys are going to see that Thursday.

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