

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

Monday, December 27, 2021

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Michigan State Spartans

Drew Beesley

Press Conference

Q. I know it's been a year a little bit more than that since you guys have gone to a bowl game. I'm wondering just how you were able to prepare the younger guys for this experience and how has it been watching them go through it as this will be your final time?

DREW BEESLEY: I think a lot of the young guys need to understand it's a business trip. At the end of the week the main goal of this business trip is to win the football game. But at the same time, there's a lot of guys that haven't visited this great city of Atlanta. I've never visited this city of Atlanta personally.

So it's a great experience. And I hope the guys remember this time that we have together in this city and all the fun things that we're doing together, provided by the bowl and everybody here. What I preach to the young guys is just take it in because you'll never get this treatment ever again once your time playing ball is over.

Q. You have been on a wild ride since 2016. There are some big ups and big downs and major changes. How would you sum it up as you look at nearly the finish? And how important is it to you that this season really went out on a high note?

DREW BEESLEY: Well, I think through all the ups and downs and all the adversity I faced over the course of my career, it just shows that this football team, this Michigan State football team, is resilient and can get out of any situation.

And regardless of a win or a loss or whatever the case may be, we go back to ground zero and we try to focus on winning the next game and focusing on the next task at hand. And that concept of neutral thinking that Coach Tuck introduced to me is something that I've taken with me since he got here. And it's working out for me and my teammates very well so far.



And obviously the goal is to help me and my seniors, fellow seniors, finish out our careers on a high note, and Luke Campbell and Matt Allen and AJ Arcuri and Matt Coghlin, all the sixth-year guys that we've been together so long, we always talk about how we want to finish on a high note and we'll do everything in our power to do so.

Q. You've had some ups and downs with the defense this year overall. What's the outlook with one more game for your career here at Michigan State, but the defense overall this season and playing another top offense and a chance to maybe close on a high note like you were talking about overall?

DREW BEESLEY: Well, we can't say we've played perfect ball over the course of the season. And all we can do is just look at the tape, learn from our mistakes and it's not just one guy making a mistake, it's everybody making a mistake. We're in this together as a defense.

And that's just everybody doing their job -- D line, linebackers, DBs, the whole defense working together as a whole. And the mistakes that we made, we learn from them. We move on and try to figure out how we can get better.

And Pitt has a very good offense. And they do a lot of great things. And I feel like Coach Haze and the defensive staff is preparing us well for this game.

Q. Wondering how difficult it has been to prepare for Pitt when their quarterback, Nick Patti, hasn't played much in two years?

DREW BEESLEY: We haven't seen a lot of him this season, with Kenny Pickett being their guy. But from what we did see, he does a lot of great things on offense. He's relatively similar to Pickett. And our goal is just to neutralize him as best we can, try to put pressure on him constantly in the pass game and try to stop the run up front.

Q. Obviously you mentioned the fact that this is a business trip. At the end of the week you want to win



the football game, but you do get to experience a lot of great events with the Peach Bowl. I'm sure you're seeing that over the last couple of days. But have you ever been to the College Football Hall of Fame? And what are you hoping to get out of that tonight?

DREW BEESLEY: I've never been to the College Football Hall of Fame. I'm excited for that and everything else that the Peach Bowl is providing. The Battle for the Bowl belt, that's something that our guys enjoy doing. Yesterday we went to Andretti, did the go-kart racing. That was a lot of fun.

And the night before that, on Christmas, we did the basketball deal. Our guys enjoyed that, too. You can tell. Payton and J. Reed and all those guys that were participating, they were enjoying. And the guys watching, they were going absolutely nuts.

This is definitely a good team-bonding experience. This team being, it being our last moments together. So I'm hoping that all of our guys are savoring every moment.

Q. When you were able to come back from your injury situation and play the last game of October and through November, as the season came to an end, what percentage do you think you were of your former self, and are you now closer to your former self? How would you characterize that progression, if you wouldn't mind talking about that a little bit?

DREW BEESLEY: When I came back against the school down the road, obviously I wasn't a hundred percent. I had to shave off a little bit of the rust here and there. But as every week progressed I felt I got a little better each week. And after the Penn State game we had a little bit of time off. That gave me some time to recover and help get my body right and along with the rest of the guys.

And I feel the best I've ever felt in a long time. And credit to our training staff and our strength staff for helping me, to help giving me the tools to do what I could to get better. I couldn't have done it myself.

Q. Have you had a chance to take a look at any young players in the program earlier in bowl practice, maybe some young offensive linemen that have caught your eye, that have not been in the playing group? Anyone come to mind in that category?

DREW BEESLEY: Yeah, one guy that I've gone against a lot during practice is Brandon Baldwin. He's a young guy. He has a lot of upside to him. And he has a lot of good things that he brings to the table. And with a little bit more experience I'm sure he's going to be a great ball player

down the road.

And Geno VanDeMark is another guy that I think can really make an impact in the future. He brings a lot of energy to practice, helping the scout team guys get going, bring the juice a little bit. And I'm excited for both those guys down the road for sure.

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