

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

Monday, December 27, 2021

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Michigan State Spartans

Cal Haladay

Press Conference



Q. Coming from maybe just slightly eastern Pennsylvania, when you were coming up, recruiting, how much did you know about Michigan State football and when do you first remember learning about Michigan State?

CAL HALADAY: Michigan State football came probably later in my junior year. I didn't really know it was going to happen, but when I did I was excited, really excited I got the opportunity to go up to East Lansing and play football for a great coaching staff and just had a great opportunity.

Q. Wondered about the challenges of facing a quarterback who hasn't had as many reps this year and not much game tape in with Patti, and I know Coach as a second part of this, Coach also talked about Quavaris probably being doubtful for this game. Wondering how you've adjusted without him over the course of the final few weeks of the season.

CAL HALADAY: The quarterback for Pitt that's going to be playing, we've watched film of him and we're getting the best idea that we can on him. He's a good player.

And Noah has been filling in and doing great these past couple of weeks, and I think he'll be ready to go if Q can't play.

Q. I'm wondering, as you guys sort of get a fresh start for a bowl game, how important it is for a defense that's been banged up that had some rough weeks in November to sort of change how you feel about the way the season ended and the things you can do and sort of have a game to build on, like how much has that been talked about and how important is that?

CAL HALADAY: It's been really important. Kind of getting back to our fundamentals and techniques and stuff like that, it's been really important, keys to these past couple of weeks. We've been just practicing all the little things,

getting the finer details of the defense and just trying to get stuff in that maybe we weren't quite getting. And now we're just fine tuning everything and getting ready for this game and also with the injuries, it just gives you time to get prepared and healed up for this game.

Q. I was just wondering, because obviously you're a freshman. And when you're thrown into that setting early on in the season, what is your mindset like then versus now when you're getting ready for bowl preparation?

CAL HALADAY: I think from the first game, definitely nervous and excited at the same time. Now it's kind of become more like used to experience. So I think it's been easier as the year went on for sure. But it's definitely been an adjustment in the beginning of the year, but it slowly got better and better, I think.

Q. You didn't actually grow up in Pitt's backyard but you won three straight Pennsylvania state championships at southern Columbia. How much contact did you have with Pitt during the recruiting process?

CAL HALADAY: I had a little bit of contact with Pitt. They talked to me a little bit my junior year, too. I went down there. It's a great school. Great coaching staff as well. And I just ended up in East Lansing. That's just how it ended up.

Q. I want to revisit that question about Quavaris Crouch if you don't mind. Obviously the two of you have been the starting duo for the entire season what's it been like playing with him as your line backing partner picked up a thing or two from him just from him being a more experienced player?

CAL HALADAY: He seems to know the game pretty well. He's a crazy athlete. And he's been, as the season's gone on, he's been kind of trying to show me some stuff that he's done or has worked for him. I think he's a great player, and I think we can all learn a lot from him when he's out on the field because he plays hard, plays fast.

