

CFP Semifinal

Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl:

Georgia vs Ohio State

Monday, December 26, 2022

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Ohio State Buckeyes

Cade Stover

Press Conference



**PLAYOFF
SEMIFINAL**



MATT GARVEY: Cade, welcome. Thanks for the time. We're going to continue with Cade Stover now.

Q. Cade, the Michigan game was a month ago. Does it seem like a month ago? Does it seem like a day ago? Does it seem like a year ago? How gratified are you that you get a second chance?

CADE STOVER: All our focus is on Georgia right now. I mean, that one stings, yes, but right now we're focusing on winning this game right now, and we're not worried about that.

Q. Cade, I asked Steele this maybe last week. Both you and him had a lot of success switching positions. Ohio State has done it before. Chip goes back and forth. Xavier plays receiver and running back sometimes. What is it at Ohio State that makes you guys as a program so successful? Is there something to a specific player being good at being able to change positions and be successful at it so quickly?

CADE STOVER: I just think that sometimes there's multiple, different versatile players on this team that can really do a lot of things. To figure out what they're best at, you've got to move them around a couple times and give them a try at each one of them.

We've gotten lucky enough to have a few guys stick at one of those spots, and it's been good.

Q. Just wanted to ask about what stood out to you about Georgia's defensive line, just knowing you guys are going to be going up against them on Saturday?

CADE STOVER: That's a tough big front seven, athletic and long. We're excited for the challenge, and we're

excited to play them.

Q. Before you guys even knew you were going to play Georgia and really before you knew for sure you were in the playoff, those practices and the mindset sort of started shifting to Georgia, right that week of the conference championship games. Do you think that set any kind of tone, and did it pay off for you guys in the weeks leading up to now?

CADE STOVER: I think any time you've got an opportunity to get back on the field earlier than what you expected and without a set in stone, foreseen future, for us to be out there and practice and have those couple days was very helpful and very beneficial now.

Q. I was wondering, have you guys, amongst each other, spoken about this or thought about this? 23 points is not enough to win games like this, and 3 points in the second half is not acceptable. How much has that stuck in y'all's craw as you prepare for this game knowing the challenge ahead of you?

CADE STOVER: We practice every play, every snap. If it doesn't score, then that's not acceptable for us. Clearly that's not -- I mean, that obtainable of course. It's football. They practice too.

We expect to go in there and be successful every drive, and if we don't, we're going to come back and solve our problems.

Q. Last year at this time, you were switching over, you were playing linebacker in the Rose Bowl. There was kind of a hodge-podge on offense. Your two top receivers didn't even play in that game obviously. They opted out and stuff. Is there a sense of maybe come on is not the right word, but of confidence that this group is together? Do you understand what I mean? You know who's who, you know who's got each other's back, et cetera, going into this one.

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CADE STOVER: Yeah, we've got a good group of guys here that we trust each other, and we're excited to go in here with the group we've got.

Q. I just wondered in the tight end fraternity, do you keep up much with other tight ends? Obviously Georgia has a couple good ones in Brock Bowers and Darnell Washington. The position itself seems to have had a resurgence in football overall, certainly has in Georgia, but seems like it has in other places too. Can you speak to that?

CADE STOVER: It's a very key piece to a good offense. If you've got a guy -- I mean, it's both, your offensive lineman and your receiver. If you've got a guy that can do both, you can really add elements to your offense that you wouldn't if you had a guy who couldn't do that.

So I think overall having the tight end position really coming back to life has a lot to do with that and people realizing you can do a lot with that position.

Q. So many people are talking about the Georgia tight ends. Do you think -- have the Ohio State tight ends heard that? What do you guys think about that? Are you guys being overlooked, your position?

CADE STOVER: That's a good question. I don't know, man. I'm not getting caught up in what's being said, what's not being said. It really doesn't matter at the end of the day here. We're just trying to win this game.

Q. Cade, I know you guys don't play like super fast up tempo all the time, but when you do, it does seem to kind of suit you guys well and be effective. What do you like as an offense when you do get to play that fast, and how does it feel when you're able to put a defense on its heels that way?

CADE STOVER: Just like you said, keeping the defense on its heels and not letting their feet get on the ground and really get their keys nice right away. It can lead to indecision here and just some blown coverages here and there. So we like to mix it in here and there.

Q. I know you would never want to use this as an excuse, but you were a little banged up the last few weeks of the regular season. How much do you think that impacted you or limited you at all? How much did some time this month help you get ready for Saturday night?

CADE STOVER: Everybody is banged up at the end of the season. Whether how much it affected me or not, I'll never

admit it because that's just the way it is. You can't be like that. You're playing football. You signed up to get beat up, so you'd better play beat up.

Last couple weeks have been nice, though, to kind of get your feet back underneath you here, and hopefully we'll come into this game healthy.

Q. Obviously it's extremely tough to run the ball against this Georgia team, but how much is offensive balance being stressed right now, especially given the way that second half went against Michigan?

CADE STOVER: We've got the plays down. We've got the people here to do it. It's just the fact of putting it all together here and playing all 11 together and just doing our job one at a time here and being successful running the ball.

MATT GARVEY: Cade, that's going to do it. Thank you very much. We appreciate your time.

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