

# Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: Texas vs Arizona State

Friday, December 27, 2024

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

**Arizona State Sun Devils**

**Caleb McCullough**

Press Conference

**Q. Just kind of wanted to ask with the middle linebacker, linebacking position, kind of looking at Texas, how patient do you think you're going to have to be especially with some of those slow match RPOs they like to run on sort of medium distance downs?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: Pretty patient. I think I'm not too much worried about -- we're linebackers. We're really worried about the run. I'm not too much worried about the pass as much. I'm really focused on stopping the run.

**Q. Question about their screen game. How do you make sure that you're not overly aggressive playing the run with how impactful they can be in the screen game? And how does that also impact blitzing, do you think, blitzing calls?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: Your eyes got to be right, that's the main thing. Watch a lot of film and see the difference between the high hat and when the linemen have low hat. Just really your eyes, you know what I'm saying?

When it comes to screens and stuff like that, having your eyes on the running back or on the quarterback or on the O-line and not flipping around and stuff like that can really help you.

**Q. Is there anything about this Texas offense that really stands out to you when you watch them on film?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: Not too much that stands out. I would say just like size, speed. I feel like we've played a lot of similar offenses and good offenses. There isn't too much that stands out. We obviously know that any team in the playoffs is going to be a really good team. That's that.

**Q. I know this is nothing new for you guys, but when you approach another game where you're double digit underdog at least on the betting lines, how do you all --**



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**is this just kind of old hat now, that you all expect you're going to have to surprise people?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: Yeah, we've been underdogs all year. Like I said in the other interview, I feel like every game we win, we're still going to have doubters. We're going to have people say -- we could go out this week and win by 40 and you'll have people saying stuff about us next week.

It doesn't too much matter. You're always going to have doubters every week. It's part of playing sports. People are going to have their opinions, other fans and stuff like that.

**Q. As you get ready for this game against Texas, Coach always talks about you guys doing your 111, but this linebacker group showing so much depth and with your story, obviously sticking through it and working hard, but how do you feel you've influenced this linebacker group, and how do you feel it's grown throughout the season?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: A lot of the linebackers here, their first year here, just being in the defense for a few years and getting more comfortable and being able to explain to the other guys how I see things and how it could maybe help them play their game and stuff like that.

So I feel like that's the main thing I've really been trying to help the backers with, just trying to tell them certain things I may have seen last year in the game that they haven't got to see this year and just help them with things like that.

**Q. Obviously maybe one of the more untalked about plays from the Big 12 Championship was your open field tackle in the backfield in the opening minutes of the second quarter that kind of really set the tone, it felt like, defensively the rest of the way through. Looking at the running back room of Texas and seeing how explosive they are with the two guys they have, what have you just kind of seen on film in comparison to the running back rooms you've seen from much of the Big 12 this season that really sets them apart?**



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**What has been the dynamic -- discussions really with Coach Cooper and this linebacking room and how you're going to stop that?**

CALEB McCULLOUGH: A lot of times you face running backs, it's like one guy, but they've got a couple guys that can go. I'm not too much worried about it because our depth at linebacker is preparing us for that. We've got fresh guys going in and out of the game. It's not really like -- guys are coming in the game fresh ready to be physical.

We've got to do what we do every week. Every week our goal is to stop the run, and I feel like this week it don't end here.

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