

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

Monday, December 30, 2024

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Texas Longhorns

Kyle Flood

Press Conference

Q. To get to the point where the backs are seeing it and getting through smaller holes, when there were doubts about this group in August after you had some of the injuries, what can you say just about the development of that unit that has gotten you to this point where they can make plays?

KYLE FLOOD: We were all disappointed for Ced, such a great person and big part of our team and to have Christian go down as well. We lost two in training camp, and we knew, all right, we've got to make sure that in practice, you can't do all the things maybe that you would like to do because you've got to minimize the contact a little bit for those guys to keep them ready. You definitely have to alter a little bit of that.

But I didn't have any lack of confidence that Choice would get ready. Choice does a great job of coaching those guys and he's played the position at a high level and I've watched him develop the players. We knew we had talent in the room. We had to make sure we continued to develop it.

Q. Where do you feel like you guys are now in terms of development of everyone all together? How do you carry forward what you guys have done now over the last month into this stretch?

KYLE FLOOD: The way you said it is exactly the key. I thought we played some of our best football on offense in the last game. That was really exciting for us. But you don't get anything for that in the next game. You have to recreate that every week now. It's a different game with different matchups, different personnel.

Arizona State creates some challenges that we're going to have been to ready for in a couple days here when we play the game in terms of how they defend the run and move their defense and over populate the ball. But you always



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feel good when the guys are executing. We have good practice, that's where it starts for us, and now we have to recreate it on game day.

Q. What can you say about the way this group has come together, with the depth and the way that you're playing right now?

KYLE FLOOD: The depth has been important to me since I got here. We recruited seven offensive linemen in my first year and it wasn't that we planned on doing that. They just kept saying yes. We only planned on taking five but we got seven and they are all still with us. That's unique in this day and age.

Q. How did you do that?

KYLE FLOOD: They have all contributed. They all feel like they are getting developed. Cam only started one game in two years and now he's the starting line tackle. Cole Hutson started as a freshman. Played a lot for us but didn't necessarily start some of the games.

I always felt like we had six starters, and with Trevor Goosby's development, now I kind of feel like we have seven starters. He's been able to go in and play at a high level and we are hoping Cam is going to be available for us. But if he's not, we've watched Trevor play in a really hostile environment at A&M and do well and now go into the SEC Championship Game and perform well. I've got a lot of confidence in him that he'll be able to operate and give us a chance to operate. I'm pleased with our development. But we are hoping to be playing for a new more weeks so we have to continue to develop even more depth.

Q. How do you do that?

KYLE FLOOD: Practice.

Q. But you only have a few left.

KYLE FLOOD: Yeah, but they are expanded weeks, though. You get a bit more practice than usual. That's a

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point I do like. In the NFL you can go from a Sunday game to a Saturday playoff game.

But in college, we played the SEC Championship Game, it was like ten days, and then ten days after that one. It's a nice deal. It's a nice combination of yeah, we are playing the playoff game but yeah, we still have time to develop these younger players.

Q. Brandon Baker, the guys who are coming up, trying to find their way into the rotation, into the lineup, what are you seeing?

KYLE FLOOD: I think Brandon has a bright future, a true freshman. As a player, he's an improving player right now. He works really hard. It's really important to him. So he's got a bright future. We are excited.

Danny probably has the hardest job. Center is the hardest job for a freshman to play because we put so much on that position, to make the calls and get everybody on the same page, and he's done an excellent job of growing his knowledge base as the year has gone on. He's got all the physical things. He's a really strong, powerful athlete. I'm excited about him.

Players, they all want to be out there and they all want to start and that's natural. As a player, I tell them, you have to run your own race.

Q. When you look at a guy like Cole Hutson, could he be a guy that takes over at center next year?

KYLE FLOOD: Yeah, he could be. Cole has taken steps for us at center. We'll deal with it. We haven't put a lot of time on that yet.

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