

# TaxAct Texas Bowl: Kansas State vs LSU

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Houston, Texas, USA

NRG Stadium

## LSU Tigers

## Jontre Kirklin

## BJ Ojulari

### Press Conference



Kansas State 42, LSU 20

**Q. Jontre, when the game ended, you ran over to the fans and your teammates. Was that an impromptu thing? What are your thoughts?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: To be honest, I was just giving all my thanks to all the fans who stayed and finished out the game and everything, but I was just so honored and blessed, and I just wanted to -- I seen my mom and everybody in the stands. I just gave thanks to the Lord, and I just dropped a few tears, and I heard the last alma mater song, you know what I'm saying, in my college career. I was just -- I'm overwhelmed.

**Q. Can you just explain this week, what it's been like for you finding out you have to play quarterback, which you haven't played in five years --**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: This week, I mean, it was a lot of preparation. We kind of kept it under wraps. I know you guys were trying to figure out, but we kept it under wraps. We did a lot of preparation. The guys fought hard. I commend everybody for fighting and having my back throughout this whole journey.

**Q. What did you do to prepare over the last month or so -- to get ready?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: It's second nature for me since I played it my whole year -- I mean, my whole life until college, so, I mean, I just really had to knock some of the rust off of my arm throwing the ball and everything, but besides that, everything else came natural.

**Q. What did it feel like to get that pass right at the end of the game? It was a touchdown pass. I know you all lost, but can you take me through that?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: To be honest, we're Fighting Tigers, and we continue to fight. I'm proud of the guys. Chris Hilton was wide open, and I let it fly, so that's that.

**Q. How was it when you were warming up knowing the weight is on your shoulders for this --**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: This might sound crazy, but I was super calm before the game. I was in a still space. My mind was clear. I wasn't really nervous or anything. I mean, to be honest, I just was out there just having fun. That's all it was. Just have fun and try to win this game.

**Q. Does it frustrate you to know that if you guys had the roster that -- the full roster, this game may have gone differently?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: It doesn't really frustrate me so much because I still had a second chance -- one last chance to play with my brothers.

**Q. BJ, the defensive line, there's a bunch of young guys. You all played pretty well for a lot of the game. What do you think the players that will be returning next year can take from this experience?**

BJ OJULARI: They got their shot, and we played very well. Going into next year we're going to have a lot more experience with the younger guys, and just going into a new program, we have to continue to build the LSU name and legacy.

**Q. BJ, the defensive line as a whole, did you feel any added pressure given what was behind you and a lot of the guys that were out?**

BJ OJULARI: I didn't really feel any added pressure. We went through the whole season with these kind of guys, so once you're an LSU Tiger, you're expected to play, you're expected to know what to do. Ain't no added pressure. D-line, we knew what we had to do. We have to create pressure to help the back end a little bit and get the quarterback through and make some bad throws.

**ASAP** . . . when all is said, we're done.®  
sports

**Q. Your career seems like a long one. You've seen almost everything. How would you describe your career at LSU?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: Amazing. It was a journey getting recruited as a cornerback. Played cornerback for two years. Made the way through my second year bouncing around at wide receiver, playing a little Wildcat quarterback on the scout team. Third year, full-time receiver. Fourth and fifth year, receiver. I think it might have been my third or fourth year I went back to corner for the UCF game and then back to receiver and then now quarterback. I've really played everything, so I'm just blessed. I'm blessed and honored, and it's a privilege.

**Q. Coach was just asked about whether you guys should have even played this game. What did it mean to you to play this game?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: Shoot, we're Fighting Tigers, man. We're not about to back down from nobody. If we've got 11, we're going to play. That's our mindset. If we've got 11, we're going to play.

**Q. What made you stick around at LSU all these years? Obviously, the transfer portal is a huge thing, and you have played a bunch of different positions. Quarterback. What made you stick around?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: It's home. I'm a fighter. I always have faith. I kept my faith, and I just kept pushing. I always knew something on the back end was going to pay off. All that hard work, it just got me to the opportunity -- got me to this point where the coaches gave me the opportunity to play quarterback. They trusted me because I constantly worked. I didn't complain. I didn't make excuse. Kept working. Kept working. Kept working. Here I am.

**Q. Favorite position?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: I would say one of many.

**Q. Obviously it's a long way. What do you think that being able to play so many different positions kind of do for?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: It gives me versatility. I think that's the word, right? It gives me versatility, and it widens my perspective of the game. I get to see on a defensive side, I'm in the back field. I get to see what the receivers see. I know how they want me to throw the ball. I know how I want the ball thrown. I know what the defense are thinking. You know what I'm saying? It gives me a wide mindset on how the game is played.

**Q. BJ, Coach Davis seemed to take this really personally, the loss. He is disappointed in himself? What do you think as players of the job he did the last month?**

BJ OJULARI: First thing Coach Davis said when he came in is he was sorry that he disappointed us. I get the sense that we let him down as well. Coach Davis did an amazing job preparing us up to this day. There's no doubt in my mind that he did the best that he can. He saved our legs. We didn't even practice as long as we were supposed to just to keep us as fresh as we can, so I think he did an amazing job in this role, and I think he did a great job and took advantage of this opportunity.

**Q. BJ, how much interaction have you had with Coach Kelly, and what do you think the approach is going to be offseason for the guys that will be back next year?**

BJ OJULARI: I haven't really had too much interaction with Coach Kelly, but we talked a couple of times, but I trust in him. I trust Mr. Scott Woodward and the decision he made to hire coach Kelly, and I'm about to follow in his foot steps, follow his program and to build the LSU name.

**Q. You might not be coming back, but how --**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: One more time.

**Q. You might not be coming back, but how optimistic are you for the future of LSU football?**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: What do you mean by that? I'm sorry.

**Q. What are you looking forward to watching now from afar when it comes to --**

JONTRE KIRKLIN: Oh, shoot. Just the guys that I grew that bond with, constantly competing, and fighting like Tigers.

**Q. BJ, what's the mood for you guys on the team now that you can turn the page and everything for the spring staff to come back and -- (inaudible)**

BJ OJULARI: We've got to wipe all this out. We're getting two weeks off. Get your mind right because winter hits, we're hitting the ground running. Not going to stop for nobody. That's really the mentality of the young guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports