

# TaxAct Texas Bowl: Oklahoma State vs Texas A&M

Thursday, December 28, 2023

Houston, Texas, USA

NRG Stadium

## Texas A&M Aggies

### Max Wright

#### Press Conference



Oklahoma State - 31, Texas A&M - 23

**Q. Max, I know it's a tough question, but it's an obvious one. How do you feel now that it's over and to have it end the way that it has?**

MAX WRIGHT: It's a (indiscernible) moment. I have loved getting to represent this university the past six years. Honestly, I'm proud of our guys who went out there fighting the way we did. The amount of hard times we went through this season, the punches to the face we've gotten as a team, things about us from people that don't even know what's going on in the locker room, it's been hard.

That group stuck together. We went out there and fought. We could have laid down at the end of the first half.

Yeah, it stinks. Obviously I wanted to go out the right way and get a bowl game win on my last game in an Aggie uniform, but I'm proud of these guys that were in the locker room. I'm proud of the guys that fought for this university.

It's hard. I don't know. I'm still processing it. It doesn't feel real yet.

**Q. What was your perspective of the play with Jaylen, that first play? And how would you rate how Marcel was able to step in and take over?**

MAX WRIGHT: So I was running like a boot over on that play and was watching Jaylen the entire time and saw him as soon as he went down and rolled over. His arm obviously didn't look the best.

Man, that guy is fire. He was heartbroken when they told him he couldn't come back in.

My guy stepped up, stepped up to the plate. No one

expects -- how many quarterbacks have we gone through this season, four? He would be the fourth guy or the fifth guy, I guess is the right way to put it. To be out there and not just be out there but competing, getting us back into the game. Come out and leading what could have been the second half game-tying drive to push it into overtime.

That just shows Marcel's character and the readiness he has going into every week. That kid's fire. We had to calm him a little bit. That first ball he threw was pretty funny. He started laughing. I went over to him, hey, that's fine. I don't know what that was, but let's go to the next one.

Man, he can just rip balls. He fought hard and played hard. I'm super proud of that kid.

**Q. Is there a point in the game where you felt he really settled in with something in particular that happened or a conversation or anything?**

MAX WRIGHT: I think after that first drive, I think he kind of came to the sideline, and I was like, hey -- Marcel is a great quarterback. Let's just put that out there. Just say that, first things first. He's a great quarterback even if he wasn't our starting guy. So I'll say that about him.

But it was probably middle of the second quarter when he really settled in, when we had some drives that were getting close to the end zone. He was making smart decisions, good reads, standing back there with a little bit of poise even with bullets flying at him.

The way he came out in the second half and helped us put points on the board the way he did, I saw him do that, and I was like, all right, he's locked in.

Marcel was a guy who earlier in the year was on scout team for us. We got to watch him dice up sometimes the scout team, so we knew that he's capable. Yeah, he did a great job. He fought his tail off. Proud of him.

**Q. Max, you guys were down 24-6 at halftime. You come back, and you make things interesting. What was the message that Coach Robinson said in that locker room before you guys took the field?**

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MAX WRIGHT: Honestly, it was just -- our backs are against the wall. Our starting quarterback goes down. Obviously it wasn't the most ideal situation where he goes down on the first play. But, man, Coach rallied us together. He knew we could play with those guys. He knew we could compete with those guys. Not just compete, but come together and really jump in.

He rallied us. I think really his pitch to us was to settle in and lock in to the brother next to you. That's what it's been this entire season when things have been going crazy. It's who's in the room with you? Who are the guys that are standing next to you in the locker room? You know they're going to fight with you. You've been through so much already, they're going to go through this with you too.

Coming out in the second half, we had a what do we have to lose mentality? Come out and let everything hang out, put it all on the line.

**Q. Before the bowl game, you talked about the importance of playing in this game one final time. Coach Robinson mentioned he didn't want to talk about the guys who weren't here but the guys who were here. Just talk about the guys who are here and are returning.**

MAX WRIGHT: I think with all the stuff going on, for them to stick around, you know they have loyalty. They have character to stick around and see things through. In a world where it's pretty easy to jump ship and go to the portal and see how much you can get from an NIL deal from another school, to see it out and see it through and to stick it out for the guys in that locker room, I think it's a testament to the character that's in that locker room and that group. Those guys are rock stars.

What I said about the NIL, that's not a jab at any of my teammates who did transfer and did do that. That's not a jab at them. I just want to clarify that.

But, man, the guys who are in that room, I'm proud of them. It's a different type of brotherhood whenever you go through something like that and like the end of that season and to stick it through.

I think what any of them have to expect, you're going to have guys who are genuinely playing for the Aggies, who are genuinely playing for this university every single Saturday. I'm proud of those guys. I'm proud of this team.

**Q. Going off the end of that answer, for you, what did being a Texas A&M Aggie mean?**

MAX WRIGHT: It's a great question. It's hard to explain it to people who don't know what A&M is. From the inside looking out, you can't explain it. From the outside looking in, you can't understand it. I think that's so true.

I think what this university represents, what it stands for, I know it's cliché. I'm the guy who wears a Texas A&M jersey to say, yes, it's the best university in the world, but I would not play for any other team on the planet. If I could play for this team for the rest of my life, I would try to, as you can probably see because I've been here for quite a few years.

Texas A&M is, to me, it's the perfect representation of what it means to be people of character, people of honor. Uniting to have that family mindset. People don't even know. It's the best university in the world for a reason, and there's no other university like it out there.

I'll be an Aggie for rest of my life, and I will wear that proudly on my chest for the rest of my life.

**Q. Max, how much did just some of those young guys stepping up and getting the opportunity in this bowl game and throughout the preparation, how much did that energize, not just themselves, but maybe some of you guys too? I know the tight end room, receiver room had some of those guys stepping up into bigger roles. I imagine that was a massive source of inspiration throughout the preparation.**

MAX WRIGHT: It was fun. Some guys who -- I mean, Marcel is a prime example. He's the guy who was a 4 or 5. He was on the scout team at the beginning of the year, and after the first play, he's put in to play in the Texas Bowl.

Yeah, the weeks in practice have been super fun. You have guys out there that are flying around and showing a lot of energy. As crazy as it's been the past few weeks, it really has been a really memorable end to my career getting to do some of the things we've done with some of those guys in the locker room.

Jaden Platt, prime example, caught a 40-yard pass or something like that. I was going nuts, losing my mind out there for that guy. Getting to see some dudes who are younger guys who are going to be in this program for a long time who are going to represent this program in a really good way and get their chance to shine and capitalize on it, it was really cool and really special. I'll cherish that for a long time.

**Q. A little bit of a specific question about one of those younger guys. What are you seeing from a guy like**



**Micah Tease that got a chance to step up and get some significant reps tonight?**

MAX WRIGHT: I really was tearing up a little bit in the locker room giving those guys hugs. I stopped and talked with Micah a little bit. That kid is one of my favorite guys on the team genuinely. He is a fighter. He is somebody who has bought into this program, this team. Yeah, he fights his tail off and pushes himself for the guy next to him every single play.

I think he shows that on film, and you can see that in how he plays the game. Yeah, I love Micah. I love all those guys who stepped up and played big for us tonight to have a chance to win this game. It's a testament to all those guys.

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