

# Kinder's Texas Bowl: Houston vs LSU

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Houston, Texas, USA

NRG Stadium

**LSU Tigers**

**Michael Van Buren Jr.**

Postgame Press Conference

Houston - 38, LSU - 35

**Q. Seemed like you guys started off so hot. What did you think when, obviously, take one to the house and you get a touchdown and you're up, feeling like it was your night, maybe where did things get off track for you guys?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: For me, I felt like it was just certain moments in the game where we just beat ourselves. We had a fumble, and I could have done a couple things better also. But overall, we just had mistakes as a whole unit, including me.

It wasn't as good from there, but we still fought back. I'm so proud of my team for the fight.

**Q. If I told you this morning you would score 35 points, how confident would you have been that you guys would have won the game tonight?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: Very confident. I believe in my team. I believe in my offense. These are things that we practiced and went out and did. Nothing that we did today was a surprise.

**Q. How about your rapport with Kyle, you really connect there underneath. How cool was it to see Chris Hilton, to have that drive to end this season?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: It was great. Chris is a guy who has been here for years. I've been here his whole college career, so being able to give him the ball in that type of moment that could potentially win the game, it was big. That's a brother to me.

Seeing him, you know, have that type of success, it brings me joy. And Kyle, the younger guy, he always finds a way to make a play for me as he's done all year. That wasn't



nothing new. It was just another day.

**Q. Obviously you were successful with the QB-1 role, probably a little bit earlier than what you had maybe anticipated for this season. Looking back at your entire season this season, do you think you may have done enough to secure the QB-1 role for next season?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: Honestly, that's not in my hands. But all I know is right after we're done, after we get back to Baton Rouge, right after we go back home, I'm going to get to work right away. And I feel confident in my ability.

You know, that's a hard question. But I'll just leave it up to God. Put in as much work as possible, and we're going to see what happens.

**Q. How would you describe, from the coaching change at the end of October to now and Frank stepping in, Coach Wilson stepping in and leading you guys and having to navigate all those games to get to tonight?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: I mean, it's just -- I give a lot of props to our team and to our coaches for the situation that was going on. It's not easy for anybody to go through a coaching change like that, especially Coach Frank from being a running backs coach to having to be a head coach.

But I've got all types of respect for Coach Frank. I love him like family. I appreciate him and all the rest of the coaching staff for everything they've done. Because even with the coaching staff change, my development didn't stop. I felt like I kept developing as the season went on. So that was the main thing for me. So I appreciate my coaches and my teammates.

**Q. Wondering if you had any conversations with Lane Kiffin over the last week or two and maybe what those conversations entail. When we spoke last, you kind of talked about wanting to run it back here and wanting to be back in this program. Have you made that decision, what your future might look like?**

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MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: I've had conversations with Coach Kiffin and the rest of the staff. Things are good right now. I'm going to go home. I'm going to sit on it, and we're going to see.

**Q. What do you kind of need to, I guess, see as you move forward? What is going to be the things you decide if you're here next year, if you're leaving? What's going to go into that over the next couple of weeks?**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: Honestly, just going to sit back and see what happens. LSU, Baton Rouge is where I want to be. If anything -- at the end of the day, this is where I want to be. So whatever happens after that, happens.

**Q. Can you talk about Garrett Nussmeier? I know he didn't have the year he had, but he was here supporting you guys. I saw you two having fun with the kids on Friday and whatnot. What kind of teammate was he? You both wanted to play the same position, but looked like you got along well all year.**

MICHAEL VAN BUREN JR.: Yeah, since I got here, he's been helping me since day one. He's never been any type of bitter to me. We've never had no type of conflict. I see Garrett as a big brother to me, honestly.

He's had success in college. Maybe this year hasn't went the way he wanted it to, but he's had success, and I was able to learn a lot of things from Garrett. I feel like being in the same quarterback room with him, I feel like I made myself better.

So that's a brother to me, and he'll forever be a brother to me, even when he goes on to the NFL. He's going to do great things when he goes to NFL. I know that for sure.

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