

Pop-Tarts Bowl: BYU Cougars vs Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets

Saturday, December 27, 2025

Orlando, Florida, USA

Camping World Stadium

Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets

Brent Key

Haynes King

Press Conference

BYU - 25, Georgia Tech - 21

BRENT KEY: Congrats to BYU, Kalani and their victory in the game. Good football team. Plays the game the right way. Plays hard.

Whether you win or lose these games, the feeling at the end is a lot of times the same, because just as if as we go out and we know we can't control the outcome of games, the control we put into it, how we play, you also can't control the emotions that you feel when 26 guys have meant this much to your program playing their last game with you.

That's what this is about tonight. Unfortunately, we didn't make plays down the stretch to be able to come out with a win. Again, credit to BYU for how they played. But I'm going to soak in every last moment that I have with these guys.

Q. Question for both Brent and Haynes. Brent, you talked so much about the significance of a ten-win season but also how this class --

BRENT KEY: You guys talked about it. I said I agreed with you. 10 wins is big. Nine is better than eight. It's all good. Wins are big. They are big.

Q. Still to that point, you would also talk about the impact a guy like Haynes and this senior class had on the program moving forward. What is the legacy that he and that class leave as they leave the program and you guys take the next step?

BRENT KEY: What was it, three years and 23 wins? Is



that right? I am not good at math. The program did one, what, three in three years or whatever.

Look, football is a continuous cycle. We are to the point now where I do talk about that momentum doesn't carry over and teams are new, right? 30, 40 guys every January come in new, but the identity and the culture of your team, that is established early on. That was established by these seniors and by these guys, the identity and the culture.

When you have that set the right way, regardless of guys that come in your program, the guys that are remaining from the year, they are the ones that carry it on. They carry it on, because of how these guys built it. They know that is what they wanted to do.

Q. Haynes, can you talk a little bit about the pass you hit to Eric there to set up the final shots and then what you saw in those last four plays?

HAYNES KING: I mean, they came up pressing. He had a mandatory outside release go route. Liked the matchup, took the shot. He came down with it, and the rest is history. The last four plays, they zoned us off pretty good, and we just either didn't make a play or missed a throw.

When you get down there, you have to make those. It happens quicker and tighter and faster. You have to make a play, especially when it comes down to that.

Q. Coach and Haynes both, Coach, I'll start with you, there's a moment in the game where you have 14 points and 13 seconds and then 15 points on the other side in the fourth quarter, and then, Haynes, you still have a shot even after that, after you hit Eric on that pass. How unique was this as a football game in and of itself? Obviously you would rather come out on the other side, but as far as have you seen a game with this much chaos in it that you participated in as a coach?

BRENT KEY: How much have you followed Georgia Tech the last three years?



(Laughter).

Q. Fair point.

BRENT KEY: My middle name is chaos. Unfortunately, we weren't able to come out on top.

Q. Brent, we've talked all year about this program making a jump. Clearly you guys made a jump, but what's the next step to take the next jump in the off-season?

BRENT KEY: I stick by what I say all the time, getting better or getting worse, right? We will head back tonight. I will sleep for a couple of days, like a hibernating bear. I say that. I probably won't.

We have work to do. We have work to do. We have to make sure we have the best roster we can possibly have, put together the best staff that we can possibly have. It will be here fast. As quick as this season went, the next one will be here. We have to continue with the identity that these guys have built. We are rolling into the next one, because we have a lot of work to do.

But the jump, the next one is better than this. It has to be, right? Again, that isn't always dictated by wins and losses. That is dictated by the type of team you have, how you play the game, all those things.

Ultimately, I get it. We are all judged by the wins and losses, but when you put it together the right way, those all become a by-product of having everything in the right place and the kids all believe in the same thing and the staff believes in the same thing.

Q. In an era where bowl games are talked about and what their meaning is, the emotion from you and the emotion from this team and you guys wanting to play, what went into that? And what do games like this mean to you and to this program?

BRENT KEY: Competitors compete. It doesn't matter where it is, what time it is, where you are playing. Competitors compete. We have a team of competitors. We will always have a team of competitors. I am a competitor, and that is what we do.

I really don't understand the narrative that has been created the last couple years about these games aren't important. I mean, who is to say a football game is not important? There are 365 days in a year that we live, breathe and work for 12 guaranteed opportunities. There is no other sport like that.

Then to have another opportunity to compete, I just don't get that. I don't understand people saying the devalue of a bowl game. It is a game. It is another chance to play a game.

Q. I know how important everything is for the seniors to send them off and it's their final game, but what has this guy to your right meant to you and just the program at Georgia Tech overall?

BRENT KEY: I have been asked that a lot this week. I think it is pretty obvious that you talk about the toughness, the grit, the leadership, all those things, but I have never seen a young man -- not too young. You are old as heck. We are about the same age now, I think.

The way he affects others around him, it is like nothing I have ever seen. The guy that wants the ball. He loves playing football. He is infectious in the way he does things. He affected every single person on our football team. He affects coaches. He affected staff members. He won't tell you that, but he does.

Those people come around once, and every once in 20, 30 years, you see those guys. I have had the opportunity to coach a lot of really good football players and be around a lot of really good quarterbacks. The ability to affect others in such a positive way, in multiple ways he does it, that's a gift that will keep giving for the rest of his life.

Q. Haynes, obviously career is over now. What are you going to do next? Where are you going to take your competitiveness --

BRENT KEY: He is going to the NFL.

HAYNES KING: Yeah, he answered it. I am just going to go train and try to get an opportunity to play in the NFL and see where that takes me and then try to play as long as I can. After that, I am always going to be around the game of football.

BRENT KEY: You are going to play as long as you can, and then you are going to come slide into an office in the new building.

HAYNES KING: All right.

Q. Without looking at the tape yet, how do you evaluate the job Chris Weinke did first time as the OC?

BRENT KEY: I thought he did a good job. I thought he did a good job getting the plays in, good mix of run and pass. At the end of the day, coaches put plans together, and players go execute. That is the trust you have in players. I



thought he did a good job. Look, at the end of the day, we were in a position to be able to win the football game. That is all you can ask for. I am proud of Chris.

Q. Haynes, Coach Key has been asked about you probably a dozen times this week. I don't know if you've been asked about what he's meant to you and you getting this opportunity at Georgia Tech and what this institute has meant to you in your life, your football career.

HAYNES KING: It is everything. He is the one that gave me this opportunity. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be here. Then as well as that, they have just turned my life totally around. Coming from A&M, a lot of stuff went wrong, I don't know what the cause was, but it led me here, led me to these great football.

When I entered the portal, I wanted to surround myself with great people that were like minded, wired the right way, and wanting to do stuff the right way. That is what I did, that's what I found here. I feel like it is not just going to happen while I am here. It is generations to go as well.

Q. Haynes, what's it going to be like when you take those pads off when you leave this room knowing your Georgia Tech career has ended? And just kind of the reflection of the last three years.

HAYNES KING: When you reflect on it, at the end of the day, I guess I had a great career.

BRENT KEY: I know that you did.

HAYNES KING: Thankful for it for sure. To me, almost like a little bit of I didn't get the job done. Didn't find a way to help my teammates at least win more of the last 4 out of 5. That is just kind of how it ended.

It doesn't feel good, but at the end of the day, the next day the sun's going to come up, birds going to chirp, everything will be all right.

BRENT KEY: I would like to say thanks to FCS, and the week we had here. This was an outstanding week, outstanding bowl game, outstanding trip, outstanding time for this football team to be able to spend our last week as the 2025 Georgia Tech football team.

From everyone in our organization and everyone on our team, we say thank you to you all. Go Jackets.

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