

# Army Black Knights Football

Saturday, November 8, 2025

West Point, New York, USA

## Cale Hellums

### Press Conference



Army 14, Temple 13

**Q. How fulfilling is a win like this for this team after a really tough game against Air Force, a physical game with Air Force, another one here, and you guys were able to pass the test against them?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, it's an awesome feeling. It was a great game. Respect to Temple and that coaching staff and the players they've got this year. They turned around their program in one year and they're a really good team.

Today was a gritty, gritty win. All around, I think the whole game was gritty. We came into halftime down. We shot ourselves in the foot and the message was to clean it up, don't hurt ourselves, and it was going to be a dog fest and we know we needed to come out in the first drive of the second half and put together a good drive and end up with points and that's what we did. I think that was huge.

Then the defense played their butts off today. They kept us in it today, so respect to them.

For us to get this gritty win, another close win. It was great, and it's good momentum.

**Q. The opening drive in the second half, how important was the pass to Parker? You guys hadn't thrown a lot, but when you did, you hit the pass that you needed to hit. Talk about that play.**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, that was huge. When I heard it come through the comms, I was like, I like the play call. At first I thought it was going to Jake Rendina because in practice that's been the first read. They did a great job covering up, and Parker stayed on his route, and he locked eyes with me, and I gave him a shot and he came down with it. It was a great overall play.

**Q. Cale, on the first drive that you scored, you had run for 12 and 10 and Jake Rendina had a nine-yard run. How important was it to get that 11-play almost**

**eight-minute drive to get you started on the day?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, we needed that. It was good for momentum. It was good for our defense to see us put together that drive and give them a break and allow them some room not to have to be perfect. It was great, and it started with the O-line. They're the machines to our engines, and those guys week in and week out play so tough and so gritty. They're all around, all five of them are studs. Braden Bartosh stepped in there late in the game. To see him come and do that was awesome. I'm proud of him. It was good.

**Q. I want to ask about the 26-yard pass to Parker Poloskey in the third quarter. That was a 4th and 1 play. Tell us about your thought on that when the play came in and then executing.**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, we installed that play before we played Air Force so want to use it on 3rd and short, 4th and short, maybe a goal-line scenario. We run the ball up in the gut a lot on 3rd and short and 4th and short, and we thought they thought that was going to come, and we leaked out the backside and the flat wasn't there, but then Parker Poloskey in the second was there.

**Q. You start on your own 42 you get the pass to Noah Short, you convert a 4th and 1 at the 35, Jake Rendina converts a 1st down on 3rd and 2, and then you decided to take the victory formation instead of scoring a touchdown. What was it like running a drive like that and being able to convert the short yards, the 3rd and 2 and the 4th and 1?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, as everyone saw last week we were unable to do that against Air Force. They stopped us on 4th and 1. To learn from that and to come out and do it this week was awesome to see.

Time in and time out we did it, and Coach Monken said we went four for four on 4th downs in the second half, and that's huge. It was great to see, to be able to run it down there and take a knee in front of the Corps Cadets and to end the game with the ball in the offense's hands was awesome. We need to do that, and we were able to get it



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**Q. Your season is gaining momentum; you're one game away from being eligible for a bowl game; you're going to play Navy for the Commander-in-Chief Trophy. How does it feel? You had a beautiful day today, 30,000 people in the stands.**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, it's awesome. I think all around, our team is just getting better week in and week out, and we're practicing hard and it's fun.

We have momentum right now. We're going to enjoy this win, but tomorrow we've got to show up ready to work and focus on going 1-0 against UTSA.

**Q. I got the impression as I was watching the game that both teams were conservative in their play, in their strategy. Almost like a chess match. Did you guys go in there thinking we're going to go a little conservative and try to grind it out? And two, as the game went on, what was your thinking there?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, you know, I think we go into every game playing Army football and we're going to run it and we're going to get six, five, seven yards a pop and take our shots when we have the opportunities to.

I think it came down to -- I know their offense does a great job of holding time of possession and so do we, and I think that's always a chess match in itself. But we just wanted to be able to go in there, execute our assignments and fundamentals, and I think early on we saw that we were able to get what we wanted on the run game, and shout-out to the O-line. We were just going to stick with that, and when the shot became available we were going to take it.

**Q. How hard was it not to score at the end?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, you know, you always want to get in the end zone when you can, but to win that game, it was a barrier play. We work on that every week. Coach Monken said, get inside and go down, take a knee so we can just get into victory formation and end it with the ball in our hands.

**Q. On the analogy about the chess match, when Temple tied it at the end of the first, did you feel like you had to change your strategy at all?**

CALE HELLUMS: No, not at all. They tied it, they were making plays, and we knew they would. It was going to be a gritty game. You could see that from the get-go.

We were just going to keep on doing what we were doing and put together long drives and run the ball and throw it over their heads when we had the opportunities to, and nothing changed. It was a low-scoring game, and respect to our defense for allowing it to be a low-scoring game and keeping us in there. But no, nothing would change.

**Q. You guys converted four of four 4th downs in the second half. I think all of them were 4th and 1 or 4th and 2 or less if I'm not mistaken. Other than the pass to Parker which surprised everyone, I think, pretty much everybody in the stadium knows it's going to be a QB sneak, Cale Hellums trying to get the one yard. What's that like, and kind of knowing you and all 11 players on the offense have to execute perfectly knowing the entire Temple defense knows exactly what's going to happen?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, it's culture for sure. In the huddle, we're there on the sideline, the coaches are asking the O-line and me what we want, and the O-line says the play and they wanted it. To run behind Brady Small, Paolo Gennarelli, and then Braden Bartosh got in there, and Will Jeffcoat on the other side, those three, four guys right there in the front, they lead the charge, and I'm blessed to be able to play behind them. When it's 4th and short, I trust them with everything I've got and I know we're going to get it.

**Q. Speaking of the O-line, while yards were tough to come by today, it was clear pretty much every play the offensive line moved the line of scrimmage and got good push. Talk a little bit about their play and what allowed them and really Jake and Carson too because the fullbacks did a great job of blocking as well?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, they played elite. The O-line played great, like they always do. They're so tough. They're so good. The bond they have is special. They played their butts off today.

Then to see Carson Smith go in there the second half where he didn't get a single rep in the first half and do what he did was awesome. I told him, I was like, be ready to go, stay in it, and for him to come out there and do that was special. It was awesome.

Then I heard you mention Jake Rendina only had nine carries going into this game and then he had nine or ten today, and he ran the ball hard. For him to do that, it was awesome. I was just so happy to see him go in there and run it hard because he blocks his butt off. For him to be rewarded with the ball in his hands this game was great to see.

**Q. Joe mentioned about your backs making some key blocks today which we've seen a number of times this year. How critical is it for those backs to also get into that blocking mix for this team?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, it's extremely critical. They have assignments and they know who they're blocking on which play, and they did a great job of doing it like they always do. Any four of those guys, we have five great fullbacks, any of them I'm confident could go in there and do their assignments and use great fundamentals.

I trust them, and running behind them is just -- God has blessed me so much for me to be able to play quarterback behind the offensive line and with those running backs in the backfield. It's great, and I'm just so blessed.

**Q. Army is obviously famous for its ugly football inside in the run game. But some games have to be more difficult than others. Temple really stacked the box today. How difficult was it today to achieve the goals of moving the ball, moving the sticks?**

CALE HELLUMS: Yeah, they got great players, and they got great coaches, like I said, for them to turn around that program within a year and to win five games this season and they're one game from being bowl eligible as well, shout-out to them. They had a good scheme, but I think we're not going to ever turn down five or six yards a carry. We've just got to stay with that. That is Army football. It was 14 to 13, but when you get five to six yards a clip, you're just trying to keep at it.

**Q. Lastly, the win over Air Force was huge, and we sportswriters like to bring up about hangovers or being able to bounce back after a huge win like that. Was it difficult in the first half, and did you guys respond well?**

CALE HELLUMS: You know, I don't know if we were really hungover with the win last week. The coaches and Coach Worley, Coach Monken, they really emphasized not to let this carry over as a hangover, right, to use it as momentum and not to dwell on the past. We won and that was it, but our mindset was Temple.

In the first half I think we did some really good things. The first drive we shot ourselves in the foot with penalties. Second drive was a good drive, and then the third drive we just didn't convert on 3rd and short and then we had an MA in the backfield on 4th down.

The message was into halftime, don't shoot ourselves in the foot; we're getting what we want, and to go out there and execute on the first drive of the second half. We were

able to do that, so I think that was a positive.

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