

Purdue University Football Media Conference

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Jeff Brohm

Press Conference



HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: He we're looking forward to getting back out to work this week. I think our guys are starting to learn a little bit more and understand what we're going to have to do in order to especially win but we've still got a lot of work to do.

I think this week will be an important week for us. Got to come out, work hard, try to improve upon our weaknesses, push ourselves to do all the small things right and give ourselves a chance to win but we've got a another big, tough football team coming in here that's playing very well. Very strong running game on offense, controls the ball on the clock and on defense, solid on defense, challenge you, challenges people. Gets after you and we're going to have to do all the small things and play well in order to have a chance to win.

But I do think that you know, our crowd at the game was outstanding. They were into it. They helped us. They gave us all the support we needed and we do appreciate everybody that came out.

Q. Where do you feel like you are from a run defense perspective right now relative to where you want to be?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: We've got a long ways to go. We're not where we need to be, not even close. I do think, you know, traditionally, historically, you know, we have a little bit better against run teams but we're not where we need to be doing that.

So we have to work hard improving to stop the run and make sure we put our guys in the right position to get it done and get our guys to play hard and come out with the ball and play with great effort and finish, and when it is time to pass, we have to defend the pass much better.

Without question, I think that the passing game, the other team's quarterback has had way too much time to throw every game and when that happens, any quarterback is comfortable, you know that you're in for a long day on defense.

Q. Seemed like the game you were waiting for from Zico and Wright, what can that mean going?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Both young men have

worked hard. They have improved every week. They have to help us win. They were ready to step in and make some plays, and I think because they have developed better working habits, they continue to improve. So they are always going to have to be a factor for us and make plays and I think when they are lining up correctly and coming off the ball and doing the small things right, they have a very good chance.

So I was happy to see them play better.

Q. What was the biggest challenge for them in terms of their acclimation to Purdue?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I think any time someone comes in from a different program and sometimes from the junior college ranks, you just have to understand all the small details that have to be done. You have to give yourself a chance to win and compete, all the hard work you have to put in, you're going against the very best. Things just can't come natural.

That was a little bit of an adjustment for them. I think Isaac has worked extremely hard to improve or get better. He's a great teammate, a great young man, and I think he wants to do his part, so I am proud of the work he's put in. Terry has made great strides, as well and played much harder this year and been more consistent and when both guys are locked in, they give us a chance to perform at a higher level.

Q. Willy on the field --

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, we need some assistance on the D-Line right now, and you know, we have to get better there. You know, he's a young man who really didn't get here till August. He had a lot of promise, a lot of future. Is he there yet? No, he's not. Now, he does have the ability to make plays.

In the game, I didn't think he played as well as he practiced but it was a little bit much for him and that's going to happen. I think over time, he's got a really good work ethic and he'll be a about player. It's just right now, he's spinning, but you know, we decided to throw him in the mix. I think we've got to get some more competition going there in the game. We do it in practice but in the game, the guys that aren't getting it done need to be rotated in and taken out and we need to give guys an opportunity to step up and make plays.

We just need to make improvement there. I don't dislike who we have out there. It's just we've got a long ways to go. They haven't played a whole lot at their position. We need a lot better technique, fundamentals and creating some consistent push and penetration on both run and pass but definitely on the pass and that has not happened and there's a lot of things that need to be corrected but we just need to continue to work extremely hard and identify what we're doing wrong and get better because we have to or it's going to be a hard time winning.

Q. Did that rotation allow you to get a little bit more pressure toward the end of the game and maybe have a fresh body or two on the defensive line?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Possibly. I do think Lorenzo, for what we ask him to do, playing the nose, has done a good job. He actually -- shake and bake, get off blocks better than the other guys. Anthony has at sometimes done a good job. Thousand now they are both at the tackle position, but at the end position we just need to improve and we need to improve quite a bit.

They are the two best players -- like I said, the players we have there are young and haven't played much, so I think they can get better, but we've got to get much faster and we have to improve more every week and really push the envelope there and create some competition because it's not even close to where it needs to be.

Q. It's a balance, you need a pass rush but also you need your guys in the secondary to cover. Which do you need to happen first: Better pass rush or in the secondary?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, both need to happen, right now. When you don't get much of a pass rush, the quarterback is throwing way too long and anybody can get open -- we've had multiple plays where you -- more than you want anyone to stand back there, that has to improve first and foremost. Because some of the time and elements, guys lose their confidence and get scared to play and get aggressive because they are getting beat.

We have to get back to trying to create more of a pass rush and challenging routes more and making them turn, and if the guy is able to buy extra time and earn it, we'll give it to him but I do think some of our guys have lost a little bit of confidence, but all those things tie together, and as coaches, we have to figure out ways to take what we have on defense and put the pieces together and create that so that it happens.

I think we have a lot of work to do there and our guys

are going to work hard to get that done but it starts from the top down including myself and we have to put our players in the best position to succeed.

Q. You did some shuffling on the offensive line. How did they grade out?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I think it was beneficial and I always do. I want to -- like to be able to rotate on both sides of the line as much as we can. I'd like to be able to rotate in some other positions as well as much as we can. I think the more competition, the better guys are going to play and it's going to make guys play better.

Regardless of the situation or how the game is going, we have to continue to push the envelope there and play more guys. I do think our offensive line, throwing that many times did a very good job. They worked extremely hard. It's not easy to pass protect for that many plays throughout the course of the game and the other team gets the sense that we might be throwing the ball quite a bit.

But I think they hung in there and did as good as they could do and gave us great effort and made good plays and created a few ways to get some help at times which helped us to take shots, and I think the overall play was a very good game by the offensive line.

Q. You've talked in the brief time you've been here over the last year and a half or so about the quarterback situation, trying to find that guy that you can count on every week. David would appear to have that hot hand you've been looking for. Is that somebody you stick with this week from a starting perspective?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, you guys saw the game. I think we feel very confident with the progress David made. Played a very good game. You know, he hung in there and made throws and sometimes he hung in there longer than he has in the past and made throws, which was huge progress.

So that was great to see. Very proud of his effort, proud of his toughness, proud of his ability to continue to just fight hard and make plays.

So yes, we were happy with his performance. You know, obviously I'd rather not have him throw that many times a game, but I think that he took his shots, he threw with conviction. There was a few series in there where I was extremely happy with, but he bounced back, gave our receivers a chance to get open and bought some plays on some plays, a few times found the checkdown and other times hung in there and found the route he needed to throw that sometimes doesn't come open right away and you have to hold it a

little bit and maybe hang in the pocket just a little bit longer.

So yes, I think David played a very good game and very proud of his performance and we feel good with him.

Q. Update on Elijah?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: We're still working hard to get him healthy. You know, yesterday, he did not throw, so we'll see Tuesday where he's at.

Q. How close to game time was Smiley cleared to play?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, he was -- went through the proper protocol and you know, made it through that, and when he's healthy, he does a very good job for us and he has some experience.

Mentally, he wasn't quite over things yet and we've got to continue to, you know, just get him even healthier and feeling confident that he can go out there and make plays.

But he went through the proper protocol and pretty good in the game.

Q. What kind of piece can he be in the secondary as you look to find the right combination back there to defend the pass better?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, he can be a key piece because he has experience and even in practice, he's probably one of our best guys in the secondary, and definitely at the nickel position, does a very good job.

You know, probably need to find ways to get Markus Bailey in the box a little bit more and that would provide us the opportunity to do that so that he could make more plays inside the box. So that's what we're going to work hard at is getting the best guys we can on the field and obviously getting those guys healthy and allowing our defense to play at a higher level.

Q. Boston College, their quarterback had a nice game last time against Wake forest and they have the running back, Dillon. When they are that balanced, similar to Missouri last week, what's the key in trying to slow them down?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, this team is going to be different. They are going to try to run the football first and they have a great rubbing attack, rushing attack and that's what they are going to feed off, so that's what we have to stop.

The last game, the quarterback played probably his best game to date and because of the numerous one-

on-one matchups, he made throws. So you know, yes, he played well. Makes it a little scarier, but at the same time, stopping the run and making them throw more than they want is what we have to do, and yeah, of course we have to defend the pass, but the quarterback did have a very good game last week.

Q. At 0-3, you said you're not a very good football team now. Is that a reflection of just the record you're at? I know you see things out there but what gives you optimistic, sitting at 0-3 that your team and can turn this around?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, when I said we weren't a very good football team, it was after the game, and of course when you lose, you're not happy. I think really what I'm saying there is we have hurt ourselves and good football teams don't hurt themselves.

Good football teams don't beat themselves. That's kind of what we've done, that's self-inflicted wounds. We did multiple dumb penalties that have cost us, and we have multiple situations that we could have easily converted or got off the field that haven't happened and really the intelligence factor and playing smart is really what's hurt us the most.

I think the effort has increased and that's been good. I do think our guys are competing, so the fact that our guys are competing to win and they are working hard and they want to improve and it means something to them and these losses bother them, is the most important thing, and that's all we can do from there is try to improve upon what has happened in the passing games, get better and it's just going to be a weekly assignment to get done.

For us, I always say it, it's a one-game season, we have to go win the name game. So it's about how can we find a way to win the next game and sometimes in losses you can identify weaknesses a lot more and if you concentrate on those and work hard to fix it, hopefully you get better.

Now that said, we have a really good football team coming in here so the margin of error or for us is not very big. We have to play smart and we can't cost ourselves or we're not going to have a chance, so if we do that and we play hard and continue to get a little bit better, I think we can have a chance to win.

But you know, guys have to believe that all the small things matter and everybody has to do their part to the best of their ability.

Q. Overall thoughts on the three-man rush? They got a touchdown off it but you also got the pick off

the same look, as well.

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: In my opinion, with the three-man rush, we've got no rush. So you know, when you have that, you'd like to be able to do that more in long yardage situations. I thought we -- sometimes it wasn't long yards, we used it for more long yardage situations, but when you do that you have to get some rush and the guys we had out there were not getting any rush. If that's all the rush we're going to get, it's to the going to be very effective. While it could still be mixed in, we have to improve the rush if we can do it or get guys out there that can rush much better. Because a three-man rush, when the guys aren't particularly rushing at all, means it's very useless.

So we've got to tweak that a little bit and see if we can make it more effective if we're going to use it.

Q. Obviously the way the game played out Saturday night dictated you guys throwing the ball as much as you did but can you describe your confidence in the running game, because B.J. and Markell seem to have had success earlier this year?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: I feel good about our running game and what we have the ability to do. It just a matter of what we choose to do against certain teams.

Like I said before, I was concerned about this team's offense and our ability to stop them, so college should be a little more aggressive. But at the same time, I do want to be more aggressive and I think the better we can pass it, the more the running game will open up; now, we really never had a lead in the game, so I wasn't going to waste plays running the ball if we continue to have success throwing it.

But yes, we'd like to be more balanced in general and be able to utilize all of our pieces on offense.

Q. When you play a team like Boston College, from an offensive play calling standpoint, does it change your mentality how you do things because plays and or possessions might be at a premium?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: It's concerning, the fact that against a team like this, you've got to be able to stop them and you've got to be able to get a lead.

If you're playing from behind, it's going to be very challenging, and that's obviously how they want to play. They do a great job of it. They are well-coached. They are tough. They are sound. They play good fundamental football. They are hoping to control the football and not allow to you get a lead and if they can play that game, they have a very good chance to win, and that's their belief and they are correct in it.

So we've got to figure out ways to create some stops, make some big plays, and try to get a lead and that happens, then there's a better chance that you can find a way to win.

Q. In your own self-reflection on trying to get better each week as a coach, do you look back at the last possession from Missouri and how you used your time outs and think you might have been able to do that differently, or when you started using the time outs, did you immediately start playing for the field goal and there's nothing you can do about it?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, you know, I don't know how you could have played it any different, other than, you know, we did talk about allowing them to score and that's probably the only thing we could have done. I mean, when they are down there at field goal range, you know and then they continue to get first downs, we used them all. We used all of our time outs.

I've been on a team where we've actually had a lead by two. We allowed the team to score; they did, and then we actually got the ball and went down and scored and won the game.

It was talked about. At the time, we had blocked I field goal earlier and we did not make the decision. So that's probably the only one I would really look back on after looking at it and say, maybe, you know, you do something unconventional and you allow them to score. But not many people do that, but that would be something that we would consider maybe a little stronger if it happened again.

Q. Monday tell Moore had a much better third game than second game but he was also double covered in the second half. Where is he in terms of progressing and understanding that he's going to get more of that attention from the secondary and how is he's going to deal with it?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I think he can which check he does a good job. He works hard. Second game of the year, bad weather conditions, they put a guy over the top of him the entire game. It wasn't -- you know, he didn't have as many opportunities to do what he could do. In this game, he was able to make some plays for us in the passing game and make sure he gets his touches. It's important to do that because he has breaking ability, and he loves football and he's a strong young man and wants to win and compete; we couldn't ask for anything more. He's a big piece of our offense and we have to make sure we continue to utilize his talents.

Q. The pass plays for David, seemed like he was more willing to take shots down the field. Do you

feel like him knowing that it's just him all night, he's not going to get pulled or anything, made him a little bit more comfortable knowing he can take more chances?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, he didn't know he would never get pulled. None of our quarterbacks would ever know that.

I think he knew that we were going to be aggressive and wanting to take shots and standing there and make throws. I have all the confidence in the world in David, and whether he gets pulled or not, has nothing to do with that. Have all the confidence in the world he'll play a good game. Started hot and had a little lull there that some of you didn't recognize but I did but he finished strong. Like I said I was very proud of his performance and I thought he did an outstanding job of competing and playing to the very end.

Q. One last note on the tight ends, seems like you were able to finally get some success -- what in terms of the Missouri defense, playing zone, helped the tight ends get free a little bit, is that right?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: I think the ability to run the playaction, throw the ball vertically, allows them more time to get open. Sometime our tight end are good when they can get to the second level and very good in zone coverage, getting there, as long as we have time to throw it. Sometimes when we get man coverage and they are getting locked up and we were not holding as long, it takes a little longer.

They need to be a big piece of our offense. I think Bryson and Cole, they have worked hard and they give us great effort and every game we have, they have to be productive for us and we have to make sure we give them opportunities to do that.

Q. Did you have a chance to look at Jarrett sparks touchdown?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Yes, I did.

Q. Did you have any thoughts? Did it look like he dropped it from your perspective?

HEAD COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, from what I understand in the rule, it has to be conclusive, and I did not see it was conclusive. So in my opinion, it shouldn't have been overturned but I'm not the referee. We'll go with whatever the call is and live by it but that's my opinion.