

# Capital One Orange Bowl: Alabama vs Oklahoma

Sunday, December 30, 2018

## Nick Saban

## Tua Tagovailoa

## Xavier McKinney

## Josh Jacobs

Alabama Crimson Tide

Alabama 45, Oklahoma 34

NICK SABAN: Well, it was a great win for our team. Really proud of these guys for the way they've competed all season long. Oklahoma is a really, really good team, very explosive team on offense. I thought we did a great job of controlling the game today the way our offense played. The only time that we really got stopped was when we stopped ourselves with penalties and a couple missed assignments and broken plays. But all in all, the players played hard for 60 minutes in the game, and that's what it took, and we knew that's what it would take.

I think it was really important in that game that we got off to a great start, got ahead in the game, got off the field on third down on defense in the first half, and that allowed us to get ahead in the game, and I think that was the biggest issue for us in the second half is we've struggled to get off the field on third down with the quarterback scrambling and our inability to cover him when we kept him from scrambling.

But it's a great win for us, and these guys have done an incredible job all year long, and really, really proud of the way they've competed and the way they've played.

**Q. Nick, can you talk about the overall experience of the Orange Bowl? You've been here before, but what was it like for you and your team?**

NICK SABAN: Well, you know, the city of Miami, the Orange Bowl folks, everybody involved with this bowl, first class in every way. Had great accommodations at the Intercontinental, and people at Barry did a great job for us in terms of our practice facility.

There's not one thing that I would say that we would be disappointed in in any way, shape or form. The hospitality was wonderful, and I really thank all the folks who work hard to make this happen for us.



**Q. There are coaches in the nation that will say how hard it is to get to the National Championship game. Does it feel like four straight to you?**

NICK SABAN: Well, I'm always looking ahead, and I'm kind of looking ahead for this one, and I'm looking that way because I think we owe it to our team. I thank these guys all the time for the great hard work that they do, the way they represent the university, themselves, their family. I'm really proud of them for that. But every thank you has an IOU, and I O U them my very best, and so do all of our coaches, and that's kind of how we approach it. It is the next game. I really don't think too much about what's happened in the past, just the challenges of be where your feet are and what's happening right now, and I'm sure Clemson will be a tremendous challenge for our team.

**Q. Coach, putting Oklahoma down 28-0, what was your impression of the way Lincoln Riley was able to rally his team back, and then for Tua, I know that you've become close with Kyler through the Heisman process. What was your message to him after the game?**

NICK SABAN: Well, it was no surprise to me that they would come back in the game. I kept telling our players on the sidelines, we have to keep playing, we have to keep grinding. We've got to play for 60 minutes. This team is very capable. I told them at halftime, the score last year in the game Oklahoma was ahead 35-10 and Georgia came back and won the game. So when you're playing against an explosive offensive team who can score very quickly, all parts of your team, special teams, offense, defense, everybody has got to continue to play well in the game. I thought we had one little lull in the game once we got ahead 28-0 where we had a few penalties, stopped ourselves a couple times. They took advantage of those opportunities and got themselves back in the game. But it was no surprise to me at all that they were able to make some plays that got them back in the game.

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I mean, me and Kyler just told each other, great game. He said I love you, I told him I love him, too. Aside from that, I just told him, great season. He had a great season. He told me I had a great game, and go win it all. But when you look at it, we're both competitors. I think he's done a tremendous job with running the offense. Lincoln Riley has done a tremendous job, as well.

I just think overall, at the end of the day, we're both competitors, and we're going to do whatever we can to help our team become successful.

**Q. Josh, the touchdown that you had getting into the end zone the way that you did, going up against a team in the state that you're from, put it into perspective for us.**

JOSH JACOBS: I really didn't come into this game with any kind of expectations or any kind of emotions. I approached this game how I approach every game. When I seen the opportunity to score, I just wanted to, I mean, try my best to score. That's just what it was.

**Q. For Coach Saban, you got to throw some oranges, but you also threw a headset tonight. The highs and the lows of emotions right there?**

NICK SABAN: It was more fun throwing the oranges. I can tell you a story about that.

My son was young and playing like junior high basketball. He got mad in a game, and I gave him a lecture, he and Kristen both, about not showing their emotions, keeping their cool, and their response to me was, and how many headsets have you broken?

**Q. Tua, you looked really mobile on your ankle. How were you feeling after the game and what's your rehab like moving forward?**

TUA TAGOVAILOA: Yeah, I mean, I think preparing this week has been really good. I can't say if I felt a lot better out there or if I was the same. But I think we're continuing to make progress with getting better, going to rehab, treatment, 24-hour treatment protocol is still on the line for us now. We're just trying to get better, trying to prepare for Clemson this upcoming week.

**Q. Josh, can you just expand on some of the nice plays you were able to make today in the first half especially with the juke and then on the touchdown catch, having the toughness to run through their defender to get into the end zone?**

JOSH JACOBS: Well, I don't really remember the juke, but on the touchdown catch, I was actually surprised I was that open. Initially when I caught the ball, when I seen it was just one defender to beat, I tried to beat him any kind of way I could, and it just happened to be running him over.

**Q. Coach, the one thing surprising about the 28-0 score was the nothing part. What allowed you to have so much success against that offense?**

NICK SABAN: Well, I think we got some pressure on the quarterback. We had a couple sacks early. We had some positive down and distance for ourselves. We got off the field on third down, and I said, the

biggest difference between the points that they scored in the second half and what they didn't score in the first half was our ability to get off the field on third down. I think they were like 0 for 5 in the first half, and in the second half we weren't very good at all. Created a lot of third-down situations, and when you play a team like that that's that explosive you can't give them another chance, and we just didn't that too many times.

**Q. Coach, can you provide an update on the injuries?**

NICK SABAN: I think that Christian Miller may be the guy that will be the most difficult. I think everybody else will be fine. So he's really the only guy that may have an issue. We don't know the extent of his hamstring injury to this point, but when they do an MRI we'll find out. But he seemed to be the most serious injury that we had.

You know, I'm really amazed at how well you all follow instructions. She keeps saying ask the players a question, and you all keep asking me a question.

**Q. Josh, talking to you earlier this week at Media Day, obviously being an Oklahoma guy, watching your recruitment and everything that you went through, you mentioned being from north Tulsa, not a lot of kids get the opportunity obviously you were afforded to go to Alabama. Tonight the biggest stage you've had in your career and you had a big night. What does it mean for you when you look at what those kids back in north Tulsa at home and watching you make those big plays?**

JOSH JACOBS: I just tried, whether it's football or whether it's in life, to be a role model for everybody back home. Growing up I really didn't have a role model besides my father. I really didn't have a role model on a big stage, and there wasn't a lot of people from where I'm from that made it out or was doing big things or positive things. So that's where I'm really the most, just being an inspiration to kids and showing them that regardless of their situation they can come out and do anything they put their mind to with hard work and faith.

**Q. Xavier, tell us what your thoughts were tonight.**

XAVIER MCKINNEY: It was definitely a challenge for me and for the DB's. I thought we did a great job of containing and playing man and just keeping everybody kind of well defended and making sure he didn't really have anybody to throw to. It was definitely hard to try to keep him in the box and keep him from scrambling, but he's a great quarterback. I thought we played well. I thought there was a lot of things that we could do better as far as facing a guy that can run the ball and that is more mobile on his feet. But I thought it was a good challenge for us and a good way for us to

get better and improve later in the season for this last game.