

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Kent State vs Wyoming

Monday, December 20, 2021

Boise, Idaho, USA

Albertsons Stadium

Kent State Golden Flashes

Coach Sean Lewis

Keith Sherald Jr.

Dustin Crum

Press Conference



couldn't do that without the guys that are sitting up here and the other seniors that this will be their last go-around in the blue and gold.

Q. Dustin, Chad Muma is a really good linebacker, one of the best in the country. When you have to face guy like that, how do you prepare your offense?

DUSTIN CRUM: I mean, it just comes down to execution honestly. They honestly have guys top to bottom that can make plays for them defensively. You just have to keep that in mind and try to attack where you feel like you match-up advantages, and like you said, he's kind of a guy you have to keep in mind at all times, but they have guys all over the field, so we just kind of have to execute and kind of play our style of ball.

Q. Sean, when you're preparing the defense, did you look at a lot of the Wyoming tape from early in the season, or have you mostly focused on since they put Levi Williams in there, and what have you seen from him at quarterback?

SEAN LEWIS: We've looked at all of it. When you have a little extra time, obviously you find out later on this opponent, so you have to balance the workload, but there's something to be gleaned from every single game regardless of who the trigger man is.

But obviously since they've made that change they got a huge win over Utah State. He's been very good with the football and distributing it around to their playmakers, and obviously starts with their run game first and foremost, and that's where they're going to lean heaviest with their two talented backs that they have.

But he's a talented trigger man that's able to do a lot of different things, and obviously they're riding that success they've had with him with that big win late over Utah State to get them into this situation and to be here in this moment.

Q. How long did it take for you guys to get over the disappointment of losing to Northern, and how do you feel the team is mentally heading into tomorrow and

SEAN LEWIS: Obviously it's been a great week out here in Boise. This is a first-class event, first-class city, and they've been unbelievable hosts. Excited to play against Coach Bohl and his Wyoming football team. They're well-coached, very, very talented, and looking forward to a great contest out here tomorrow on the blue turf.

Q. K.J., Wyoming has two really good running backs, something you guys have struggled with at times this year. What goes into stopping the run and giving your defense an opportunity to make plays?

KEITH SHERALD JR.: For us it's just being in your gap and do your assignment. We don't ask anybody to do anything they're not supposed to do, just do your job and we'll be fine.

Q. It's your last chance to play with this team this year. Obviously how important is it for you and how cool is it that you get a chance to play with these guys one more time and have a chance to bring the second bowl win in the last three years to Kent, Ohio?

SEAN LEWIS: Yeah, it's everything. Every time we go out to compete we're going out to win, and to do it with this special group of guys who have bought into what we've asked them to do from the very, very beginning and have changed the way that Kent State football is perceived nationwide. We get to bring our brand of football to another part of the country and put a little bit more respect on the way that we do things, and hopefully we can come away with another bowl victory, and now you start talking about instead of this being an outlier for what Kent State football does, we're consistently going to bowl games, consistently winning bowl games. That's what we want to do and that's what we want to be embodied by, and we

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just excited about another opportunity to kind of wrap up the season in a positive way?

KEITH SHERALD JR.: Obviously we were disappointed with the outcome of the game, but it just took us 24 hours. We reviewed the film and we just moved on. We can't change anything that happened in the game, we just can only make up for it in this next game. So we're excited to play in this game and go out and give it our best.

Q. K.J., they have a good running game and obviously we saw against Northern Illinois how crucial time of possession can be. How important is it going to be for you guys to get off the field and force those 3rd down stops tomorrow?

KEITH SHERALD JR.: Yeah, we obviously have to get off the field on 3rd down. We're a better team when the offense has the ball, so we just have to do our job and stop the run.

Q. Keith, you guys have been a takeaway machine in the secondary this year, and they've thrown some interceptions. Are there some things you guys take a look at and maybe get excited about going into the game?

KEITH SHERALD JR.: Yeah, we're excited about that, but they won't throw the ball until we stop the run, so we have to stop the run first, and then when we get them to throw, we'll take our opportunities and take the ball away and give the ball back to our offense.

Q. Coach, you've touched on it all year, but this kind of revitalizes the Kent State program. Can you talk about the two guys next to you and talk about how they've helped rebuilt Kent State's program to go to two bowl games in three years and be here in the moment?

SEAN LEWIS: Well, it would take a lot longer time than we have, butting up against practice here for me to brag on these guys and all that they've done. But I mean, the two young men that they are first and foremost, their character, their resiliency, what they've accomplished off the field resonates more so than anything that they have done on the field.

What they've done on the field, not to diminish anything that they've done on the field, but they're exceptional young men that we've been able to build trust and relationships with that I know that if they ever call, and I know that they know that I trust them and they trust me, and because of that we've been able to accomplish really, really big things, and to get here on this stage.

But the plays that they've made have been exceptional. K.J. in 2019 sent us bowling with his play in Eastern Michigan and what Dustin has done and what he's meant to our program, and to be able to hand the keys to him and the way that he's operated and drove this offense, to be the Conference Player of the Year this year and to get us to this spot and on and on and on with all the accolades that they've received and all the production that they've done. But the thing I'm most proud of with them and the group of seniors that will be playing their last game for Kent State is the young men that they are.

26 percent of our roster tomorrow when they take the field is college graduates, which I'm really proud of, and the doors that are going to be opened for them and the opportunities because of their journey and path through Kent State is second to none.

Really most proud of that, and it's just a cherry on top that we get to go compete again tomorrow against a really, really good program.

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