

Capital One Orange Bowl: Texas A&M vs North Carolina

Monday, December 28, 2020

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Texas A&M

Hard Rock Stadium

Carson Green

Press Conference

Q. I could be mistaken and we could have already asked you about this, but if we didn't might as well. Do you fancy yourself a running back with some of the runs you had a couple weeks ago, and what is that experience like for you?

CARSON GREEN: The experience, I was not expecting to run the ball. Don't want to run the ball again. It was fun and all, I'm not going to lie, I blacked out, I just took the ball and started running. It was kind of funny. Obviously if I'm touching the ball, something went wrong. So that's kind of how I thought about it, too.

Q. Kellen was talking a little bit earlier about maybe what this could be if this is his last game as an Aggie, what do you, in your perspective, think Kellen has meant to this program in his years here?

CARSON GREEN: I think he's meant a great deal to the program. I think he definitely is going to leave an impact, definitely leave a legacy here, which is awesome for him.

I think Kellen just helped all of us as seniors, the 2017 class, I think we've all helped build, hopefully, like maintain like a championship program, something that like teams from now on will start following the ways we did everything, how it worked out, how we did the off-season, how we practiced, and how we played games.

Q. Is there any conversation amongst the seniors on the offensive line about anybody taking advantage of coming back next year or what's that conversation been like?

CARSON GREEN: Obviously there's talks around the whole locker room about that but right now everyone is focused on winning this game, playing the best we can, finish out the year strong.

Q. Carson, can you talk a little bit about just that -- I



know North Carolina has got some guys that are opting out, but you guys haven't. You guys are basically staying 100 percent strong. Just how proud you are of the guys that put the team first -- not saying that there's anything wrong with what the North Carolina guys are doing, but just the fact that you guys are putting the team first and wanting to finish up strong?

CARSON GREEN: I don't know, the whole opt-out thing, everyone can make it what you want. Like I don't think anybody on our team is going to quit on our team like that. Like we've been battling it out. The whole 2020 season, definitely got really close like just the team as a whole because there's been a lot of stuff going on. You've kind of got it give it up for everybody just sticking with each other, even like through kind of the thickness and kind of the rough times. We had two weeks off here and there, you had COVID, people got quarantined. People just knew that they just wanted to keep playing.

I think it's one of those things, too, we owed it to Texas A&M to play it out. You know, Coach Fisher might not have recruited me, but I owe a lot to someone, just letting me come here, letting me play, and I owe a lot to A&M to finish out my part of the contract and play out all my games, since they are providing like a scholarship and letting me play here.

Q. What has changed about the culture in the football program since Coach Fisher arrived and especially this year? What's been the secret sauce for you guys?

CARSON GREEN: The secret sauce is I think we just had a lot of depth -- not depth, but like a lot of experience, more just around the whole team. The defense is like a lot of seniors on it, a lot of people that know how to play football. This year we finally had an O-line that had a lot of experience. The biggest thing like we had a quarterback that had a lot of experience, and even the running back to Jalen. The tight ends like Renick, too. The receivers, they were just wanting to play, wanting to make plays, so that helped, too.

I think this year we made a big emphasis like on the O-line running the ball, being able to pass protect, too, and give Kellen enough time to get it to the skill players to make plays.



Q. And what about the culture as a whole? What has Coach Fisher and his staff brought to the table?

CARSON GREEN: Since he's been here, he brought in Coach Schmidty, the strength coach, and I love Schmidty. He's a great dude. Like his program -- he's going to try to break guys and make them fit into the program, and that's what he did from the beginning on. I could tell like, it was just a different way we did things with like the old staff and with him. He had to be here early, had to be on time. If you weren't early, then you're going to get kicked out. It's just one of those things. And everybody respected it, knowing that we were trying to change it.

So the culture as a whole got changed. We all knew like what it takes to be a winning program and what we had to do to get there and how we have to be able to stay there consistently throughout the week, and that means like practicing at a championship level. Like practices have become kind of like long and just demanding and stuff, but every week we realized it was very important that we are focused every day.

Q. In terms of North Carolina's defensive line, do you have an idea how you're going to set up protections for the game on Saturday?

CARSON GREEN: Looks like they're going to do a lot of three down. They like to move a little bit. They are going to have four eyes, some four eyes and stand-ups. Protection-wise, we are just going to keep it the same way. We always protect three-down front, four-down fronts, nothing really changes that way.

You know, North Carolina, like we've been watching them, they're a pretty good D-line, pretty good defense as a whole. I kind of like how they just hustle the ball. They are always high-motor guys, which that deserves a lot of credit for those guys.

Q. Obviously you guys are disappointed in maybe getting over it as you get to practice this week and it's game week, but what does it mean to play in this game and what would it mean to win it? This program hadn't been to it since the early 1940s. So this means something, doesn't it?

CARSON GREEN: Yes, sir. Yes. It's just another game. We need to finish this season out strong. The whole team knows this is a big game. Whatever the people voted on, it's the past. You can't really do anything to change it. All we can focus on is this game.

Everyone on the team is pumped to go to Miami. Like you

said, we haven't been there in years and years, so it's awesome that we can be one of those A&M teams, one of the first ones to set a standard about going to New Year's Six bowls and playing our hardest, finishing out the season and hopefully coming back with a win.

Q. I'm going to ask a 64-mile-up question. Explain to people who don't know why offensive linemen like run blocking as opposed to pass blocking because you especially had mentioned how much you like run blocking this year.

CARSON GREEN: You know, I like -- it's one of those things, like for me, I like getting in a three-point stance and I like going at somebody. It's kind of like a board drill almost sometimes, where it's just you versus him; you've got to win your battle in your block. I guess you can say the same thing with pass protecting.

It feels -- I would say it's awesome when you get to move somebody, get to throw somebody on the ground and getting to move them like two or three yards back knowing that you just overpowered that man.

Like run blocking, also I think it takes -- so to be able to run block, you've got to trust not only the O-linemen but you've got to trust the tight ends, if you're in there with tight ends, you've got to trust receivers to make blocks on the outside perimeter, you've just kind of got to trust the whole offense as a whole in order for Isaiah, Ainius, any of the running backs to make that carry and make the yards, and then this year it's also been awesome just getting to see Isaiah run through guys. He'll make contact at five yards and then get an extra two or three or five, and that's a big thing, too.

It's just like for us as an O-line, you can tell we just get really hyped up when we get to move the ball, run the ball and just move people around.

Q. Do you ever kind of get the feeling or do you know at a certain point in time where the opponent's defensive front knows they're in trouble?

CARSON GREEN: Yes. That's at the point that an O-line, you can feel like breaking almost. You can feel them bending over, they're getting tired, and that's when we're just like begging the coaches, like hey, let's keep running at them. We're in better shape than them; we can keep doing it.

Whenever you start seeing them start subbing people out, like third, fourth quarter, long drive, we're really good at doing those 10-, 12-plus-play drives and just running the ball at them the whole time. Like we're in shape and we also want to throw people around. If you watch us some



games, like it would be -- one of the last plays of the drive we just went 80 yards and people were still getting moved off the ball, which it's awesome seeing all of us, how we've improved that way.

Q. Do you guys have anything left to prove in this game?

CARSON GREEN: Yes, sir, obviously. Again, every week you've got your personal self to prove. You've got your name on your back. You've got Texas A&M. We've just got to prove to everybody in the country that we are a top team. We are going to be a top-five team and we want to stay there. This game especially, we need to prove that we belong in a New Year's Six bowl. We belong in the top contenders for the next year and the years to come. And I think just finishing out strong, seeing that we like -- we can make it a whole year just being focused and just playing.

Q. Last week you had a big day on signing day. Do you pay any attention to the recruiting and the guys that are coming in, and do you all get excited about it or is it something that you don't even -- hey, I'm not going to play with those guys, so I don't care?

CARSON GREEN: It's not like I don't care; it's just you hit a certain age and it's kind of like, all right, like I just don't even really know much about -- I just don't really know much about the recruiting and stuff like that. I heard that we did good, a bunch of good O-line guys. Pumped about that. Always good to have better O-line guys to push each other.

Honestly, the only guys that I really care about recruiting is the guys from Southlake, from my hometown. If there's anybody good, hopefully we get them, keep the Southlake train coming here.

Q. You talked a minute ago about the North Carolina defensive line. When you look at them at the line or the defense as a whole, does it remind you of anybody you've played against in the SEC?

CARSON GREEN: No, not necessarily. I think these guys might not be the biggest guys we've seen, but I think they do play really hard, and they've got a lot of grit to them. Like I said, they run around, they hustle, they're good with their hands, they try to keep fighting the entire play. If that means they got beat, they're trying to hustle someone down from the backside. So I think they're different in that aspect where they're maybe not the biggest people but they -- I respect them, how they play. They play hard. They play just tough, so it's going to be a good game.

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