

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

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Texas A&M Aggies

Hard Rock Stadium

DeMarvin Leal

Press Conference



Texas A&M 41, North Carolina 27

Q. Jump right to it, crunch time, you're down 27-20. What's going through your mind? What was the mood of the team on the sideline and what do you make of the explosion to score 24 unanswered?

DeMARVIN LEAL: I mean, we stuck together. We kept talking to each other. We kept trying to push each other just to bounce back. We always face adversity. This entire season we faced adversity, even before the season started. So we're used to it, and we're used to coming together when times get tough, and that was the outcome.

Q. Marvin, the way you guys basically played defense all season, especially the way you ended this game, is this kind of the building blocks and the new standard for defense moving forward at A&M?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Yes, sir, no question. Yes, sir. Defense, we love it. We love it.

Q. Just how excited are you moving forward at the future of this program?

DeMARVIN LEAL: I'm very excited. The guys that we have coming in and the guys that we have that are staying, man, it's going to be crazy. I just can't wait to see it.

Q. DeMarvin, when you're on the sideline and Devon broke that long run, first of all, did you see it happen, and what's going through your mind when he starts to regain his footing, when he almost fell down?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Oh, man, I was too excited. I mean, he just -- he did his thing, most definitely, and I'm just proud of him and the way he stepped up. It's just -- it makes me so happy to see somebody so young doing big things for our team.

Q. Was there any question that he'd score?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Oh, man, I already knew it. I ain't got in question in there. I believed it 100 percent.

Q. You came right back and got a big stop. Did that give you any kind of, I guess, jolt or boost or anything?

DeMARVIN LEAL: It gave us all a boost. We were still sitting there trying to fight and fight and fight for that energy that we were trying to get, and as soon as that happened, it just -- everybody that you could just feel the energy because that energy is so contagious, so you could feel the energy go through everybody, and it was an amazing outcome.

Q. Talk about the defense and you guys won eight straight since losing to Alabama. Do you think this is something good for you guys to get into 2021 and have this winning streak going?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Yes, sir, most definitely. Our confidence is extremely high, and we're just getting closer every single day.

Q. Kind of a stat question for you, but I was wondering if you could touch on the tackles for loss you had, especially with y'all having nine and North Carolina having four. I was wondering if you could talk about how critical that was for you in the game today.

DeMARVIN LEAL: That was very critical. It's amazing just seeing everybody do their job, and that's just mostly what we preach, everybody just doing their job.

Honestly, it's not a surprise to me.

Q. And then just one quick follow up for you, I was wondering if you could talk about Buddy with this being his senior --

DeMARVIN LEAL: I love Buddy. I'm so happy for him. He's grown so much, and you can just tell, he just loves the game. He's an unbelievable leader. I follow right behind him. I try to lead the way he leads. I'm definitely going to take a couple notes out of his book and apply them myself.

Q. Just wanted to ask you about the stop you guys had on 4th down after you guys took the lead. How big were those two play stops, and then what was the feeling when you saw the chains were short on that 4th down?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Unbelievable, but that's what we do. That's the kind of defense that we're becoming. That's the norm that we're trying to have. So when it comes down to those 3rd-and-short and 4th-and-short downs, we just step up, and we're ready to get after it.

Q. What did it mean for Jayden Peevy to be the guy that made that stop?

DeMARVIN LEAL: Oh, it meant so much. I know that moment meant so much for him because he worked so hard, he's gone through so much adversity, and I know that moment, he definitely needed that moment.

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