

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

Ainias Smith

Press Conference

Texas A&M 41, North Carolina 27

Q. How exciting has playing in this backfield been? And I mean, every time Achane gets the ball, do you expect him to burst open a 76-yarder like that?

AINIAS SMITH: Yes, literally yes. I expect that every single time. He's been doing this since high school really, since forever. I told him he was the light. I told him, bro, every time you touch it you have the ability to go out here and do something with it.

So yes, I was expecting that.

Q. This win here, you're down, what, seven in the fourth quarter and then you go on and rattle off all the points that you did, and thanks to obviously the defense on the big 4th and 1 stop, too, but does this win kind of sum up what this team was about this year, just kind of grit and no quit?

AINIAS SMITH: Definitely. I mean, the whole year we were always pressing on -- not even so much pressing but just working on finishing and coming out the second half and just being us, and that's really all it came down to. You've just got to stay composed and just finish.

Q. Is this a game -- obviously I know you haven't been here that long, but is this a culture-changing game that we're seeing right in front of our eyes here? Is this a game you think A&M would win in the past?

AINIAS SMITH: Oh, man. This game says a lot, and it definitely starts -- this was the start of the next season, and going into next year we've just got to come out with the exact same attitude that we had in the fourth quarter.

Q. In that first half you didn't get a lot of targets, and in the second half you made some really big plays. What allowed you to get open and make some of those



plays out in space and how important were those?

AINIAS SMITH: Man, they were big. I told myself to just stay calm, let the game come to you and be yourself. I really wasn't tripping on the first half. I was definitely giving my all. It really wasn't about me getting the ball. I just wanted to be a team player and just put my all on the line. The second half when I started getting the ball I told myself whenever I get it, just go ahead and make a play, be you, so that's all that was.

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