

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

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

North Carolina Tar Heels

Hard Rock Stadium

Eugene Asante

Press Conference

Texas A&M 41, North Carolina 27

Q. Eugene, there were a couple times out there tonight where you kind of looked a little frustrated when you missed some tackles, but is the positive that you were there in place to make the play and is that something you can build off of?

EUGENE ASANTE: Yeah, certainly I think so. I think that when I'm in situations to make tackles, I need to make those tackles. I feel like that's something we stress over here is tackling every day in practice. I think when those opportunities present themselves, I need to make those plays. It's great me being in position to make those plays, but I need to make those plays.

Q. Eugene, Mack has talked about this kind of being the first game of next year, kind of with everybody coming back. What was this opportunity for you guys in terms of making a statement on a national stage to kind of get ready for next year?

EUGENE ASANTE: Yeah, I think it's a big deal, just us being on this stage at the Orange Bowl. Like the guy said, two years ago nobody would have imagined North Carolina being in the Orange Bowl. Give Texas A&M credit, they played a really good game, they had a really good scheme.

And I think things are trending on the up and up over here because we've got a lot of young guys that want to learn and want to do better for this team and are in position to make plays and just got to make those plays.

I feel like this loss is a lesson to us, and we just need to work hard in the off-season, get with the strength coaches and just continue to work hard because I feel like we'll certainly be back.

Q. Building on that, what particularly excites you about the defense next season? What did you see



today from certain players or certain personnel groups that shows what you could have potentially next year on defense?

EUGENE ASANTE: One thing I've seen was more communication within the back end with the front sevens. Like Jeremiah said, the young guys are just communicating a lot more and just were willing to go out there and stand on what they say and make a call and make a correct call, and do what they need to do for the defense and the overall success.

I think that's one thing to look forward to, and I think on top of having guys coming back now and just the veteran leaders like Gemmel, all the guys in the locker room to show the young guys the way. I think those are a couple things to look forward to, and I think we'll be successful for the next year.

Q. You hadn't played this number of reps in any games before. Was there a point in time where you had to dig down and find something else in you in order to finish this thing out?

EUGENE ASANTE: I feel like in terms of the mental aspect of it, you know, just lining up once again, going out there on the field. I don't know if there was any wear and tear, but I feel like just being more constantly in the rotation.

So just being out there and getting things communicated and just being out there mentally, I feel like that was one thing I had to work on a little bit more.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

