

November 15, 2014



An Interview With:

COACH KLIFF KINGSBURY

Q. Kliff, what do you think happened to the defense in the second half? [No microphone.]

COACH KINGSBURY: Maybe. We haven't played very well all year in the second half for whatever reason. And they had a good plan. I thought they got back to pounding the ball, didn't turn it over. Had some good schemes that obviously were effective against us.

But I don't know why they were able to score every drive. I just -- they just got it done. Got to give them credit.

Q. Why did you choose to put in Pat Mahomes? How do you feel he performed?

COACH KINGSBURY: Davis isn't 100 percent. That high ankle sprain is still lingering. I wanted someone that could move around. I knew we'd have a hard time up front protecting. I felt that Pat, his mobility gave us a better shot. Didn't want to put Davis out there unless he was 100 percent.

I thought Pat did some good things. He protected the ball. That's what I asked him to do, protect the ball, and he did that, made a bunch of plays with his feet. I was proud of the way he battled.

Q. What percentage would you put Davis at right now?

COACH KINGSBURY: I don't really have a percent. He just can't move as effectively as I'd like him to move.

Q. When Davis is back to 100 percent, considering the what Patrick has done the last couple of weeks, how close are those two?

What's the competition like once those two guys are both healthy?

COACH KINGSBURY: That's a great question. Have to look at the film really to see where Pat's at. The big deal to me was protecting the football. That's something we struggled with all year, and it's really put us in a hole most of the year. So doing that gave us a chance later in the game. So we'll just have to see how they both look next week.

Q. How much of that mobility that Mahomes gave you today, how much do you think that helps?

COACH KINGSBURY: It helped a lot. He created with his feet, kept some things alive under some tough rushes. Had two big touchdowns called back that I thought he extended to make great throws.

Just proud of the way he battled. Wasn't always pretty, missing things. As a young guy, the way he kept fighting, the moment wasn't too big for him. I thought he handled himself well.

Q. A lot of freshmen stepped up early in first half, Madison, Mahomes. What does that say for the future here?

COACH KINGSBURY: Yeah, we're playing a lot of young guys. They've come a long way. It's been rough at times with some of those youngsters, but just proud of them not shying away from the moment. That's one thing, all those kids have stepped up when we asked them to. Hasn't always turned out the way we wanted, but they haven't been afraid of the moment.

Q. About the 9:50 mark seemed to be the turning point of the ball game. Got the ball at the 35, went down to the two sideline passes that were incomplete and then got sacked. Was that something you guys saw where you felt you could take advantage there and get another quick score.

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COACH KINGSBURY: We had great looks on both of them, got exactly what we wanted, just didn't make the plays.

Q. What's the emotion to being guaranteed a losing season now with seven losses?

COACH KINGSBURY: I don't even know how to answer that question. Just focused on really the seniors, felt bad for them because I thought they came out with great effort. On Senior Night, you'd like it to end better. That's pretty much my main concern.

Q. When Coach Smith was calling defensive plays today, you had guys holding up towels. Is that to protect the signals or just locating them?

COACH KINGSBURY: Yeah, to protect signals. Obviously, with the situation we had earlier in the year, our signals, I'm sure, have been passed around. So that's -- we've changed some up, and they just wanted to make sure.

Q. Were you surprised by Thomas' mobility?

COACH KINGSBURY: No, I think he's a good athlete. I thought a couple of those plays he made, he was so by himself, I probably could have made a few yards. Defensively, we can't allow that to happen.

But I thought he protected it well in the second half. I thought he ran it well. You could see his confidence growing in that second half as a quarterback. He's a good player. I remember recruiting in high school. He had a couple of throws he'd like to have back in the first half, but he handled himself well on the road in his first start. Got to give that kid a lot of credit.

Q. What was the reasoning for him being so wide open and by himself in some places?

COACH KINGSBURY: Just missing assignments. I'd have to look at the film, but hearing guys on the headset, just guys not doing what they're supposed to do.

Q. A question about the guys holding up the towels. Looked like you were shielding your defensive play calling, but it didn't seem like your offense. What was the difference there?

COACH KINGSBURY: Yeah, we changed our signals back in the spring. So that hasn't been an issue for us. With the defense, we had just heard some things that our signals had been around. So we've changed them up and just trying to protect them.

Q. So you felt those had been compromised some in a previous game?

COACH KINGSBURY: Yes, possibly.

Q. How is it that you guys have been harping on all year trying to win the turnover battle. When you finally do win the turnover battle against Oklahoma, it's still not enough in the end?

COACH KINGSBURY: When you can't slow them down in the second half, that's going to happen. But the first half, we had some opportunities there to really distance ourselves and just once again didn't, and we haven't been a good second half team all year for whatever reason.

Q. What did you think about the way Devin played? Seemed like he was able to get separation a lot more consistently today.

COACH KINGSBURY: He did some good things. He's growing up as a receiver. He had the one post he'd like to have back, where he want up, and we've got to make those plays. I think we had five drops once again. We have to get better. It's been a bad deal for us dropping footballs. With where we're at, you can't squander drives like that.

Q. Do you have an update on J.J. Gaines?

COACH KINGSBURY: I don't. I just said it was a shoulder injury. So that's where we're at with it.

Q. Justis Nelson, was he --

COACH KINGSBURY: Some sort of head injury. So they took him out, precautionary.

Q. Kliff, early in the game where you had the -- two of those plays that were third and short, if I remember correctly. You had Scalzi in at tight end, and you had two procedure penalties. One of those, they were gesturing toward Oklahoma guys. Did you feel like they were calling signals?

COACH KINGSBURY: That's what I was

told, was that they were simulating a snap count. But that goes on, and you just have to be focused and sit in there and just that's inexcusable, whether they're doing it or not.

Q. Two of the big plays that were called back because of penalties, do you think that's lack of familiarity with the offensive line to a more mobile quarterback? Or what do you see as really the problem?

COACH KINGSBURY: I think some of that. The ball didn't come out quick, and I think some of our guys got caught off guard. Instead of just focusing on their job, got a little lax and made a mistake. So as we practice it, as we get used to different quarterbacks back there, those guys have to assume, if No. 5 is back there, the play is going to be extended, and not to make that mistake that kills us.

Q. Even in those plays, what do you take away from what Patrick was able to do even though it was called back?

COACH KINGSBURY: Since we signed him, he's one of the best at extending plays that I've ever seen. As a young guy, you need that because you're not going through the progression you should or going to the right spot with the ball. But tremendous job at getting out of the pocket if it's not there and keeping his eyes downfield and making good throws on the move.

Q. Do you think Patrick inspires his teammates in the huddle? Is there a different confidence with him?

COACH KINGSBURY: I'm not sure. He's a very confident young man. I think growing up around professional pitcher, and he's been great at everything he's ever done, whether it be baseball or basketball. He's just very confident in his abilities.

Like I said, it didn't always look the way it should look, but he -- the ball moves when he was in, and he protected it very well.

Q. How rare is that for a freshman quarterback?

COACH KINGSBURY: It's very rare. A true freshman quarterback, it's one thing to redshirt and have a year, but for a true freshman to protect the ball as well as he did against a very good defense in his second start, it's rare.

Q. Kliff, last play of the first half, when Keenon has the interception, did you feel like there was any opportunity for him to get out of bounds?

COACH KINGSBURY: I didn't think so. I thought he saw green grass and just went for it. I think it would have been close.

Q. It seemed like Jared Kaster was visibly frustrated with the officials at times. Do you feel like they were extending the substitution time for the defense?

COACH KINGSBURY: I'm not sure. That's been a point of emphasis. If you do sub, they slow it down. They physically contact the center and don't let him move. Kaster likes to play fast. We practice fast. That was more just him wanting to push the pace. But I think that's been pretty standard this year.

Q. Kliff, you're going to set for the third straight year an average attendance mark. How do you feel about the fans who have showed up and endured with you guys?

COACH KINGSBURY: It's been incredible. They keep showing up. We've all been disappointed in how it's gone, but for them to show up and keep making noise for these players and these seniors today, we have the best fans in America. It's going to pay off.

Q. How hard is it that that senior class, all 20 of them, going off the field today. How tough is it to send them off with a game like that where you guys are so close?

COACH KINGSBURY: The whole year's been tough. Those guys have been through two coaches, had some tough seasons around here, but they've battled and been great leaders for us and have really helped us implement where we're going. So I always have a special place in my heart for that group.

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An Interview With:

JAKEEM GRANT

Q. How did you feel Mahomes did out there today?

JAKEEM GRANT: I feel like he did good. Being a freshman and coming into a big game like this, I felt like he ran the ball and threw the ball good. And just overall perspective, he just -- he checked and doing all of those things that Davis do. He went out there, and he did a great job.

Q. With his ability to extend plays, how does that change your role as a receiver?

JAKEEM GRANT: It really doesn't change anything besides just doing the scramble routes, scramble drill. Getting open when he scrambles to the right or left and just rolling out to his side and catching the ball when he throws it.

Q. How is it different from one quarterback Mahomes to Webb? What's the difference between the two? Did one get more reps than the other in practice this week?

JAKEEM GRANT: No, not at all. It's just the thing about the difference between Davis and Pat is extending plays, like he said. You know, Pat is a scrambler. He'll roll out whenever there's trouble and get us the ball. It's just that difference.

Besides that, throwing the ball, it's just the same.

Q. Kliff mentioned dropped passes being another problem today. How can you guys fix that?

JAKEEM GRANT: Just go in and catch tennis balls, catch jugs, you know, and focus. It's nothing to it but just focus. See the ball all the way into the tuck, and that's it.

Q. Have you guys done anything differently as the season's progressed trying to kind of fix some of those problems?

JAKEEM GRANT: Definitely. Every time we drop balls, Coach make us run basically like football suicides. So like I said, it's just focus. If we focus better, we'll catch the ball.

Q. The touchdown you scored early in the game, the six-yard catch, did you kind of break off of route there?

JAKEEM GRANT: Definitely. Like I said, Patrick is a scrambling quarterback. He extends plays, and I originally had a slant on that route, and he told me previously he was going to roll out that way because they were bringing blitz. And I rolled out to the side he was rolling out, and we connected on it.

Q. Is that something you worked on in practice with a more mobile quarterback where receivers are coming back with the quarterback when he's moving?

JAKEEM GRANT: Oh, yeah, definitely. After practice we always do that with Pat because he does extend plays. So we want it to be great on that, just like you're seeing today. As you can see, like when he scrambled out, we caught a lot of touchdown passes off that. Some were called back, but you know.

Q. The play at the start of the fourth quarter, it was 21-21, and you had the incomplete in the corner of the end zone down there. What was that play call, and what was supposed to happen out there?

JAKEEM GRANT: It was just a corner route to the back pylon. It was me and Pat's fault on that. I didn't get my depth, and he overthrew it. There's no one to blame but both of us.

Q. [No microphone] on back to back plays. What were you seeing coverage-wise

there?

JAKEEM GRANT: We were seeing they were playing a lot of man the whole game. So we felt we could beat them with speed downfield. All he had to do was throw it deep and us, as receivers, catch the ball.

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An Interview With:

SAM EGUAVOEN

Q. Sam, how difficult was it to stop their running game today?

SAM EGUAVOEN: I mean, we were connecting. The best part of their running game was their running back, obviously. He broke off too many tackles, and we weren't swarming to the ball. We fit everything correctly, but then towards the end of the game, we weren't counting the quarterback. He's a freshman. We didn't expect him to be pulling the ball so much. Hats off to OU for that.

Q. Feel like you guys were biting a lot more in the second half on Samaje, and that allowed Thomas to break up the big runs?

SAM EGUAVOEN: Why wouldn't you? I didn't have any faith in their quarterback getting that many yards. Anybody, any defense in the world will bite on a good running back like that.

Q. How tough in your senior season not to be guaranteed a winning season? How tough is that for you all?

SAM EGUAVOEN: The whole season has been tough. The whole four years have been tough, with new DC's left and right. Nothing new to me. Just got to keep pushing through the rest of the season. Can't get any uglier. We've just got to keep fighting.

Q. Second half, they just ran play after play, just running continuously. What was their -- what were people saying as far as their offensive line and what have you?

SAM EGUAVOEN: It was missed tackles. We just weren't swarming to the ball. Too many people were assuming a tackle was going to be made, so we just relaxed. I felt it towards the end

of the third quarter, felt like we were just relaxing. That's when they opened up on us.

Then they had the quarterback running game which gained them a lot of yards, and that gave their running back more confidence there was going to be less bodies on him. So we just relaxed when we shouldn't have.

Q. How did the second half maybe compare to Arkansas, the Arkansas game, where they were pretty strong run team as well?

SAM EGUAVOEN: OU wasn't nothing like Arkansas, I don't think so. It was just the quarterback run game started messing with our heads. I mean, Bell had one big play for about 40 yards, but they're just chunking the field down. It really wasn't like run fits or anything. It was just tackling.

Q. You didn't expect the quarterback to get off that many runs?

SAM EGUAVOEN: No, we didn't.

Q. Was there an intent by the coaches on the sideline to obviously make a counter move once they saw Cody -- you guys saw Cody Thomas start to tuck and run a little more?

SAM EGUAVOEN: We made adjustments. Other than that, we just have to tackle. We'd make the adjustment, and they'd give it to the running back, and then we missed the tackle. It was just an ugly game.

Q. So they'd counter, and the decisions that were made put you in the right positions?

SAM EGUAVOEN: Yes, sir.

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