

AUBURN vs. LIBERTY
November 17, 2018
Jordan-Hare Stadium >> Auburn, AL

AUBURN HEAD COACH GUS MALZAHN QUOTES

Opening statement...

"I just really want to start out by saying I really appreciate our seniors. I'm real proud of those guys. We played very well as a team today. All of the seniors got to play, and I think that was really important defensively, to shut those guys out. I thought that was outstanding and had a score defensively early in the game.

"Offensively, I thought they were pretty balanced. They didn't have a turnover again; I think that is really big. And then special teams, the blocked punt was really good early. I thought (Anders) Carlson had an outstanding day. We asked him to kick a plus 50-yarder right of the bat, and he drilled it. He did a good job with his kickoffs, too.

"Our guys came out, they took care of business. Being the last home game, I'm really proud of our other players for fighting to make sure that our seniors had a good experience and good memories their last time out there on that field."

On the defensive shutout...

"That was something that Coach Steele and the defensive players have been talking about all week -- (it was) their goal to have a shutout. The last home game for our seniors, and they did it. It was really impressive."

Jarrett Stidham, QB

On executing the game plan...

"It was great. We jumped on them from the start. We got a lot of momentum and the blocked punt was a huge swing our way. We tried to keep it rolling as much as we could offensively. My hat is off to the defense for doing an excellent job."

On Senior Day...

"It was all about sending our seniors out the right way. I think we did that, and this will be a game our seniors will remember for a long time."

Dontavius Russell, DL

On his time at Auburn...

"It went by fast. There's nothing that can really be said about it besides that it just really feels good to be here."

On his consistent performance year after year...

"It is really uncommon for people to play four years back-to-back the way I have. To be able to make it well so far and play these past years for Auburn has been a blessing."

Kam Martin, RB

On his identity with the team...

"To run the ball hard and to be physical and tough. We have to do what we do, and that is playing Auburn football."

On your first 100-yard game this year...

"It felt good. I had a great week of practice, so I knew I if I came out here and took care of business then I was going to have a great game."

Chandler Cox, FB

On senior day win...

"That was awesome. It was a special night for me personally, for my family. Especially for the seniors around here. It was a memorable night for us all. I'm going to miss it and it's hard to believe that it's done. I will never step out on that field again, but it was a special night."

On Seth Williams...

"He's like your own personalized player (in a video game). I wish I had his speed and could run like he does. It's fun to have a teammate like that."

On execution this game...

"This makes it even better. We went out there and got the job done. They're an up-and-coming team with some good players."

On Alabama...

"It's a big one this week and the reason I came to Auburn. We're not going to lay down and back down from those guys. We're going to go in there and give everything we have. I'm going to leave everything out there."

Ryan Davis, WR

On his last home game...

"We went out the right way. Any time you shut out a team, that's good. I couldn't be happier with our team and what our seniors have accomplished."

On senior day...

"It's a lot of emotion going on. Just thinking about it all day and then running through the tunnel one last time. Walking out the tunnel for the last time, you reminisce on how you got to this point and everything the past four years. I definitely say this was one of the greatest feelings my entire life."

On Alabama next week...

"So much goes into this game. You want to play for the people that came before you. With the history and background of it, you want to go out the right way."

Andrew Williams, DL

On shutting out Liberty...

"I would say that is what we came in thinking; that is how we practiced. It feels good when you work hard for something and you achieve it. Our No. 1 goal was to keep the zero on the scoreboard -- all the way from starters to walk-ons, everyone had the same mindset."

On forcing turnovers...

"It is all about momentum. That brings life to the offense and to the next series. It is all about teamwork."

On using this game as preparation for the Alabama game...

"Every game you improve, improve on things that you did not do or improve on things that you were not good at or could do better. We came in with that momentum and mindset and that is how everybody feels."

Darrell Williams, LB

On the interception...

"It was man-to-man, and I kind of read the QB because I could see it through the line. As soon as I dropped back, I knew he was going to throw it there. He had been throwing slants all night, so I knew it was going to be a quick-gain type hitch. I was just trying to make a play out of it."

On the defensive display...

"We needed to get this shutout because it was going to be good for our scoring defense. Last three years we have been top 10 or top 15, and to go another year around the top 10 would be a big step. That zero definitely helped that -- we had been pressing that the whole week. It feels great, especially for this being my last night, too."

Anders Carlson, PK

On how tonight's win felt...

"No complaints, it felt good. We started off well, and I'm glad I got those kicks to start. It felt really good."

On kicking a long field goal...

"It was (great) for sure. I think I was going through a little tough struggle there for a while, just to put that through now felt good."

On the mindset when struggling...

"I think it comes through experience and not getting too excited, just kind of slowing down your mind and body. And just knowing what you do and do it well. "

LIBERTY HEAD COACH TURNER GILL QUOTES

Opening statement...

“Obviously Auburn is the better team. We got out-coached and out-played, and they deserved to win the football game. We can learn from this game for next week. We can take what we learned from it and get ready for the next one. That’s as simple as it is. We got beat.”

On Auburn shutting their passing game down...

“Their personnel were better than our personnel. It’s the simplest way to put it. We tried different things. Their defensive backs, defensive linemen and linebackers made it a tough thing. We just couldn’t execute it as well as we hoped for.”

On the setback the offense has faced...

“Our competition has been very good. Virginia was a very good defense; Auburn is one of the better defenses in the country. Competition-wise, we just have to step it up. We weren’t able to step it up at this point in time. It’s a little bit of everybody. It’s a combination of the whole offense.”

On Damian Bounds’ injury...

“It’s negative. Everything is on a positive side as far as he goes. They will continue to evaluate him, but they did have some initial good news.”

On how scary it was having one of his players go down like that...

“You always have concern when a player goes down like that. Obviously, we had even more concern with it being one of our own players. Any player from any side, when you have them down for a while, it’s obviously very serious. A doctor has to take as much precaution as possible. I’m glad he’s ok at this point of time.”

Moving forward...

“We just need to watch the tape and move onto New Mexico State. We’ll move on from this fast and get ready for the next ballgame.”

LIBERTY PLAYER QUOTES

Elijah Benton, S

On first game in an SEC stadium...

“I think it was a great experience to see what it takes to be at the top. The SEC is obviously the best college football conference in the country. It was a good experience to see what we need to do to be able to compete with teams like that.”

On how the defense played...

“I don’t think we were worn down. I think plays just happened and Auburn found things that worked for them.”

Jeremy Peters, CB

On first quarter...

“We ran the ball and tackled well in the first half. In the second half, we had some plays to work on. They had good territory. I feel like we had a pretty decent game.”

On being worn down...

"I don't think they wore us down. We were in pretty good shape. We had guys rotating, because they were tired, but had depth in every position."

On Jarrett Stidham's run to take 22-point lead...

"That was a big play for them at the end of the first half. After that, they did pretty well. We had control, though."

Stephen Calvert, QB

On playing Auburn...

"They really tested our fight and our will. That's something that we've been preaching all year and they kind of big boy'd us this game. We have to come out more physical. They were obviously the better team. They had the size, the physicality and the depth. Playing that type of team is just a good experience. A good way to test and see where your team is at physically and mentally. Hats off to them. They are a really good team."

On the next game...

"We just have to let this game go. It already happened. We'll learn from the film of our mistakes and what we did. It's over with. It already happened. The biggest thing is just moving on and attacking practice every single day out of the week."

On passing after first drive...

"They were just playing press man, two man, and they were getting physical with our receivers. That kind of threw off rhythm. Other than that, the pressure. They did a good job of getting to me fast. Not as much as sacks, but just pressuring me and making me force throws."

On pick six...

"I didn't even see him in that window. I thought he was coming on the blitz, that's why I pulled it. He made a great catch. I could see it just straight in his hands. He grabbed it full speed at the line of scrimmage with his hands and took it for six."

On rebounding from game...

"We just have to stay focus and know at the end of the day it comes down to trusting your players and trusting your coaches. I trust my players and my coaches. It's a love thing and something that we have to move on from."

Frankie Hickson, RB

On running game...

"They are very sound defensively. They are very well-coached. Gus Malzahn is a great coach. He got the guys ready to play. They outmatched physically. We couldn't match their physicality. We just kept fighting."

On different between ACC (Virginia) and SEC (Auburn)...

"Honestly, the physicality. The physical aspect of the game definitely turns up when you get to the SEC. You kind of hear about that when you're growing up and playing football. When you play against it and

you split it. One week you have ACC, the next you have SEC. You really see a difference. That's no knock to UVA. They are also very physical but Auburn is very physical at well."

On his long run...

"I feel like it did spark something. I feel like offensively that was something good for us to see and work off of. That's definitely what led us to not give up. I was hoping for that. We never gave up. We never quit. Coaches just kept calling plays and we just kept going out there and fighting."

On bouncing back...

"You learn from it. You flush it and you get better every single day. You kind of take this loss or take something that you needed to learn from this loss and every day you work to get better."