

# SOUTH CAROLINA

## ATHLETICS

### South Alabama at South Carolina

November 22, 2014

#### • South Alabama Head Coach Joey Jones •

##### *On the feeling in the locker room at halftime*

We were playing good football, I thought, in the first half. We moved the ball offensively pretty well against a SEC defense, converted on third down a good bit in the first half. We got a couple turnovers, did some really good things. We turned the ball over I don't know how many times in the first half. I think three times we turned the ball over. Then our inability to score in the red zone – we didn't give us a chance to tie it up, kind of changed the momentum of the game. When you don't get those things done against a team like that, they start to wear on you. They've got more players than we do, everybody knows that. But, our guys fought. We are proud of the way we came to play. Would I have liked to make a few more plays? Yes. But, we didn't and they deserved the victory.

##### *On five turnovers*

The most surprising thing for me is up until three games ago, we were second in the conference in turnover ratio. We were doing great taking care of the football. The last three weeks it has been bad. We've had, I think, four, four or five the last three weeks. I don't know where that came from. It didn't happen last year; it didn't happen the first part of this year. All of a sudden it just creeps in and we got a bunch of turnovers. So, that's the biggest thing to me in the game is the turnovers. If you take care of the football you got a shot, if you don't, you don't. It's just the bottom line.

##### *On the defense*

One thing about our kids is they do fight and know how to fight. They know the next play is the only thing they can control. We preach that to them. They came out and made a couple big plays. That was big. That is just a testament to our team. We were out-manned out there, and we were sitting there really toe-to-toe with them for a while and just couldn't finish. They wear on you after a while – their size and they have good players. My hat's off to them. They played a good ball game.

##### *On Spurrier*

It was a good thing to sit out there and talk to him before the game. I've always respected him, and he is just a great ambassador for the game. [He's] a very good competitor. Everybody knows how good he is, how great of a football coach he is, and he is a great person. It was great to meet him. I wish we would have played a little better in the second half to scare him a little bit, but we didn't do that. It was great meeting him.

#### • South Alabama Players •

##### **Maleki Harris • Inside Linebacker • Senior**

##### *On struggling to gain momentum*

I can't speak for the offense but for the defense, it is tough. But again, one of the mentalities that our coaches have instilled in us is toughness and embracing whatever it may be so even if plays aren't coming, as long as the chances are there we keep ... getting those chances, sooner or later we're going to make those opportunities. You can't miss opportunities against a good team like that.

##### **Shavarez Smith • Wide Receiver • Senior**

##### *On mental approach*

As an offense we practice persistence, so no matter what is happening on the field we encourage each other to be persistent. We have to be mature on the field. No matter what happens, you can't allow it to hurt the team morale. You just have to stay focused on the ultimate task because we practice all week on staying focused. Out here we just try to make sure that we carry the things that we do in practice onto the game field.

##### *On what led to interceptions*

There wasn't very much going on in the secondary. Sometimes on offense you're not as crisp as you want to be. Sometimes you're not on the same page when you want to be. They didn't really do anything too special on the defensive end. We just didn't execute as well as we would have liked to.

##### *On South Carolina's red zone defense*

They have a lot of athletes. They have a lot of active guys. They have a lot of physical players. But like I said, it's not very much that they did at all. It was just us as an offense not executing as well as we would like to.