

SOUTH CAROLINA (4-3, 1-3) vs. VANDERBILT (2-5, 0-3)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.

POSTGAME QUOTES

>>> SOUTH CAROLINA HEAD COACH SHANE BEAMER

Opening Statement

"What a win. First of all, it's amazing, last night we were in the hotel and we showed a video to the team and it was about you guys, sports writers. That in the Superbowl between the Falcons and the Patriots, these sports writers that had a story written when the Falcons were up 28-3, and how they had to tear all the stories up and write a new one because of the way the Patriots came back. So no disrespect, but I hope every single one of you had to tear up your story that you've been working on for the last two hours and start a new one. Augusta does not seem pleased with me right now as I say that, but it's true. But the whole point of the video was, we don't let anyone write the story for us, and that there was an outside narrative this week maybe I don't know I'm insulated in the building but no matter what people say on Twitter, no matter what people write on the message boards, no matter what people say on talk radio, WE, the people in this program, write the story. That was the point of the video and it's crazy how it all came to fruition today so, so proud of our team, my gosh. First of all, there was so much bad football out there today from busting coverages in the first half on defense and given up explosive passes; turnovers on offense; two holding penalties by two DB's on the same play; missed tackles; a couple bad snaps on some kicks; some explosive plays on offense that came back because of holding penalties. So I mean, we can't have that and we'll talk about that tomorrow and learn and continue to get it corrected but, wow. What a job our guys just never flinch and I said it after the East Carolina game and I said it after the Troy game - these guys battle, and they love each other, and it's pretty special to watch. I hope our fans appreciate how special this group of guys is. There were a lot of great plays in that game and a lot of the great moments but I don't know if any one meant more to me than right before the offense took the field for that last drive that you see the whole defense come down there - Jabari Ellis, JJ, Aaron, all the DB's - and they're all in the huddle encouraging their teammates and had every, not every right but at that point it hadn't been going well, and it didn't look good, and the defense got a stop. They just kept making stop after stop after stop, and then the defense comes down there and has their backs, and then Zeb and the offense go right down there and score to win the game. What a finish. What a game. You know, we had a lot of - I'm sure you guys will ask about injuries and different guys that were out today for different reasons, we had a lot of adversity that we had to overcome. But these guys just keep finding a way. And there's something to be said for that for sure. Give credit to Vanderbilt, I know what the narrative was coming into this game. That's a team that, you know, late in the second quarter against Florida last week it's 14-nothing and that's a team that was down 14-nothing to Colorado State and came back and won. They they've got size like I told you about all week, the quarterback coming in today we thought that might happen, he's a runner, he did a great job. The running back runs hard or physical. They're tough, and they showed that today so Clark Lea he's doing a lot of great things for that program and their future is bright, as well. And then thanks to our fans as well. We really appreciate the guys that were out there we had an unbelievable amount of recruits that were here today, saw a bunch of them just now after the game. We're going to get this program back to where we all want it to be because of the way that we're going to recruit here, and when we have a home field environment like that today, that helps, big time. Not just with us but all the sports that had that had recruits here before the game. So, a lot to improve on. I know you guys got a lot of questions but, what a win. What a win. And congrats to our guys as well, I'm so proud to be their coach.

Quote 1 - on if Zeb is the starter going forward

"We'll see. I mean, Luke's foot was bothering him a little bit late in the game, was having some trouble making throws and he made some great throws as well. It's a shame because we had some big explosive passes that would have been big time plays that got called back because of some holding penalties. So, like every game we'll go back and look at the video of the game but Luke did a lot of good stuff and Zeb obviously came in and did an amazing job as well. He's a phenomenal teammate and people forget - I mean we were two-and-oh and had just gone right down the field against Georgia on the opening drive when Zeb got hurt. And so he continues to operate at a high level for us and Luke continues to get better as well."

Quote 2 - on when did Beamer figured out he would put Zeb in at quarterback

"I guess the series before when we got a little bit of pressure and we threw the interception, the last interception actually before that series, you know, we had talked about it. And Luke's foot was bothering him a little bit, and we just needed a spark to finish some drives, and then I guess right before that series and then right after that last interception we just knew that if we're gonna go win the game, you know, we're going to give Zeb an opportunity and we needed a healthy quarterback in there as well. And Zeb's got a great feel for the passing game protections...we've got good plays but let's get the ball to our playmakers. Zaquandre. Jaheim. On and on and on. You saw those guys making plays. When you look at

Jaheim today - six catches, 136 yards Xavier Legette had to step in today; Vann, Joyner ran the ball a little bit better; Z White getting back in the mix, so we just tell you guys all the time, we're just continuing to get better as a team each and every week, and you saw a lot of guys that have been really working hard in practice that showed up today."

Quote 3 - on how to balance an exciting win vs self-inflicted wounds

"I look at it, obviously it's got to be better, I see the good we did today we've got to overcome it, you know and and it's all the things that we talk about, in practice, and execute. We do ball security when we have officials that practice at the defensive backs don't hold and you know we can't, we can't do that and we'll certainly on Sundays, win or lose, we come in and we're very honest with our guys and coach, the stuff that was good and coach the stuff that was bad and learn from it. Really winning is hard, you guys have heard me say that today winning is hard. We really are going to enjoy this one and then learn from it and get ready for Texas A&M."

Quote 4 - on Zaquandre's involvement going forward

"Yes. He hadn't been battling an injury you know with him, it's just we got a good running back room with with Kevin and Marshawn the way Juju has been running the ball and, and those guys were doing better in practice and all the details of runs and, and things like that accountability stuff. He hadn't been as good but he's been doing a good job on special teams and, you know, and we talked about it this week as a staff as an offensive staff - who are the playmakers on our offense and when I think about playmakers and the guys that bring energy to our offense. Zaquandre White is one of them so you know we were fortunate to have a great group of running backs, We've got to continue to find ways to get Z White involved, and he brings energy to our team. The players on our team on offense, defense, special teams, they love the kid, and they love the kid because of the way that he practices and the energy that he brings so when he is touching the ball, good things happen. We met when we came in off at halftime, you know, we met as an offensive offensive staff and defensive staff and they one of the things I told the offensive staff was tell me how exactly how we're getting the ball as a Zaquandre White early in the second half because we need to get him going and I think we got to the ball on the first play of the game so thankfully they listened to me on that one but he's a guy. He's explosive and he just loves to compete, which we want guys that love to compete out there and bring energy and he does."

>>> SOUTH CAROLINA PLAYER QUOTES

Player 1: Zeb Noland • Pos. QB• Class GR

On ... "When did you know you were going in?"

"I am ready whenever because I was a backup for a long time and I am always ready to go."

On ... "connecting with Xavier in the endzone"

"Moments you dream of as a kid. Think about making throws and doing your job and that's what it came down to."

On ... "If there has been a mental toll of being out for 3 weeks" "Getting back in the huddle"

"You never know when your number is going to be called."

On ... "take us through the 2-minute drive"

"Talked about what plays I like, just call any of them."

On ... "where does this rank for you in fb career"

"It's a real feeling. I never thought I would put on the pads again It doesn't matter if you're playing in the Super Bowl like Tom Brady did against the Falcons. After that touchdown I tried to celebrate them more than they were celebrating me."

On... Taking over as QB

"The only thing I can do is be ready and be a good teammate every week."

On ... What your feel for this team

"You look at the Tennessee game and no one was complaining. Everybody loves each other. We have built a culture from the bottom up."

On ... Xavier's Injury

"Xavier works hard every day. He's a great player. He worked really hard this summer and came out ready to play. He comes to work like his injury doesn't bother him. He comes out and continues to get better. Josh Vann is really smart and teaches those young guys a lot."

On... "How do you keep it composed"

Playing against Iowa at Iowa State, played at Georgia. You have to smile in bad situations and go out there and have fun. Coach Satt says make it recess."

Player 2: Xavier Legette • Pos. WR • Class JR

On ... "What was the play call on TD and what did you see in the endzone"

"Saw I was wide open and made the play."

On ... Battling Injuries

"I have been dealing with lots of injuries. It took me away for a couple of weeks. But I was excited to be there."

On ... Zeb's Presence

"He was ready. He knew exactly what to do. He just drove us down the field."

On ... "emotions on touchdown as crowd was going crazy"

"I hadn't had a moment like that since freshman year."

Player 3: Jaheim Bell • Pos. TE • Class SO

On ... "Have a sense of 82-yard TD was going to match up"

"I felt comfortable with that play. Whenever we called that play, I knew it was going to pop open"

On ... "How did you feel about today.

"Shout out to Zeb. He's the GOAT. He stepped up big time."

On ... "Xavier, what's he been like, how rewarding for him, coming off injury"

"He's still holding his head high. He had the game-winning catch."

Player 4: JJ Enagbare • Pos. EDGE • Class SR

On ... "How much did you know ab VU QB and did he surprise you"

"I expected this coming in. It Shows that he is very athletic and can make plays with his legs."

On ... "Fumble at the end of the game"

"Coaches are big on visualizing plays before they happen."

On ... "What motivated defensive players"

"Make sure they know what time it is and that the game is on the line. Passing out waters and Gatorades. Being there for each other when things get tough. It's what Coach Shane has been teaching since he got here. It's love, all love."

On ... "Run game."

"We definitely are not starting off where we expected ourselves. We are building on it. Each day just trying to level up."

On ... "Game winning TD pass, seeing older guys step up, X making play"

"It's a great moment. The drive that sealed the deal. He's (Zeb) been showing extreme leadership and being composed. Every time (X) is out there he is a big play waiting to happen."

Clark Lea – Vanderbilt Head Coach

On the hurry-up for the last two drives...

"Yeah, you know, just the situation, no timeouts that, you know, that drive for fuel. 36 left... obviously they didn't read some chunks, which certainly we'll go back and look at that and say, "how do we generate more pressure?" The chunks kill you in those situations you want to make a drive methodically and use up all the clock and we're trying to heave it up at the end for a desperation, we weren't able to do that. I think we're going to see breakdowns in coverage I think we're gonna see plays that need to be tackled in balance that we weren't able to get out of bounds and we just didn't play well enough to the finish, but as far as the strategy goes that the goal was to try to defend both out cuts on both sides and force the ball inside and underneath so that we can tackle and keep the clock running that was the clock was our advantage there and we weren't able to do that."

On the new quarterback...

“We knew early in the week that Mike was going to need to step up for us. I felt like he did some things that gave us a chance to win the game. I thought we were more explosive today which is something that had held us back in the past we were able to generate plays that went past 20 yards and 40 yards tonight, and that was helpful to us. I felt like he was able to extend and find routes down the field, he was able to locate Will Shepherd and shepherd was able to finish on some explosive plays for us so there was good there, there's going to be a lot to clean up too, we weren't able to really get the run game going. So there'll be areas for him to get better but I'm proud of Mike, I think he stepped up I think he represented himself well as a competitor. I think he made some, some plays that we needed, and I felt like he put this team in a position to win the game and that's all we can ask him.

On South Carolina bringing in Zeb Noland on the last drive...

“I'm not surprised, I think he was doing what he felt like he needed to win the game throwing, and I want to be complimentary of South Carolina and Coach Beamer they fought, and that's that's a character win for them, we've been on the other side of that one too this year and they should be proud of that effort, I was impressed with the final drive I think what I'm going to do is look at more of the things that we can do to be better, rather than the plays that were made on offense, but I respect the way they finished the game and Zeb certainly did a nice job of coming in at the end there and doing what it took to win, I respect that.”

On positives to take away from the game...

“Of course, I mean, there's going to be a lot of positives, our issue is stringing together a consistent performance. I actually thought we were way better in terms of our complimentary football tonight that's something I've sat and talked about after every loss, I feel like all three phases need to interlock in performance and I thought they did tonight. Those are things that you do to win games on the road. We're just, you know we're disappointed in the result and it hurts, and we're a program that feeds off competition and that wants to win, I mean that's why we're here and so when you fall short, it's going to sting, but also as we are a work in progress and we are becoming the program we know we can become, you know we'll find ways that this is also a step towards that vision too and that'll be after we unpack the game and we're able to watch the film and able to meet about it and then move on from it and we'll be better next week so they're aspects that we'll be proud of. They're things that we'll look at no that we have to do better and we will keep moving this program forward towards the vision which, which we're excited for that.”

On the message for the guys...

“We don't worry about any 15 games or that, that's not what this is about for us, this is just about each time we get a chance to go out and play Vanderbilt football it's representing this program, the way we know it should be represented and that's making the competitive decisions and playing hard and they're disappointed, but the message in the locker room is, we have to own it, we own the fact that we came up short, and we don't like it but there are no victims here, we take responsibility ownership over that's coaches and players alike and that starts with me. We certainly aren't looking at this in terms of the accumulation of previous year's games, this is about team one this is about what we're doing this season and, you know, we're going to be disappointed in the result, we're going to let it stay on for 24 hours, then we're going to win the response and we're going to put together an effort to allow us to be better next Saturday and we can do that. They're disappointed and hurt but they know the better days are ahead and we'll keep, we'll keep fighting and working and we'll get there.”

