

## **SOUTH CAROLINA (5-7) vs. CLEMSON (8-4)**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2023 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.**

### **POSTGAME QUOTES**

#### **>>> SOUTH CAROLINA HEAD COACH SHANE BEAMER**

*If there were any over-arching issues that plagued the team during the season...*

“When we look at statistics, nationally we're one of the worst teams in the country at protecting the quarterback and that's not only offensive line, one of them tonight was missed blitz pickup at a different position and so it's not all on the offensive line but certainly they (Clemson) are really good up front. We weren't good enough tonight, when we've been really good on offense we've been able to protect the passer and throw the ball downfield and we knew was gonna be a challenge tonight. We tried to do everything, quick-game screens, roll out, max protect, you name it, and had a hard time getting anything going. We've got to protect the quarterback better and, and obviously in the month of October when we didn't win a football game, we didn't create a turnover in the entire month of October. When you don't create takeaways defensively, it's going to be hard to win and when you can't protect the quarterback it can be hard to win. We created takeaways the last three weeks and just didn't get enough of them tonight, heck of an interception by Nick (Emmanwori) but they had issues protecting the ball early in the season and they got it fixed and they did a good job of it tonight.”

*On the team's defensive effort...*

“Yeah they were awesome, we kept putting them out there and they kept making stops. We knew they were going to come in and try and run the ball, they were down two of their top receivers, and we knew that going into the game ... the quarterback's a good runner, he showed that tonight we had a hard time getting him in the game and I think this is two straight weeks, I don't know what they did the week before, but I know last week all three of those guys, the quarterback, Shipley and Mafah had double digit carries and they did again tonight as well. But having said that, we were making stops and they were 7-for-16 on third down and our defense played well enough for us to win. When you hold the other team to three field goals, you feel like you have a great opportunity to win a game.”

*On the state of the program heading into the offseason...*

“It's as strong as it's ever been in my opinion. We got a hell of a recruiting class coming in here, we just started five true freshmen throughout the season. We went through some lumps this year, we lost 12 players to season-ending injuries, six of which were offensive lineman. That's not making excuses. It is what it is. I don't know if you saw before the game the committed prospects that were out at midfield with me, it's a pretty freakin' big-time group of players that are coming in here next season. All you had to do was be in that locker room right now with the young men in our program, that is a hurting bunch of players right now. The comments that the seniors made to the returning players about the future of this program and what this program was about, I was extremely proud of them.”

We certainly need to be better from a NIL standpoint than where we are, I know that people here that are involved with that are working their butts off. We can offer guys a fantastic education, the opportunity to play SEC football, unbelievable city to go to school in, and culture and a program that's real and not fake. Nobody's patting ourselves on the back for going 5-7 but I think there's a lot of teams that wouldn't have been able to respond to the adversity that we faced throughout the season over and over again like we did. I just wish I had been able to do more as the the head coach to get them over the hump tonight and get a win. That's what hurts me is guys like Dakereon and those guys that have that have given so much to this program, for them to not be able to finish on a higher note, it's something I'll have a hard time getting over.”

*On Spencer Rattler's performance facing Clemson's defense...*

“Give credit to Clemson and their defense, I mean No. 54 is going to play in the NFL for a long time, No. 0 is going to play in the NFL for a long time, No. 13 is going to play in the NFL for a long time, I'm not going to name their whole defense but the two true freshmen that just got to town are going to be here for a couple more years and they're gonna play in the NFL for a long time. It's a really good front and we didn't do a good job of protecting to say the least. They do what they do defensively, they're going to get up on your face, they're going to pressure you, play man coverage, that's basically what they did tonight.”

He (Rattler) was certainly under duress and we didn't do a great job of giving him time and certainly he'll be the first to tell you that he'd like some throws back, but also we have been challenging in our receivers and tight ends and running backs all week that, because of the way Clemson plays defense, there's going to be a lot of opportunities for competitive catches, where the ball is there and it's bang-bang play, and we got to make them. It looked like they made a lot more of the competitive plays, the defensive backs against our pass catchers tonight, than we made the catches. We've got to help Spencer out when we get opportunities to make plays."

*On the program's immediate offseason goals and tasks...*

"We've got a couple of recruits in this weekend, I'll have recruiting meetings all day tomorrow, meet with the players on Monday, recap everything and get a plan going forward. Got exams coming up in a couple of weeks, so we got to finish up the academic year strong. We're able to go out on the road recruiting, so when the contact period opens, I'll be out recruiting on Friday and around our players as much as possible this month as well.

We had some guys that walked tonight on senior night that can come back, and optimistic that some of those guys will, and if you look at who is returning - we gotta hurt for these seniors right now so I'm not trying to look ahead to 2024 right now - but we got a hell of a team coming back next year and a strong group of people, an unbelievable freshman class coming in. We've got to get a lot better. We got to be better as coaches because we weren't good enough tonight, but we also did some really good things this year. We just couldn't quite get over the hump enough times."

*On the impact of the senior class...*

"We talked about in our team meeting yesterday, some of those guys were here when I got here, Dakereon and Tyreek and Tonka and Legette, and they stayed which - the easy thing to do is to leave. And didn't just stay for one year, but they stay two years and then a third year as well. Then guys that came in, didn't know anything about me, but trusted me to come in Ahmarean Brown, Jordan Strachan. I mean, I can remember sitting in my bedroom in Norman, Oklahoma doing a zoom with Ahmarean and his dad trying to convince them, 'not quite sure what our offense is going to look like but we want you to come play football at South Carolina' and he trusted us and and came in. They're awesome."

*Final thoughts on the 2023 season...*

"They're a great group of guys and went through a lot this year. The injuries throughout the year, and they just kept hanging in there, if any team had a reason to just throw in the towel and say, this just ain't our year, you know, another offensive lineman got hurt or we're starting another freshman on defense, heartbreaking loss to Florida, whatever it might be, this team easily could have and they never did.

I know I told you guys how much I enjoyed coming in the building, each and every week or each and every Sunday regardless of what had happened the day before. It's the truth and it's because of these these guys. They're just a lot of fun to be around and that's the hardest thing about being 5-7 and not getting that sixth win, is not being able to spend the next month with them."