

University of Texas at San Antonio Football Media Conference

Friday, September 15, 2023

San Antonio, Texas, USA

Jeff Traylor

Press Conference



Army - 37, UTSA - 29

JEFF TRAYLOR: Congratulations to Army and Jeff Monken. His team played an absolutely perfect ballgame. They had zero penalties, zero turnovers, 85 snaps, 450 yards. They did a fantastic job.

His team was very well prepared to play. Ours was not. That's on nobody but me. Congratulations to Army.

Q. Jeff, that Army offense looked unstoppable at times today. How can you explain their 6 for 6 on fourth down and just their yardage production?

JEFF TRAYLOR: We just can't handle them in the trenches. They physically man handled us up front. They did a great job on their scheme. They were one play ahead of us on all calls.

Fantastic job by Coach Monken again. We got out coached, we got out physicaled. They deserved to beat us tonight.

Q. Did you see it as more of an issue with individual battles, or how much was there deception in the option game?

JEFF TRAYLOR: The double pass was nice, but that would be -- we busted a coverage, which was the first time we've done that all year. We turned somebody loose on a check, and we've got to get that correct.

It's on us. They're all looking to me, man, and I didn't have them coached up and ready to go.

Q. Coach, you had -- aside from the loss, it was a good night for Eddie Lee Marburger in his first start. What were your thoughts on the offense?

JEFF TRAYLOR: I was very proud of the kid. He stepped

up and played his tail off. Eddie Lee Marburger wasn't the reason we lost the ball game, I promise you that.

Q. Jeff, in three years, is the most disappointed you've been after a loss?

JEFF TRAYLOR: It's kind of been the whole year so far. It's a perfect storm so far. It's getting Army on a short week. We played a darn near rival game versus Houston, a darn near rival game -- a rival game versus Texas State. Fall up short with Army, now we go to Tennessee.

We're just not doing well. I don't know what it is. It's obviously the football coach because we ain't getting it done right now.

Q. You played Army and Monken a few times here, but did this one feel different with a new offensive coordinator and the formations they were throwing out, going more to shotgun than usual?

JEFF TRAYLOR: Yeah, it was different, there's no doubt about it. They did a fantastic job. It's a nice plan of what they've done before. They just added a new wrinkle to it. The quarterback played an unbelievable ballgame. The kid is a scrapper. We couldn't get him down.

Then our defense finally gets him off the field, get the ball back, eight-point game, five minutes left, all of our timeouts, and we can't get it done. Had a great box to run the ball into, and then we went -- we had a good shot down the field for Devin, safety came across and made a really good play on that one.

Then on third down and seven, we got frickin' sacked. If it had just been fourth and two, I'd have gone for it. Fourth and four, I'd have gone for it. But we gave the sack up. Frustrating, man. There's got to be an easier way to make a living somewhere else.

Q. Third quarter, it looked like you guys had the momentum rolling. You called that squib kick.

JEFF TRAYLOR: Didn't hit it good. It was a good call. They called the correct call. We blocked before the ball

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went ten yards because we didn't hit the ball very well. It was there. We didn't execute it.

On the head coach. Got to do a better job.

Q. Jeff, regarding Frank Harris' injury, what are some of the factors that come into determining whether he played, and how much does conference game versus non-conference game factor into it?

JEFF TRAYLOR: No doubt. We've got Tennessee next week. We got an open week the next week. When we go to Temple, we're going to be 0-0, and America is going to write us off because we're not a very good football team right now. So we'll be a pissed off, healthy football team when we go to Philadelphia, we hope.

Q. Understanding it's hard to force a turnover when they run the ball 65 times, is there something missing that you guys haven't been able to generate?

JEFF TRAYLOR: That's a great question. I don't know what the frick that is. We're one of like eight teams in the country that haven't caused a turnover yet. I don't know. If you figure it out, mail it to me, and we'll get to work on it.

Sorry. Apologize. That's embarrassing. God bless. Birds up.

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Rashad Wisdom

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Q. Rashad, what were the biggest challenges of trying to slow down Army's offense today?

RASHAD WISDOM: They played as a whole unit. They played tough. They're very disciplined. They know exactly where they should be. They know their exact assignment.

You know what I mean, a team like that is going to be hard for anybody, just because how hard they play and the style that they do play ball, but they played a great game today. I can't knock them at all. They played a great game.

Q. Did you feel like you guys were in some challenges knowing where the ball was going to go on these option plays? Was that a big part for you?

RASHAD WISDOM: Sure, those times when everybody is bunched up in the middle, you don't know where the ball is. You don't know where it's going to spill out to. You're just sitting there waiting to react. Next thing you know, it slips by you or comes right in front of you.

Those type of teams can be hard. That's just the type of game that they play. They play it well. Hat's off to them. They played a great game, like I said.

Q. You guys are still looking for your first turnover of the year as a defense. What's been missing to keep that happening for you guys?

RASHAD WISDOM: I think for us, man, we just got to go make it happen. We play very sound defense, I feel like. We're usually where we're supposed to be. Man, we've just got to go make it happen, you know what I mean? We're still waiting on it, but I feel like, once we get that first one, man, they're going to start coming in waves.

I feel like eventually we'll be talking about how many we do

have as opposed to how we started off the year going through a couple games without one.

The future is still bright. I'm looking forward to it. We're going to keep on working, man, and stay ready so you ain't got to get ready.

Q. How would you describe the overall mood of the team in the aftermath of this loss?

RASHAD WISDOM: We're definitely upset, for sure. Definitely being able to play here at home, we always want to try to go out there and get a win.

I just feel like we're kind of upset with ourselves really. We didn't really play our brand of ball, and I feel like this can be good for us. Just get back to it tomorrow, learn from it, and then keep on going forward with the season.

We've got a long season ahead of us, and this one loss won't define us for sure. Really looking forward to the season, but I still think we'll be fine. Like I said, we're going to use all these tests as learning lessons and keep on moving.

Q. Rashad, I think they were 6 for 6 on fourth down conversions. How physical was this team tonight, Army?

RASHAD WISDOM: They were definitely physical. They were very physical. I'm sure you all could see on my face, man, we were out there battling. They were a very physical team. Just hat's off to them. Like I said, they played a great game. It's just what it is.

Q. Eddie Lee got the start for Frank tonight. How do you think he played?

RASHAD WISDOM: He played great. I knew that coming into this week. Eddie's been waiting on his time, and like I said, stay ready so you ain't got to get ready.

Eddie puts in a lot of work. There's times I'll come up there during the summer, he's out with his dad, and they're hanging up tires on the goal posts. Literally Eddie's dad

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has three baskets full of footballs, and he's just out there throwing, throwing, throwing.

He was ready for this moment, and he made the most out of it, for sure. He had a great game.

Whether it's Frank, Eddie, or Owen, we're rolling with those guys, and each one of them is ready to step up when their time is called. We've got some depth in that QB room for sure, but Eddie played a great game.

Q. J.J. mentioned the 6 for 6 on fourth down. What are the emotions of that like when you're close to getting them off the field but they keep coming up with that play to need to extend drives?

RASHAD WISDOM: We've just got to get them off the field. There's no excuse to that. Our coaches put us in a great position to go make plays, and we've just got to go do it.

I feel like that's on us. I feel like that's on me. We've just got to go do it. I know there was a couple of plays that I failed to make that were pretty key, and I've got to be able to make those.

Like I said, we're going to take it as a learning lesson, man. At this point, it is what it is. All we can do is learn from it. Doing that will just make us better in the end.

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Joshua Cephus

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Q. Josh, just what was the overall mood in the locker room today after the game?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: It was definitely -- we left a good amount of plays on the field. We didn't execute how we wanted, up to the standard that we normally play at.

We lost, you know, but it's definitely going back to the drawing board, watching film, seeing where we messed up, more detail, just fixing what we messed up on really.

Q. I guess just overall how disappointed are the guys? It feels like you might have left two wins on the table this season, and the season is coming up, conference is coming up. Just what's the overall mood of the guys?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: Like you said, it definitely hurt. The theme of this year is don't matter, get better. Whether we would have won those two games we left out, it wouldn't have mattered anyway. Like I said, don't matter, get better.

After these 24 hours and watching film of what we did tonight, we'll be focused on Tennessee and getting the win there.

Q. What was it like going into halftime after Eddie Lee completed that 46-yard bomb into the end zone? Do you feel like that was a confidence booster for him for the rest of the game?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: Definitely. He threw a great ball, catchable ball for one of the zone six to make the play. If you don't know who the zone six is, that's the receivers.

Tykee went up and made a great play on the ball. We called the last four minutes of the second half -- I'm sorry. Oh, my gosh, I can't think. We call the last four minutes of

the first half and the first four minutes of the second half the middle eight. Those minutes are where a lot of momentum can swing a game.

Like you said, I feel like that brought Eddie confidence, it gave us momentum. Tykee made a great play, and I think it gave him more confidence throughout the game as well.

Q. How did you feel about how Eddie Lee handled the moment overall standing up and being a starter for the first time? What did you see from him?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: I saw great confidence. Throughout these last couple weeks, fall camp, he just sits back, pays attention to Frank, takes all the mental reps. Whatever read Frank is making, he's going through as well. So I think that showed tonight.

Q. How much do you guys have to adjust on offense when Frank isn't out there? What's different?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: I don't think it's too much of an adjustment. For me really, it's just catching the ball. The ball spins a little different from a lefty than a righty. So that's the only difference.

Q. Can you take us through your touchdown on the screen pass where you got loose? What did you see on that play?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: I didn't really do nothing. It was all Oscar and -- I want to say it was Cam, either Cam Cooper or Houston blocking for me. They made a great block, put hands on somebody, was very physical. All I did was run straight.

Q. Josh, the defense obviously struggled today. Kind of a role reversal of the first two weeks. What did you think about the effort? Was that a tough, physical Army team?

JOSHUA CEPHUS: They definitely were physical. They are every year. It's always a tough game against Army.

I feel like offense didn't really help the defense as much



today with field position, scoring. We've just got to get better.

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