

October 20, 2012



An Interview With:

COACH KIRK FERENTZ

COACH FERENTZ: First of all needless to say we're disappointed with our performance tonight. Give Penn State all the credit in the world, all phases. We had a great crowd out there, great environment and we just couldn't get anything going offensively, defensively or special teams. So a really tough ballgame for us and give them all the credit.

Q. Was there any point late in the game where you thought about taking James out and bringing Jake in?

COACH FERENTZ: I thought about it but there's really -- probably wasn't one the biggest decisions I had tonight, that's for sure.

Q. Is any one thing that surprises you the most about tonight?

COACH FERENTZ: I thought this was going to be a really tight, competitive ballgame, was my anticipation. You know, they have got a good football team obviously and it's as well -- at least from my vantage point, as well as they have played this year.

They played really well in their last game against Northwestern. Did a great job with their bye week apparently, and they had it going tonight and their quarterback really played a tremendous game.

Q. When did you get the feeling that Mark was going to be able to go for you?

COACH FERENTZ: You know, I thought Thursday, maybe he had a chance. He was able to do some work on Thursday. His demeanor was great all week. You know, he was determined to

play. Hopefully he didn't go backwards tonight. Hopefully we'll find out more here tomorrow.

Q. What's held this offense back from noticeable improvement over seven games?

COACH FERENTZ: You know, I don't know that I understand that question. Over seven games or tonight or what?

Q. Based on week-to-week-to-week, it seems like -- I mean, I don't want to be giving opinions in a press conference?

COACH FERENTZ: I think the first two games we struggled. I think after that, we started making some real progress and then we played a very good defensive football team last week and played a real good defensive team tonight.

We definitely struggled tonight. We didn't block them well, execute well, run or pass. We couldn't get anything going tonight, at all, period.

Q. Some injuries along the offensive line tonight?

COACH FERENTZ: I think certainly Brandon Scherff, that's a lower leg injury and I think we'll lose him for the season, which is really a shame for him. He's worked extremely hard. Andrew Donnal, we'll know more here in a couple days. They are going to check him tomorrow, Monday and we'll know a little bit more there.

Q. In the fourth quarter when the game was marginally out of reach, did you think about pulling James, he was getting hit pretty hard?

COACH FERENTZ: That's already been asked -- I thought about it, but at that point we just felt like, let the starters finish the game.

Q. Is there any bright spot you can point to, kickoff return --

COACH FERENTZ: Outside of Jordan

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Cotton, kickoff return, probably not. Certainly a spark -- a little bit like the Arizona State game eight years ago where we ran back a punt. And other than that, there wasn't a lot to cheer about certainly, but that was good. And Jordan made a nice grab, too. So hopefully he's continuing to progress.

Q. What prompted the change to go with Nico in the second half?

COACH FERENTZ: We'll look at the tape and see. We just wanted to give him a chance and see how he'd play.

Q. In 2007 when Jake was struggling, you went with Ricky, was that because those guys were close? I'm thinking maybe for a spark offensive-wise --

COACH FERENTZ: 2008, you mean? 2008 was kind of back and forth. Yeah, we thought the competition was really close. Right now, James is our quarterback.

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