



## 2024 MISSOURI FOOTBALL

### POSTGAME QUOTES VS. VANDERBILT – SEPT. 21, 2024

#### **Head Coach Eliah Drinkwitz**

##### *Opening statement...*

"Just really proud of the grit our team showed. Faced a lot of self-inflicted wounds and adversity, but didn't flinch. Especially proud of the defense for keep coming back out there. It's great to be 4-0, it's as good as we can be"

##### *On Vanderbilt...*

"Vanderbilt is a tough, gritty team. I told everybody all week; their quarterback gives them a chance."

##### *On red zone play...*

"We just didn't capitalize the way we needed to in the red zone in the first half or the second half."

##### *On the crowd...*

"Our crowd was the difference; crowd caused the kicker to miss."

##### *On Nate Noel...*

"Proud of [Nate Noel]. Did a great job tonight"

##### *On the bye week...*

"We're going to use [the bye week] to get better. We need to get a lot better, and that is what the focus is going to be, getting better"

#### **Running Back Nate Noel**

##### *On his workload...*

"Yes, sir. Yes, sir. But you know, I've been in offseason with Coach Russ, and I believe in him. I believe in his system, so I'm ready"

##### *On the game...*

"Yes sir, we always knew it wasn't gonna be easy in conference play. So, we just know. We just want to go 1-0 every week."

##### *On overtime...*

Me, personally, I've been in, I've been in a few overtimes. So I was, I was calm, cool, collected. I was just trying to make sure everybody else was calm, cool, collected. And just made sure everybody knows that it's not over yet, like we can we it's still possible.

##### *On the game's big turnaround...*

"Well, on the sideline during that whole, you know, when they were scoring and stuff like that, we just kept the same composure, and we just kept telling each other encouraging words like the defense and the offense, going back and forth, telling each other encouraging words, just like that. 'We still got this'. We did multiple situations throughout fall camp and spring to prepare for those exact moments, being down, trying to come back, you know, with the crowd, you know, stuff like that. So, it was just, it was great to see everybody execute."

## **Defensive Tackle Chris McClellan**

*On what he's thinking after the win...*

"I'm thinking, I'm grateful for this team. I'm grateful for, you know, each, every individual player, coach, Drink, all the coaches on staff. Man, just a great team win. Man, to see where we at. And this is a, you know, this is SEC. Man, it just means more."

### ***On Vanderbilt's QB...***

"Yea, that was a big thing. We practiced and focused about this week. Man, we knew he was going to be a very tough guy. You know, he had a very like, you know, most quarterbacks' kind of protect themselves. He was trying to put his body on the line for his team, which, I mean, is good, but we kind of try to take advantage of that. So, you know, he's a great player, but we just take advantage of what we see."

### ***On how tough it is to win a game...***

"Man, I just can say, you know, it's not always pretty sometimes, like you said, it's a rough, tough sport. It gets ugly, especially in the trenches. So sometimes, man, you gotta be a dog in there. You just gotta keep playing your game. Because, like I said, Man, it's not always pretty."

### ***On the next game against Texas A&M...***

"So, I mean, you know, taking advantage of that man, going into somebody else's house and playing in front of a packed Stadium. I think it's fun for just, you know, the team, period. But it's especially fun for me, man, I kind of always like being a bad guy, so going out there and being on the opposing side of it, man, it's gonna be very exciting for us as a team and me personally as well."

### ***On his time here and workload...***

"Man, I love it. Man, it's a great time here, because I'm surrounded by great players, so that always makes it fun, man, but you know, just the defensive tackle room, defensive end, line backers, the whole defense, man, we all just mesh together really well. So, it's just a fun time just to be in there and to be able to play with each and everybody on the field. Very good."

## **Quarterback Brady Cook**

*On how he would describe the day...*

"Man, Vanderbilt pushed us. They had a great plan, and they pushed us right to the end. At the end of the day, though, we were able to get it done, and defense made a stop at the end, and offense, offense put up points when we needed to. So, it was a tough one."

### ***On it being a difficult day...***

"Yeah, it was a tough one. I mean, like I said, Vandy came out and, I mean, they gave us some trouble. Their defense had a great plan, and a lot of great pressures. And, I mean, they pushed us hard."

### ***On the blitzes...***

"Yeah, you know I think we game plan great for it. But obviously, you know, they found ways to get guys through, you know, mix up the looks. And, yeah, they definitely pushed us with the blitzes,"

*On his touchdown passes to Luther...*

"Yea that was a fun play. That was one we worked all week, and Luther put the double move on him. Ran a great route, and I knew we had him, so that was a fun one."

*On where he's at and where he's going...*

"I mean, like you said, you know, we're 4-0 so that's what we wanted to be, and that's what we are. And luckily, we have a bye week, so you know, we're gonna get healthy, we're gonna go back to work tomorrow. We're gonna watch the tape hard. We're gonna practice hard this week. And obviously, we know the challenge we have ahead in two weeks. You know, we play at Texas A&M, and that's gonna be the real test of this season"

*On the next game at Texas A&M...*

"I've been looking forward to it. I hear a lot about it, I hear it's loud I there. It's fun. So, I'm excited."

## **Vanderbilt Head Coach Clark Lea**

### *Opening statement...*

"It takes winning small margins to win a tough game on the road against a tough opponent, but again, disappointed in the result, but I believe in my team. I'm excited to continue on the journey and to and to go look for more."

### *On defending Missouri's run game...*

"When we were able to get them off schedule, you know, we were able to build a stop. The second drive I felt like they were effective in getting the space they want for the stretch game to get going. The one I want back is the long touchdown run. Some of the things that we're going to see on film, where it's first and 10, second and six or first and 10 second and five, those are going to be nuances around, you know, how we play at the point of attack, or the free hitter being in the right position. I think we battled through the first half. You know, at the safety position, kind of rotate some guys through, and we have to play better at the safety position. But the long (64-yard Noel) run was the pressure that we had one player out of position and to defend the run against a good team you got to build a run wall. To build the run wall, you have to have 11 guys on the same page. And so, I felt like, outside of that one that, you know, there's going to be yards for them and plays for them. I felt like we got into a rhythm against the run two in the back half of the game, where we were able to build, build some stops here and force field goals, but we've got to do a better job, and again, first and second down performance, impact, third down performance. We want to be better there, too."

### *On his perspective on the program's standards...*

"I don't like that perspective, because we're gonna form our opinion around the standards we measure ourselves to. So, Missouri is a good football team, Eli does a great job and this is a tough environment. We didn't do enough today to be one point better than them. We know we have a good team, and just like last week, when we fell short, we battled hard. It's not good enough. And for us, you know, we want to look at the standards we have as a program and reach towards those and when we hit those standards, you know, we're going to be celebrating this game in our locker room. And so, understand the perspective. It's just not how I choose to see this team. I believe in our team. I don't need a game against another opponent to know what we're capable of. But if we want to again achieve the things that we set out to achieve this season, you know we're going to need to clean up, and we're need to play closer to our standards and I know we can do it."

### *On the challenges of defending Luther Burden III...*

"Well, you know, they were able to hit the out and up there, the double-move in overtime. And I thought he was effective in the return game. I think that's an area that we need to be scrutinizing our coverage units. You know, we missed upon it again. Tonight, we kicked the ball down the middle of the field on a line, there's too often that their kickoff return unit is able to bring the ball out. I felt we out-punted our coverage on an early return. So, I thought he was effective in that respect. And obviously I want the out and up back in, in the overtime. But again, credit to them. There's going to be opportunities for them to find one-on-ones. They found it at that moment. You know, we'll keep strengthening our performance, but he's a really good player, and he's going to get his plays. Again, credit to them for finding the design there to get him open in the overtime."