

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

Saturday November 28, 2015

## David Shaw

Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

COACH SHAW: Heck of a college football game. Outstanding. Two really good football teams. Two teams with a lot of really good football players.

Big plays on both sides. Resilience on both sides. Our big thing we talked about earlier today was belief. Just belief in the work that we put in, belief in our preparation, belief in our struggles. Belief that our struggles helped us to be a better team.

And at some point in this game it was going to come down to making a play to win the game. Didn't know if it was going to be offense, defense or special teams. But we kept our minds in it, we got up, we didn't change, we got down, we didn't change. And we knew it was going to come down to somebody making a play.

They scored late at the end. Great. But we had time. I challenge anybody to find a better two-minute quarterback in the nation than what Kevin has done this year. At the end of halves and at the end of the game. It's been outstanding.

We were going to use our timeouts at the end if they didn't score there to preserve as much time as possible. But we didn't need to, because they did score. So now with decent field position and three timeouts, with a veteran quarterback, that's one of the best quarterbacks in the nation, hey, we put it in his hand. He made some nice plays. Got a face mask penalty and then we're back to Devon Cajuste, who was big all game. Made big plays all game. He got the ball down there and just tried to center the ball and use a little bit more clock, get a few feet shorter and gave Conrad Ukropina the opportunity to win the football game. Just like he did all summer. We had those pressure kicks all summer. Guys yelling and screaming and calling him names, even nudging a him a little bit, messing with him. And he was a hundred percent over the summer.

So, all the talk on the sidelines when he lined up, the guys were already jumping up-and-down. I wasn't ready to celebrate just yet, personally. But the confidence that they have in him and what they have seen him do, you're talking about a walk-on kicker that came in as a young guy, earned his stripes, learned, grew, earned a scholarship and he's our guy now. And



he's done a phenomenal job and he's become one of the best kickers in the nation.

**Q. On the 27-yard pass to Cajuste to set up the field goal, what was the play? What was the plan? Can you kind of take us through the thinking there?**

COACH SHAW: Well we, of course, always look at what they do in the two minute -- there were a couple different options. We tried a few shots early on. They did a really good job defending it.

But we thought it was some lanes inside. So, we weren't trying to score a touchdown, we were just trying to get in field goal range. So we went back to when Devon, who is just under 6'4", fast and big and a big target. If we didn't hit him, we had Michael Rector coming underneath. We'll take the shot take another timeout and try to get another chunk. But Kevin did a great job, looking off the safety coming back and threw a bullet. Dev caught it, got positive yards after the catch. Took the timeout, moved the ball a little bit closer, took the timeout, kicked it.

**Q. How fitting was it for Kevin to go out on senior day, final game here and have a game like that to sort of sum up the way he's played his whole career?**

COACH SHAW: Yeah, that is -- the toughest part for me, I'm past, which was giving Kevin the game ball and knowing that what he's been through over the last year plus, and he's come out, he's so mature, he's so confident, he's such a great leader. Such a great football player.

But knowing that he had to keep his emotions in check. His father passed away as Notre Dame grad and was always fired up for the Notre Dame games. A lot of his family went to Notre Dame. So Kevin did a great job of keeping all that at bay and just playing football.

But I knew at the end of the day, he was going to be emotional. I was emotional. He didn't play his best game against these guys last year, and he played one of his best games tonight. And I can't say how proud I am of him. We exchanged pleasantries there, but only the head coach and the quarterback can. And he's our guy. And in true Kevin Hogan fashion, he said, thanks, coach, we got to play USC next week.

**Q. Did you have a target yard line you wanted to get to for Ukropina, number one. And number two, this one, do you feel like you're kind of carrying the PAC-12 on your back in terms of representing the conference on the national scene?**

COACH SHAW: So first question is, you know, he's hit from 55. So we would like to get closer than that if we can. 55 or in or we were going to try to get as close as we can. Feel the most confidence if we can get the ball itself to the 30 or inside the 30. But he's, once again, he's hit from 55, so that's it.

Second part of it, no. We represent Stanford. We're not carrying anybody. We don't worry about the other teams in our conference. We don't worry about what people say about us nationally. We go out and play the best football we can. We're 10-2 with a really tough schedule. No 1-AA teams on there. We're 8-1 in the deepest conference in America. We have nothing to prove to anybody.

We're in the PAC-12 championship game and we got to go play a great game against a team that's going to be fired up to play us. And that's where our head is. And once again, what the national chatter is, that's not up to me. That ain't up to us. All we know is we got another football game next week and we're going to try and play our best.

**Q. Cajuste, five catches, 125 yards, a touchdown, just comment on his performance and bouncing back from that injury that slowed him for much of the year.**

COACH SHAW: So, really, funny, Devon came back to me, kind of starting last week, and said, you know what -- he's been 100 percent healthy -- and he said, gosh, coach, I feel fast again. I feel like me again. I feel like I'm really, really back now. And it showed in practice. He's been running fast. I'll say this about Devon Cajuste, Michael Rector, about Rollins Stallworth, about Francis, those four guys, in particular, even Trenton Irwin, we have had a lot of leads this year to where we stopped throwing the football and these guys, these receivers that want the ball, that run routes and catch the ball, they have been blocking their backsides off. They have been blocking extremely well. They want Christian to do well, they want the running backs to do well. And they know when called upon, they're going to go make plays.

And the team's feeling on this team right now is phenomenal right now. We've got guys going out there, Michael Rector catches one ball last week and made some great blocks. Devon Cajuste hasn't really had a breakout game all year. He's had a lot in his career. Hasn't really had a breakout game all year and

he's had probably his best year of blocking. He's blocking extremely well. And today was the day. The coverage dictated it. The right plays were there, the quarterback saw it and hit him and he made them.

And I can't say how proud I am of him also because, once again, you're talking about guys play the receiver's position because they like touching the ball. And they haven't had a lot of opportunity, but we have been talking for the last month, you don't know when it's going to come. Just be ready when it comes and it came tonight.

**Q. Tonight, I'm sure Stanford was hoping being on national TV it would be a showcase for Christian McCaffrey. How do you think his performance held up tonight with his Heisman hopes?**

COACH SHAW: I have no idea. I know he played well. I know he ran hard. Every run seems to get four to five more yards than it should.

Heisman? Whatever those awards, they're all great. No one can tell me that there's a more dynamic player in college football. No one can tell me there's a guy doing more for his team than Christian is doing for us in college football.

Talking about a USC guy, you know, for me the benchmark for running back in this conference has been Reggie Bush. And to see that Christian passed his yardage total last week in one less game says a lot. On our web site, we have got the measurements and he, basically, passed all of the Heisman winners, except for Barry Sanders, Sr. He's phenomenal, having a phenomenal year. And he does so many things as punt returner, kickoff returner, receiver, runner. He's dynamic. I'm not on any awards committees, I just know that he's special and everyone that sees him play knows he's special.

**Q. Your three healthy defensive linemen Aziz, Brennan Scarlett, Solomon Thomas, had well over 500 snaps logged coming into this game. Can you talk about their performance tonight and can you talk about their performance surviving a 12-game schedule with, basically, three defensive linemen?**

COACH SHAW: One word. Gritty. Gritty. It's hard. We would love to have some more depth, but we, you know, these are three guys that are playing the best and we trust them and we believe in them. Even when they get tired, they know that they got to keep going.

And we rotate them as best we can. And we're in nickel, so we play two at a time, most of the time. So we try to roll as best as we can, but they know we need them. We need them. And as long as they're healthy, as long as they can move, they're going to go out there

and fight for us. So I give those guys a lot of credit. A lot of credit. We got time for one more. If there's one more. Out there. Any more questions? Excellent. Thank you.

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## Kevin Hogan

Stanford-38, Notre Dame - 36

### **Q. First of all tell me how emotional was tonight's victory?**

KEVIN HOGAN: It was very emotional. I just tried to take it all in and enjoy it. I knew it was going to be that way, I knew that a whole lot of emotions here at Stanford. Just go out there and have fun and enjoy my time with the boys out there and fortunate to fight until the end and Conrad nailed the kick and it was just an unbelievable finish.

### **Q. Your final game as a senior here at Stanford Stadium. Pretty nice way to go out.**

KEVIN HOGAN: It's the best. I couldn't have pictured it going any better. Just having the opportunity to go down and finish the game with the ball in our hands, it was one of those games where it seemed like whoever had the ball last was going to win. And they left enough time on the clock and Conrad's got a leg, so which we knew we had to get it around the 30, 32 yard line. And he nailed it.

### **Q. The big play of course was the pass to Cajuste. Tell me about that one.**

KEVIN HOGAN: Yeah, so they were playing backs free, only rushing three or four and had Devon in the slot and, I mean, we, I threw it before he even broke, I knew where he was going to be. He broke perfectly, and was able to catch it and turn up for a few more yards to get us in position. It was just good execution.

### **Q. Against Notre Dame, too, your dad went to Notre Dame, a lot of ties to your family to Notre Dame. How extra special does that make tonight's win?**

KEVIN HOGAN: It meant the world. Growing up as a fan of Notre Dame, going to all their games growing up and to be able to have my last home game here against them, my childhood team was a dream come true and fortunate enough to play a good game and our team came out on top.

### **Q. Coach Shaw said he gave you a game ball and both you got emotional. Can you describe the scene?**

KEVIN HOGAN: Oh, it's just, it's hard to describe. Just those guys had my back, they have been so supportive of me and helping me go through the hard times and I couldn't see myself being anywhere else in college, I



came to the right place, I played for the right coach, Coach Shaw's amazing, and it's just a great finish to along career.

### **Q. Think your dad is looking down on you tonight?**

KEVIN HOGAN: I have no doubt. I could feel T I knew that -- I have no doubt in my mind that we were going to win that game.

### **Q. You said you had no doubt in your mind, but 25 seconds left, what is going through your mind at that time with having to go 40 yards?**

KEVIN HOGAN: We knew we had timeouts, so we could kind of chip away and we saw that they were in a two zone, so saw the seams open and pretty fortunate that we got that facemask penalty to kind of move up a little bit and then Devon ran a great route and I just hit him in stride and we got into field goal range. But it was just seeing the lanes and we knew that we could kind of chip away those last 30 seconds and very fortunate to get into field goal range.

### **Q. At this point of your career with all these quality starts in tough situations (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: Yeah, we felt confident on offense all night. Honestly, it didn't think that -- we really felt like we were kind of shooting ourselves in the foot on some of those drives. So we were very confident. We knew -- we weren't sure if there was enough time, but we knew that we could move the ball down the field and it definitely helped having those timeouts, but everyone, before they even scored we were walking up-and-down the sidelines saying we get to go win the game ourselves, we're not going to put it in their hands. So it's just a dream finish for us.

### **Q. They tried to limit Christian's impact on the game. Did you see that and know it was going to be in your hands to beat them?**

KEVIN HOGAN: They have a great front seven. Hat's off to them. A lot of talented guys and they did a good job of kind of making the holes narrow and Christian was able to still pop out for a few of them and I still think he almost rushed for a hundred, but I mean we just felt comfortable in the passing game, we felt good with protection, they had a lot of funky blitzes, but we felt great all week picking them up and just getting the ball to their tight ends and receivers in space was what we were trying to do.

**Q. The Oregon game was almost uncannily similar except in that one you guys made the mistakes and didn't win. Did you feel that that kind of failure down the stretch might have helped you execute down the stretch here?**

KEVIN HOGAN: What kind of failure?

**Q. Coach Shaw was saying that when it didn't go well against Oregon down the stretch, you guys made some mistakes, turned the ball over, he said there was almost like a, we have been here before mentality.**

KEVIN HOGAN: Yeah, we feel confident out there that we're going to put points on board, at any point. We really don't think there are many defenses that can stop us. And they give us the chance to go out and move the ball down the field, kind of similar to how we did in the two minute drill before the half. We really feel like we can move it. So we were very confident and coach was kind of letting us play.

**Q. Did you ever think about the road that you took to get here?**

KEVIN HOGAN: No, there's plenty of time to think about that later. There's so much going on in the next week and whatever, whatever the chips may fall after that, you can't really pause and think back yet, because that -- I love the guys and all our focus is on the next one, as it should be, and it's really great to, we're definitely going to celebrate this one though, it's a huge win.

**Q. What's it like preparing for a team that you've seen twice before?**

KEVIN HOGAN: It's definitely better than playing the same team in six days, which we did before. So, it's definitely going to be a challenge. We got film on each other, so, we're just going to get out there and work on our bread and butter plays and trust our technique, trust our execution and we'll go from there. But we're definitely feeling great right now.

**Q. Obviously, they feel like they're better than the last time you played them. But how do you feel you guys have improved the most?**

KEVIN HOGAN: I feel like we have improved everywhere. That was really our first break out of kind of getting things clicking on offense and we feel like we definitely improved tremendously and we're going to carry that confidence into next week and it definitely helps knowing that we have beaten a team before, but it's not going to cause us to relax at all. We know how good they are and that they're playing really good football right now. So we're going to try to keep the chip on our shoulder and keep going.

**Q. So you're known for keeping it cool on the field, but how special was it to have to watch the final play with it out of your hands, sweat through the time out, freeze the kicker, what's that experience like when the ball is not in your hands?**

KEVIN HOGAN: With Conrad out there, oh, I had no doubt he was going to make it. That's what he's done. He did it all summer. We put him in all kind of crazy pressure situations from all over the field and if he can do it with us huddled around him, screaming, crazy things at him, then he can go out and win the game against Notre Dame. And he has ice in his veins, so I wasn't worried, I was just happy that we got close enough, because you never know.

**Q. There was never a doubt?**

KEVIN HOGAN: No.

**Q. What were your emotions going out for your final game in Stanford Stadium and what are you going to tell your grand kids years from now about this game?**

KEVIN HOGAN: Yeah, I mean, I spoke to the team before and just kind of told them let's go out and have fun, we played in plenty of big games, what better way than to play a Top-5 Notre Dame team at home on Senior Day, so let's go out, cherish it, enjoy the time, have fun, and don't be afraid to slip up, it's going to happen, they're a good team, but we just tried to soak it all in and have fun.

**Q. The decision to come back, how much did it have to do with what happened with your father and how much does a game like this sort of make it all worth it?**

KEVIN HOGAN: Nothing, it was all about what was best for me and my future and I didn't comeback to play Notre Dame, I have no allegiance to them at all. I came back because I thought it was the best decision for me and for our team and for my family and I made the best decision possible.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: When you put it that way, it's pretty wild. But it was just kind of the pinnacle of how far we have come and how many plays we have put on on the field out there. It's pretty awesome, but it was just perfect execution and I mean he ran it perfectly, I put it right there so he could catch it in stride and there's no better way to finish your career than a completion to set up a win.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: He proved time and again he can make those kicks. We wanted to make sure we got it close enough. We know he has all the leg in the world. But he nailed it. I had no doubt that he was going to

put it right there.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: There was six seconds left when he kicked it, so we weren't sure if there was going to be any time. So we were sitting on the sidelines and then the ref blew the game dead, so we just ran on the field. I don't know. I'm at a loss for words.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: It's awesome. The fans were great tonight. Notre Dame travels well, but for our fans to be able to come out on the field and celebrate with us at the end of the game was awesome. Perfect way to finish the season.

**Q. What was you like the selection committee to know about Stanford? I know you're not going to lobby, but you kind of have to have them pick your team, why should this team be considered for a playoff spot?**

KEVIN HOGAN: Because we are 8-1 in the toughest conference in America and put together a heck of a resume. We know we kind of took it out of our hands a couple weeks back, but I think that no one in the country wants to play us right now.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KEVIN HOGAN: Our goal is to get to the PAC-12 championship and to have a chance to go to the Rose Bowl. So after losing to Oregon, it was tough but our goal was still ahead of us and we realized that goal last week against Cal. Essentially this game didn't mean anything to our, our goal or our main goal at the start of the season, but to come out and beat a really good Notre Dame game is just a cherry on top.

**Q. How gratifying is it for you to play as well as you did in your final game. You won 34 games and that was one of your best performances?**

KEVIN HOGAN: It's awesome to just kind of put it all together. It's a huge game for me, it meant a lot. Got a lot of emotions and just kind of to finish my career with a great game and kind of put so much in a position to win and with all the guys around us, we have an amazing senior class and leadership and the coaches trusted us this week and just to go out and with a win, it's amazing. I don't even know what to say.

**Q. What would you say was your most memorable moment at Stanford?**

KEVIN HOGAN: There's so many. This is definitely up there. Definitely top three moments. But just being able to go down and win the game on our own and have it in our hands, wasn't much time left, but I was warming up on the sidelines and turned around right before that drive and saw Conrad just warming up,

kicking into the net and I was like, okay, I just got to get this guy in range and he's going to nail it. So it was a pretty awesome finish for both of us.

**Q. Talk about that final walk for you.**

KEVIN HOGAN: Oh, usually I walk over with headphones and pretty focused. And today I didn't take them, just wanted to kind of take it all in and enjoy it, hear the fans, give high-fives, and kind of give thanks to everything that this community and in school has done for me, I'm forever grateful. I just tried to have fun today and enjoy it.

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## Blake Martinez



Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

### **Q. (No microphone.)**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: That thing we did where Conrad has to kick a field goal before our conditioning. And if we miss, we have to do extra conditioning. He never missed all summer. So we would always be like right in his face, yelling like random things, the worst things you could possibly say to someone and he still made every single one. And tonight it was amazing when he made that.

### **Q. So what kind of the mood on the sideline, like are you guys talking, are you kind of quiet? What happens?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: I think that we had a lot of confidence in Conrad. Coach Bloom, one story for me, was Coach Bloom came up to me and was like, oh, Blake, do you think he's going to make this and I'm like, oh, easy, easy money. Just from summer, he hasn't missed one ever. And we're going to get this, don't worry about it.

### **Q. So what's that moment like when he makes the kick and people are screaming, "legend, legend, Legend Trophy" and things like that. What's that like watching the crowd power down from the sideline?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: Unreal. Just the emotions that are flowing through are just amazing. And kind of, at first, everyone was telling to us stay back because there was still enough time for us to like have to kick off. But for some reason they let the clock run out still. So I was like, all right -- first, I was like kind of back and they're like, you're good to go, and I went running down.

And then kind of said, like, good job to the other players, but after that it was amazing. My parents ran on. I was taking pictures with them and all the fans. It was just a great moment to have for your last time on the field.

### **Q. As a player, what is it like when the fans storm the field? Like how do you -- Do you like that?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: Yeah, yes. Obviously, for the winning aspect. Not from the aspect -- but, yes, definitely when they run on the field, just to see those guys that have been cheering you on all year. It was

just a great moment to kind of see them face-to-face and be able to take pictures. I took a bunch of pictures with little kids. They were saying, hey, good job, I was watching you all season. And it was a great moment to kind of cherish that and give back to them for all they have done for us.

### **Q. Is this the best offensive line you played all year?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: Oh yeah, definitely. I compare them exactly like I said in another interview, that they're exactly like our offensive line. They're a physical group, and you have to be able to play perfectly on every single play or they're going to kind of offensively outmaneuver you.

### **Q. Is it size or technique or scheme or what is it?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: I think it's everything. They have a great coaching staff, they have great recruiting, and they got the guys. They're all 6'7", I stand next to them like, all right, cool, I got to go around this guy on this play, so.

### **Q. So in the fourth quarter, when you start making those stops, what was changing for you guys?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: So, right before the fourth quarter happened, I brought the team together, our defense together, and I told them, hey, this is our time, this is where we need to kind of just nut up, basically, and say, we're not going to let anything get past us. We're going to make those stops for our offense. They have been doing it for us the whole game and it's time for us to make that stop and contribute in this game, so we did.

### **Q. In that last minute or so, with your backs on the wall, like, was there ever a moment where, like, we should just let them score and let our offense have time to run plays?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: No. Every single play we were going for a stop. That third down stop, going into fourth down, the fourth down was kind of sucky at that point, because we felt, we felt so confident we were going to be able to stop that play, but they got outside of us and kind of made that. But, yeah, we were going for a stop the whole entire time. And once they scored we were like, all right, offense, there's enough time to go down and kick a field goal. Which happened.

### **Q. Has it hit you yet that you played your last game**

**in this stadium?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: Not yet. I feel -- it feels like it's soon going to hit. Probably tomorrow I'll be like, wow, that's going to be the last time I run out of that tunnel. Next time I'll be, maybe, walking out of the tunnel, watching the Stanford game, being the alumni right on the sideline and cheering on those guys. And it was a fun moment and definitely, definitely remember it forever.

**Q. What was it like walking off that field? What was it, like, when did you kind of distance yourself from the scrum afterwards and just walk off?**

BLAKE MARTINEZ: Oh, yeah, it was kind of took awhile, because I was like walking off and like seeing all these fans that want to take pictures.



# Stanford University Football Media Conference

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## Christian McCaffrey



Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: They're stacking the box, making it hard for us to run the ball. And our receivers did an unbelievable job at doing what they do best, catching the ball and getting up field. Guys like Kevin Hogan, who don't blink when stuff like that happens and says, you know what, let's ball, let's go get this win and that's exactly what he did.

**Q. Not necessarily a flashy game for you guys, offensively, but you dominate the time of possession and you really grind it out there with the running game.**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: Yeah, that's a great defense. That's a really great defense. To score 38 on them, I think, we're pretty happy with that. I know there's still so many different things that we need to improve and that we'll get back in the film room. Like every single week, no one can ever play a perfect game and we'll just get back to the drawing board and see what we can do to do that.

But, overall, just so proud of the team and how we fought. That's one of those games that as a kid you dream about playing in. To come with the win is super special.

**Q. Did you feel like you had a target on your back tonight?**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: Definitely. They have an unbelievable defense and some unbelievable players and when they're stacking the box it makes it's tough to run.

But you look at the day Hogan had and that's the windows that it opens and that's why, when our offense gets in a rhythm, and they're doing a great job stopping the run and we're getting four, five yards a pop, those runs end up turning into they're worried about the run and then Hogan makes great plays down the field in the pass game. So when you can do both things well it makes playing football a lot of fun.

**Q. Next week it will be USC for the PAC-12 championship. Talk about that game.**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: Yeah, we're excited. We're extremely excited. We know USC's a great team and we're ready for the challenge. I think you're guys are

extremely excited. We're going to enjoy this one, but definitely have one foot in right now looking forward to this next week.

**Q. You guys play like you did tonight, you'll be the PAC-12 champs.**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: Thank you, I appreciate that.

**Q. No question. How does playing them a second time affect your preparation?**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: No different. We prepare each week the exact same. We're not going to do anything different just because it's playing the second time. We'll look at some things, look what they have done towards the end of the season and prepare the exact same way.

**Q. Great game.**

CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY: Thank you, I appreciate it.

# Stanford University Football

## Media Conference

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### Conrad Ukropina



Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

**Q. You know what we're going to ask.**

CONRAD UKROPINA: So it was a six-point game, they were driving down and actually, I turned to Dallas and I'm like, no, excuse me, I turned to Alex, our punter, and I said, all right, they're going to go down and score. Then we're going to get the ball with a few seconds left, drive down and kick a field goal to win. So kind of called it. Which is awesome.

But, gosh, this is just such a testament to the whole team, great team win. So running out there with Dallas, kind of knew that they had a timeout. I knew they were probably going to use it and give me some more time to get set up. And I actually like when they call timeouts, because if you think about it, it just gives the line more time to kind of rest and really lock in and just everyone get ready and kind of get ready for the next play. And it's, obviously, it's changing gears from going from offense to special teams.

So, ran out there, looked at Dallas and I said, I mean, shoot, man, might as well just make it. I mean, it's the same kick we have done hundreds of times in practice. So, just went out there and great snap, great hold, and was able to kick it through the pipes. So that's awesome. Great feeling. Great feeling.

**Q. What's the preparation like, mentally, on the sideline? We saw you before that, there was nobody near you, you were just doing your thing. What's going through your mind?**

CONRAD UKROPINA: Honestly, I just stay within myself. I know that I don't need to -- coach tells us all the time, you don't need to put on a cape. You don't need to go out and do anything that you're not capable of. Just stay within yourself. It's a 45 yarder. I know that's well within my range and right down the middle makes it easy.

So just able to go out there and be successful. And as a unit it's really, really exciting and it's a testament to really how hard we all work as a team.

**Q. What was some of the things that people said to you in the aftermath? We saw Josh kind of pick you up after that.**

CONRAD UKROPINA: Well, it's the Legends Trophy,

and so before the game, coach was like, this is where legends are made and so a lot of guys were like, "you're a legend. Oh, legend."

(Laughter.) Which is awesome. And it's so great. Just a great feeling. Gosh, I've never been bombarded with so many people trying to take pictures. It's funny. It's a really great feeling. So just really, really happy. Proud of the whole team.

**Q. Biggest kick of your career?**

CONRAD UKROPINA: I would say it's up there. I hope there is more big ones and I hope that I can capitalize on them as well.

**Q. Overall, what did it take for you to get the job done out there?**

CONRAD UKROPINA: It was a team win. We were hurting a little bit after Oregon. But we really came back together as a locker room and we prepared really, really hard this week. We knew that, hey, this game might not be the end all, be all, but regardless, we want to win every single time we step out on the stadium, especially when it's at our house.

So I would say just the preparation this whole week, everyone just did such a great job. They were really locked in. Our captain, Ronnie Harris, is a vocal leader. Even though he's hurt, he's getting guys going and yelling hey, let's go, this is for the seniors. We got to do this.

So I just say the mentality was really more through the whole week and really maintained and then when we got to game time it's just, let's go, let's roll.

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

Saturday November 28, 2015

## Devon Cajuste

Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

**Q. Senior Day, you guys have the ball, 25 seconds left. You need to get into field goal range. Take me through that 27-yard gain?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: Zero doubt in my mind that coach was going to make the great call. When I heard it was just an alley, I knew I had a bender route and, I mean, I don't know, I just made the play, just like practice. So it was just extremely exciting, just the fact that it happened. I don't know. I'm still smiling from it.

**Q. Was that the best moment in your Stanford career, that play?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: For me, yeah. For me, yeah. The second would be the Rose Bowl. But for me, personally, yes.

**Q. And for Kevin, obviously, with his dad being a Notre Dame grad and with all the build-up and the story behind that last Senior Day drive, what was his reaction, what did you tell him after the win was sealed?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: I don't even think I got to talk to him. Oh, wait, yeah, sorry, I'm blanking out, I did. It was kind of just like, great job. And then just next play. Like we had to finish the game. We just had to get to the next play and then we celebrated on the end.

**Q. What was that final walk for you like?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: Oh, man, that was -- I was sad at first but I was happy all at the same time. I remember last year doing my last walk and it was kind of very similar, but this time it was like this is it, the end. There's no more. But I was just very, very happy. All the support. My family came out from New York so it meant a lot.

**Q. Coach talked about you finally coming to him and saying, I feel faster, I feel a hundred percent. What's that progression been like over the season?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: It's been slow and long, but it's been steady. And today, I would say I played my best game all season and I kind of had the reverse factor of what most people have. You sort start out at a hundred and you slowly wean down. I didn't start out a hundred, but I ended a hundred, so.

**Q. What do you think is your best memorable**



**moment as a Stanford player?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: Definitely be the 2013 Rose Bowl when we won.

**Q. And this is right up there?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: This is second, right there. This is -- they're almost like neck and neck, but, yeah.

**Q. Hoge's last throw in Stanford Stadium, your last catch there --**

DEVON CAJUSTE: I didn't even think about that. That's really cool. I didn't even think about that.

**Q. Pretty poignant, isn't it?**

DEVON CAJUSTE: Wow, that's pretty surreal. That's even more surreal than I thought it would be. No, I feel like the whole scene was very surreal to begin with. The fact that we're like all right Notre Dame is going to score -- Conrad called this too before it happened. He's like, so Notre Dame is going to score and I'm going to go down and kick the game-winning field goal and it happened just like that. So, it was fascinating, it really was. But I never thought about everything was the last. That was awesome. It's awesome.

# Stanford University Football Media Conference

Saturday November 28, 2015

## Michael Rector



Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

**Q. Your feelings right now in the aftermath of this win?**

MICHAEL RECTOR: Yeah, I still can't believe it. I'm still in shock. Still in awe. I saw that kick go in from Conrad, huge kick. Ice in his veins. And everything, just to have the fans rush the field. That's just nuts, they're all on the field celebrating together.

**Q. Take us through that touchdown.**

MICHAEL RECTOR: Yeah, that was actually a play where we had the option to hand it off or throw it if we saw the coverage was right. And we saw the coverage. I knew Kevin was going to throw it my way, so luckily, I was able to break that tackle. I told my friend Rollins, another receiver, that if they threw it to me, I was going to break a tackle and score. And luckily, it happened all like that. So looking forward to next week against USC.

**Q. So in your offense, you guys are used so frequently as blockers, maybe compared to some schools. What is, kind of, that like for you? How do you not go stir crazy and then capitalize on the opportunities that are presented?**

MICHAEL RECTOR: Absolutely. We knew coming into Stanford that we are here to block, primarily. And at first, you know, that's what we came in to do. So we take pride in what we do. We always talk about executing, making the big play when it comes to you, and just staying positive and knowing that when your number's called, you'll be ready.

**Q. A disappointing year for you last year. To bounce back like this, are you able to put that in perspective, are you able to look at that and take some accomplishment from it?**

MICHAEL RECTOR: Absolutely. All credit goes to the team, how we responded the last season, came in and worked throughout the off season, the summer, training camp, it's us just unbelievable. It's been fun with these guys, it's been special and I look forward to the next few weeks.

# University of Notre Dame Football Media Conference

Saturday November 28, 2015

## Brian Kelly Postgame Notre Dame

Stanford - 38, Notre Dame 36

COACH KELLY: Well, tough to talk to our team in the locker room after a game like this. Two very good football teams playing today and came down to Stanford made a play that they needed to make to win the game and we didn't make it.

And like I told our team, it's tough to win games. Winning is hard. And losing should never feel good. There are no moral victories. I'm disappointed in losing the football game, but I'm proud of our football team and the way they competed, the way they kept playing for four quarters and just came up a little short. So with that, questions.

**Q. How big of a punch in the gut was that? That they come down, you were so close and had such an opportunity to make the college football playoff.**

COACH KELLY: Yeah, I mean our guys are very disappointed. They know -- it's never about the last 30 seconds. We had a number of opportunities in the red zone that we should have converted or could have converted into touchdowns that we had to settle for field goals.

So, it's never about just one series or one play. It's a culmination of the game and the reality is, we're two plays away from being undefeated and being the number one team in the country, you know. One play at Clemson and one play here at Stanford.

So, I love my team. I put this team up against anybody in the country. Fact of the matter is, we're not going to get that chance. We get that. We understand it. So it's disappointing, but very proud of our football team.

**Q. Gutsy drive by DeShone Kizer taking the team down the field there on the final drive.**

COACH KELLY: Well, I thought it was as good as it could get, right? Four something on the clock, eats up the whole clock, makes an incredible play on the third down, throw as big route under duress, runs the ball physically. I think he handled himself like a fifth-year senior, and he's just a freshman. So, if there's a bright spot there, obviously, the way DeShone Kizer played was pretty bright.



**Q. The other quarterback, Kevin Hogan, grew up a Notre Dame fan and has close ties and can you just speak about what you saw from him?**

COACH KELLY: I thought Kevin was accurate. Kevin is a great competitor, and we know him well, and he's a class act, a class kid. I know him through recruiting, I knew him every year. He's just a competitor, great competitor, and I thought he was on tonight, threw the ball effectively, hit us with big plays down the field. But that's what we expect when we play Kevin Hogan. He plays very well.

**Q. You mentioned you're maybe two plays away from being undefeated. Given the amount of time and effort a team puts into a season, the amount of injuries you overcome, how do you kind of just deal with that and rationalize it?**

COACH KELLY: Well, you really don't. I think everybody clearly understands the game of college football, that maybe there's a team or two that is immune for that, we're all dealing with it. Baylor dealt with it, TCU's dealing with it, Michigan State's dealing with it. Everybody's got to overcome it. And we were two plays from being on the other side of it.

And so, from our perspective, I think each and every year you go in and you know that your roster is not going to stay the same in November. That's why you have to prepare yourself and build your football team with depth.

We know what that looks like now, and we'll continue to build our football team to have the kind of depth to sustain injuries that occur naturally in college football.

**Q. How do you feel like Josh Adams and Devon Butler filled in for the respective replacements?**

COACH KELLY: I think Josh Adams set a Notre Dame record for freshman rushing, so that's a pretty good mark on his record.

I thought Devon Butler competed his butt off. He got a PI late in the game, but he's competing for the football. So, I thought he played well. He left with a concussion in the last series, Nick had to go in for him. But I was proud of Devon, I was proud of the way he competed out there.

**Q. There's a pretty big difference in third down**

**defense in the first half to the second half. Where do you think those improvements came from?**

COACH KELLY: I thought we were much better up front. We got pushed around a little bit in the first couple of drives and then we settled down and played much better. I think we kept Christian under a hundred yards rushing, which hadn't happened in a while. I think a lot of that was just we settled into our game plan and played just better football defensively. It starts with your front four.

**Q. You guys rushed for 299 yards. Seemed like you had two looks you kept going to with some success, the counters with the running back and also with DeShone and then the power reads. What was it you guys saw and what was it that allowed you to have so much success running the football?**

COACH KELLY: Well, a couple of things. Obviously, you get the pull a little bit and gap block. It's a mixture of three down and four down and we got some good angles based upon film study.

We felt like we got some good leverage and the ability to pull some of our big guys. They're not quite as big and physical as they have been in the past, so we felt like we had an opportunity to gain some leverage. And I thought we had a pretty good plan going in.

**Q. Can you talk Jaylon finished with 15 tackles, 8 solo, seven assist, can you just talk about his play?**

COACH KELLY: Normal day. That's Jaylon's normal effort. He's all over the field and he has been every single week that he's played. I don't think he's had an off week. He may have had a play that he didn't make once or twice, but each and every week he has had that kind of impact to our defense.

**Q. You mentioned DeShone playing like a fifth year senior. Over the course of the season, how important has it been for the moment never to be too big for him?**

COACH KELLY: The moment's never too big for him. He's still learning. There's things that happen out there, you can turn the football over. Obviously right before the half. He knows those things action but he's growing and learning, but he's a great competitor. I thought his last drive, the way he handled himself and got us in the right looks, I thought the throw to Will Fuller was as good as it gets. Just did some great things out there and again, I think that his learning curve is probably in the short field areas and making decisions down there, but who wouldn't want that guy back next year? I'm sitting on a pretty good situation with the quarterbacks that we have coming back, if I don't screw them up we should be okay.

**Q. With the kick returns, putting Jalen and Joe and quite a few defensive starters on that to try to -- was that just an effort to try to stop McCaffrey from being the field position impact that he's had this year?**

COACH KELLY: Oh, absolutely. It was all about McCaffrey and making sure that he did not wreck the game from special teams. I thought we did a great job on special teams and kept him out of changing the complexion of the game from that standpoint.

I thought we kicked it well and punted it well and covered it well. I thought we got the upper hand in special teams other than obviously the field goal they kicked at the end.

**Q. Starters on kickoff coverage, did you feel like this team emptied the tank today, that there was nothing left at the end?**

COACH KELLY: No, it was all hands on deck. Jalen is on it, Joe Schmidt is on it. It was a defensive play. I said, look, guys, we can go one of two ways with it, do you want to start on the 45 yard line or the three yard line? I can put a couple of backups on this team or you guys can start on the 20 or 25 yard line. How do you want this to go? And it wasn't much conversation after that.

**Q. The 27 yard gain to Cajuste, was that sort of what was available on that defense or could you take us through that play from your perspective?**

COACH KELLY: We got to close down inside out on that seam route. I thought we probably played it a little bit too, too much outside in, worried about backing up. We got to be more aggressive to a seam route.

**Q. I know that at this point maybe hard to look at big picture but 10-2 with all that you guys over came with injuries and everything, how would you categorize this regular season?**

COACH KELLY: Again, a couple of plays away from being undefeated. Couldn't be more proud of the way our kids competed, over came some catastrophic injuries to key players. Quarterbacks, running back, tight ends, defensive linemen, cornerbacks. I mean, we're talking about across the board here, we're not just talking about one position, we're talking about impacting all positions, playing on the road against very good competition, getting home at five o'clock in the morning, bouncing back, playing two option teams, I mean I could go on and on. Proud of my football team. We didn't get it done, we didn't win enough games, we get that. But this is a really good football team.

# University of Notre Dame Football Media Conference

Saturday November 28, 2015

## DeShone Kizer

Postgame Notre Dame

Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

### **Q. How disappointing is it?**

DESHONE KIZER: Well, before we do anything, you can ask me about the fumble, you can ask me about the red zone decisions, you can ask me about the incomplete passes, you can ask me about the defensive performance, you can ask me about the offensive performance, but before we get to that I just want to say that it's, honestly, a privilege to be a part of the team that I'm a part of the 127th team at the University of Notre Dame is something special. Those guys in that locker room truly put themselves in the most ugly positions with their bodies to truly give themselves up for their brothers and for that, I am truly grateful to go out there and be able to battle with those guys.

### **Q. It was so gutsy to have that play and then to see the kick go through I saw you hit the ground. It must have just been an awful feeling.**

DESHONE KIZER: Yeah. Yeah. I'm completely blank inside. It's hard to really describe how you feel in a time like this. Obviously, I'm disappointed. Not in the fact that we lost, but more in the fact that some of the most amazing football players I've ever been around and leaders, just walked off their last regular season game and didn't have a W. And that's just, that's the hardest part about it all. Tonight Stanford made one more play than us and, unfortunately, I wish we could go back and do something differently, but at the end of the day, that's how the cookie crumbles.

### **Q. Coach said you were two plays away from being undefeated this year. Knowing that, you still have another game left, but the college football playoffs, was that important to you since you were that close?**

DESHONE KIZER: This team is all year made a point to let everyone know what our mission was. And we truly thought that we were one of the best teams in the country, so, yes, the goal was to make it to the playoffs and we know that that opportunity is kind of fell away with this loss. We don't like to settle for anything less than the goals that we set out for and it's going to be rough to kind of reconstruct this season and how we want it to end. But we all understand that there's probably going to be one more opportunity for to us



step out on the field together and to represent our university and to represent this team one last time, I can promise you that the preparation will be there and the heart and the passion that we have had all year will come out again and hopefully we can leave this team and this legacy with a W.

### **Q. Speak to Josh Adams effort tonight.**

DESHONE KIZER: It was unbelievable. He came out there like he was a fifth year veteran. He runs harder than anyone I've ever seen. He truly is a great teammate to us and he puts everything out on the line each play. That's what you have to ask for out of your running back and that's what he gave us. To have him in the back field with me, it's truly a privilege and it just goes to show that from one to four at every position, we might not be the most talented all the way across, but we're going to give the most heart and at the end of the day heart is what's allowed us to put us in the position that we're in now.

### **Q. You might have answered this, but how sure were you on that last offensive drive that you guys were going to do what you did and go down and score?**

DESHONE KIZER: Football's crazy. I've been on the other side of it, it can't necessarily be a hundred percent sure. Once the kickoff ended where it was, I knew that the chances were higher, but like I said, this game is crazy, you can't predict anything. Kevin Hogan is a really good quarterback and I know that with his experience that he was going to come out and try to put together something to try and knock down a field goal and he did it. He made that one extra play that we weren't able to make.

### **Q. In the last couple weeks you guys have come to the red zone 11 times and have come away with only one touchdown. I know you talked about it earlier in the year, but what do you take away from the last two games and then this game as well that it happened to you again?**

DESHONE KIZER: I have no idea. We'll evaluate it, we'll go back and check it out. I know some of the decisions I made down there weren't obviously the best. I mean, we ended most drives, other than the last one, before half, with a kick and that was our ultimate goal. We understand in a game like this that field goals are the separators, as we can see at the

end of the game. So to go down there and reach the red zone and end up with points, it's good. Yeah, we want to score touchdowns, but the object of the game is to score more points than the other team. So if we're kicking field goals we're winning as well.

Now, once we go back and evaluate how this last couple games has been in the red zone, we're going to try to put together a better plan to try to end up with six points at the end of the drive rather than three.



# University of Notre Dame Football Media Conference

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## Jaylon Smith Postgame Notre Dame

Stanford - 38, Notre Dame - 36

### **Q. What was this year able to do to help you build relationships with all your teammates?**

JAYLON SMITH: I think we were challenged mentally, physically, emotionally, in all aspects. I think that we handled it very well. We developed a culture and we stuck to it and it's something that I'm very proud of, personally, of me and all of my teammates, just how we were able to stick together and just have great camaraderie.

### **Q. What enabled you guys to bounce back tonight after (No microphone.)**

JAYLON SMITH: Yeah, it's an elite matchup. Notre Dame versus Stanford, at Stanford. So you can always expect their best. It's a situation where you know it's going to come down to the end and we knew that going into it and they made one more play.

### **Q. You guys struggled on third down. Was it execution, something they were doing?**

JAYLON SMITH: I guess they wanted it more -- no, it was definitely the execution part. They executed better than we did on those third down situations and it's something where it's very crucial and it's hard to defeat them when it's a lot of third and shorts, a lot of third and ones. So it's just a matter if we were able to figure it out at the end, it's just sometimes things can be too late and like I said, they made one more play than us. That's what it came down to.

### **Q. Your game plan against McCaffrey seemed to work pretty well. You held him to one of his lowest outputs of the year. Was that --**

JAYLON SMITH: What was his number?

### **Q. 99 yards.**

JAYLON SMITH: Like total? Okay.

### **Q. So, it seemed to work for him. Was that your game plan coming in was to look at him?**

JAYLON SMITH: Well, he's the number one game wrecker. Best player on the team. And the idea was to contain him. Based on the numbers we did that, but one player doesn't define a victory or a loss, so it's really just what it came down to, they played better than us.



### **Q. Does this season feel like success, disappointment, both? How do you process it?**

JAYLON SMITH: I think it's both. No one wants to lose, so even though we lost two games, it still hurts, especially to end, to go out this way, as far as the end of the season. But it's definitely a learning lesson for all of us in our lives. Definitely in a lot of unique situations where things aren't going to go your way and it's all about how you respond and that's how I look at it.

### **Q. One more game, one more big game.**

JAYLON SMITH: Absolutely, deep down we're all definitely proud of what we have achieved and this is my first 10 win season playing for Notre Dame, so I love it, but it's never a good feeling when you lose. I think any competitor can't be happy after a loss.