

November 30, 2012



Stanford – 27
UCLA – 24

An interview with:

**COACH SHAW
CHASE THOMAS
KEVIN HOGAN**

DAVE HIRSCH: We have the Pac-12 Champion coach for the Stanford Cardinal, David Shaw.

COACH SHAW: First of all, I'm very proud of my guys. These guys played extremely hard. We've talked about how this thing wasn't going to be easy. We talked about how we were going to get UCLA's best shot. We're going to get UCLA's best shot, and they gave it to us.

Their quarterback played great. Boy, he's hard to tackle. Their running back made some big runs, their running back made big plays and big stops on the defense. But our guys hung in there.

We knew it was going to come down to the end. Were we going to have the resolve. Were we going to have the toughness. Were we going to be smart enough at the end to make just enough plays to win, and our guys did that.

Q. You talked about their quarterback playing great. Can you talk about yours and what he's done for you in the four games he started? What tonight making the big pass for the touchdown?

COACH SHAW: You know, Kevin's still growing. The sky's the limit for him. We're really excited about his progress. But also his ceiling is very high. Kevin didn't play perfect again today, but boy, when we needed the play, he makes it. As a runner or as a thrower, or making checks at the line of scrimmage. He deserved that MVP for that game because he, for a couple of times, he

put us on his shoulders and he played great. I'm so proud of him.

Q. A lot of people of course knew that Stanford was going to be a good team without Andrew Luck, but I don't think many people would have anticipated you guys would be going to the Rose Bowl. Tell me what that means to be headed to the Rose Bowl?

COACH SHAW: First of all, we talk a lot about not worrying about what other people's expectations are. Our expectations are on our play, and we play well enough. We know we can compete with anybody. If we don't play well enough, we know we're going to have a chance to get beat. So we always have that in the back of our minds. We play with a chip on our shoulder. Kind of our mantra throughout the year was to be loose, to be focused and play with a chip on our shoulders, and our guys have done that.

Part of that chip on our shoulder was to prove that we're not a one-man organization here. We're a team. And we'll have more great players leave this year, and we expect to be good next year again. We recruit tough, smart kids, that play well. They make plays. We plan on being in this position hopefully more than once.

Q. On the touchdown to Drew, was that what Kevin was looking for right away? Was he going to do something else and then saw the busted coverage or was that option A, and that was what you were going for?

COACH SHAW: It was kind of their -- he had to read the safety, okay. There were four verticals. Four guys going deep, and one guy coming underneath on the shuttle cross. If they all dropped out and everybody was covering, he was going to check it down, and kick a field goal. But he saw the safety. That's what Zach Ertz does. He makes a lot of plays. But the safety jumped Zach on the inside, and Drew got a great release.

We talked about our releases. You have

to get great releases against these corners. And Drew ran that in the end zone, and Kevin held on to the ball to hold the safety inside as long as he could. He threw the ball, took a big hit, and it was a great throw, and a huge catch and a big play for us.

Q. How much did the interception in the long run back by Ed Reynolds turn this game around?

COACH SHAW: That was the game changer. You know, take points off the board for them, and put points on the board for us. When you get a game-changing play like that, you have a good chance to win, because if the rest of the game is played even, that one is the one that tips it in your favor. That's what Ed's done all year. He reads the eyes of the quarterback. He makes a great jump on the ball. My dad calls it stealing second. He would be a great base stealer. He reads the quarterback, gets a good jump, he's got great hands and he's a former running back.

When we recruited him, he was playing running back. And I thought he was in, but that just got Stepan another touchdown.

Q. What was different tonight from six days ago? Did they throw anything at you that you guys weren't expecting? Was it just them coming out really hard in the opening that kind of got a jump on you guys?

COACH SHAW: They just played extremely well. They played extremely well. And they threw the ball to the outside and made our guys run and try to chase them. They took advantage of some of the mismatches in their favor. I can't say enough about Usua who is 5'8" covering a guy who is 6'8" or whatever he is, not deflecting the ball or missing twice, making it tough on him.

But they played extremely well. Our guys hung in there. We did not play great, but we played hard, and we gave ourselves a chance to win in the end.

Q. First Jordan Williamson hits the field goal against Oregon. Today, not only the one at the end that provided the margin, but he made a tough kick there in the first half as well to end the first half. Just talk about how far he's come over this past year?

COACH SHAW: He's come a long way, and we expect him to come a lot farther. He's been more consistent. He barely missed a

40-whatever yarder a week ago. But besides that, he's been money. He's been really good. He's got his routine down, he's confident, he's consistent, and that's all I ever say to him. He's got a strong enough leg to kick it from 60. I just need him to be smooth and consistent, and that's where he is right now.

Q. You were talking before about the attitude that you wanted to come into this year with after losing Andrew. What about the team -- I mean, is it a different make-up of a team as far as talent and what you can do? What did you see in this team that you thought you had the right pieces to go with it?

COACH SHAW: I believe this 100% since I began coaching. I don't think you ever completely know your team until four or five games into the season. Guys that have been around here have heard me say that a bunch. And four or five games into the end of the year, I knew that if we executed and played well, we could beat anybody. But we weren't going to have the plus 25 margin of victories that we had a year ago and two years ago. Those, for us were pretty much a thing of the past. We're going to play close, tight games. We need to take care of the ball. We've got to rely on our running game and our tightness to make plays.

When a receiver steps up, like Drew stepped up today to make a huge play, that's a huge plus for us. And our special teams have been great all year. That's Pete Alamar, to handle the special teams and coach the kickers and punters and field position, defense, running the ball, use your tight ends, play action, the mobile quarterback, all of those things can work together, and they worked together to put together a really good team.

Q. How much is the speed (Indiscernible) you have in the safety this is year?

COACH SHAW: It's huge. Entire secondary, the speed of our secondary is as good as it's ever been here as far as guys being able to not let plays go for long touchdowns, but letting plays go -- a big play might break out, but our guys are running down and making tackles.

Q. You talk about not thinking about the externals or the outside judgments and everything. But there are things that matter

from externals in terms of recruiting. There are a lot of athletes that probably didn't think that Stanford could go to three straight BCS bowls. What does this mean for the program? I mean, now it's impossible to say that you guys don't have some legs under you.

COACH SHAW: The best thing about it, the only thing people that believed are the guys that are in that locker room now. The guys that we recruited, and we recruited that with those guys in mind. And I've said it a million times. If you can get enough, tough, smart, motivated individuals in one locker room that like to win in everything they do, they like to be successful, they push themselves, they push each other, if you've got that kind of a locker room, you can beat anybody.

Q. I understand that one of the things you liked about Kevin when you saw him in high school was he was a mudder. He played well in the rain. Is that true? How did that help him tonight in these conditions?

COACH SHAW: It was, honestly -- Kevin's in here now, he's going to get a little bashful -- but to be honest, when Coach Pep brought the film in and we saw the wet, rainy conditions, he seemed like he was the only guy not slipping. You saw athleticism, a strong arm, and a guy that made good decisions. You saw a guy that could run and challenge defenses. And he's going to keep challenging defenses on the edge, right, Kevin? We'll keep working on that. But at the same time, those intangibles, those things that you can't teach, those things are so valuable to an offense.

Q. When you took over with Harbaugh, how realistic was it to get to the Rose Bowl? How much progress have you made, obviously, until here?

COACH SHAW: The big thing is two years in a row we were one game away. We were one game away. We were a loss to Oregon away twice from getting in this game and getting a chance to go to the Rose Bowl. We knew that this year it was going to come down to beating Oregon at Oregon, and our guys never batted an eye. They didn't wince at it. They said that's going to be the game. We have to get over the hump.

If we want to get to our goal, which is getting to the Rose Bowl and having a chance to win the Rose Bowl, we have to go to Oregon and win the game, especially the defense. We came in with a great attitude, chasing the boys. We went after them, played great, made just enough plays

on offense and won in overtime. That game was a signature game for us, because that was a team that had been keeping us from our goal.

Q. Your guys did a nice job containing Johnathan Franklin in the first game last week. Tonight he had a little bit better performance. From where you were standing, what was happening that was allowing him to --

COACH SHAW: He's really good. He's really good. I mean, we played great down there six days ago, but if you give that guy an inch, he's going to take a mile, and he took a couple miles on us. He's really quick. He's low to the ground. And I said it a week ago. We talked about the all-conference stuff. We've got four backs in this conference that any week you could say that guy's the best. Franklin showed today why he's so special.

DAVE HIRSCH: We have Chase Thomas and the Pac-12 championship MVP, Kevin Hogan.

Q. Kevin, can you talk about the touchdown pass and what you saw and how that play sort of unfolded?

KEVIN HOGAN: Yes, we were sending vertical, sending all the receivers vertical. I think it was 3rd and 15, and I just saw the corner kind of sit a little bit, and Drew snuck behind him and got into the back of the end zone and made a great catch.

Q. Kevin, as a freshman quarterback, what's it mean to you to reach the Rose Bowl? That's got to be quite an accomplishment?

KEVIN HOGAN: Oh, yeah. It's been a good month. We've been playing well. You know, especially for me, just being able to play, it's been fun. The guys around me make it a lot easier than it looks. I'm very fortunate to have such great teammates around me.

Q. Chase, you can count on me to be a downer. You guys shut them down completely last time. What was different this time?

CHASE THOMAS: I mean, they game planned really well against us. They had a great game plan coming into the game. You know, they got us out of the box with that fast motion. When they saw us do that, they ran right down the middle where that linebacker vacated. So they saw what worked last week and really emphasized doing the

same things this week. I mean, they have the best running back in the Pac-12 is Stepfan Taylor. To be able to hold that guy to under 70 yards like we did last week was a really big feat. And this week, we weren't so lucky. We had some gaps creased. But we made the stops when we needed to.

Q. Kevin, you guys entered the fourth quarter down by a touchdown. Can you describe what your emotions were like in the huddle? Were you as calm?

KEVIN HOGAN: Um, yeah. We kind of looked across the field and they were riled up. We knew that we just had to stay calm and play our style of football. We kept to it. We pounded the ball, got good field position, and we ended up scoring the tie and Jordan made a great kick to win the game.

Q. Does this feel new at all to you?

COACH SHAW: Yeah, I guess. It's been fun.

Q. Chase, back when you guys lost to Washington, how far away back then did you feel from the Rose Bowl compared to where you are right now, obviously?

CHASE THOMAS: Yeah, I mean, if you would have asked me after that game if we'd be here today, I would say it's definitely a possibility, but it's kind of hard to say, yeah, we're going to the Rose Bowl. But the type of guys we have in our locker room, we stepped up when we needed to. We made big plays. We took teams into deep water late, dragged them out, bled them out in the late games. You know, it shows a lot of determination and will on our team to be able to finish so many games in the fourth quarter or even overtime.

Q. Obviously, a lot of guys contributed to this. But talk about having a freshman quarterback that's played as well as he has four games in a row and on this stage tonight?

CHASE THOMAS: You're a freshman? I don't know. He sure doesn't play like one. The type of leadership he has in the huddle, the way he commands the huddle, it's tremendous for a red shirt freshman like him. We have tremendous faith in him on the defense.

It doesn't really matter who is at quarterback as long as they're sustaining drives and putting points on the board, the defense is going to be happy. But he's done so much more.

He can extend plays with his legs and his arm, get outside the pocket, and it's always hard to game plan against a quarterback that can make plays on the move.

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