

Stanford University Football Media Conference

Saturday, November 22, 2025

Stanford, California, USA

Coach Frank Reich

Postgame Media Conference



Stanford 31, Cal 10

FRANK REICH:

Q. Coach, first time around, big game, a lot of excitement going on. What was it from your perspective to experience this big game and get The Axe back for the first time in years?

FRANK REICH: Getting The Axe back is huge. I mean, this was such an incredible experience for me. I'll remember a lot of things about this year, but these last two weeks and this game tonight will certainly stick with me for a long time.

I mean, just seeing and feeling what it means to the players the coaches, really everybody connected with Stanford football, former football players, alumni, like just proud of this team, proud of getting the Stanford Axe back where it belongs.

Look forward to this team making a habit of keeping it here.

So much credit to our players, man, the way these last two weeks you could just feel a different energy. This is college rivalry football. It was a new experience for me, and I felt every bit of it.

Like I said, really credit to the players.

Q. Coach, I got to ask you about this defense. Obviously one of your best performances of the year. Just talk about your defense.

FRANK REICH: Defense was incredible. I mean, players were make plays all the over the field. Listen, I give a lot of the credit to Coach Thompson, Coach April. Scheme was amazing. They been great the whole year. Obviously today against that offense, that quarterback, did a phenomenal job on defense.

How well they played early and not only playing well, but scoring two touchdowns, I mean, are you kidding me? We

were struggling on offense so it's one thing for the defense to keep you in the game while you're struggling; it's another thing for them to score two touchdowns for you and go in with a lead and you feel like you haven't even made a first down.

I just think that really kind of injected us with some confidence. We came out and we moved the ball down there to start the second half, and then we didn't come away with points, but I just think, again, the defense has been really good the whole year. Super great game tonight. Happy for Coach Thompson, Coach April and Jay and Double D coming up with those two touchdowns are massive.

Q. I was here for the San Jose State game and you said that was one the best wins you've had as a head coach. Previous the Boston College game was. Where does this one rank? The second part of the question is I know this is supposed to be and is likely going to be an interim and you're done after next Saturday, but a win like this, does that make you think, hey, I would liked to this again?

FRANK REICH: Of course it does. We know it's done after this. Andrew and I know that that's always been the plan. I'll tell you what, it means a lot, this whole thing. That's part of why I came here, to experience what it would be like to be a part of the Stanford football community. This is a special place and that's why every win has been incredible.

But this one, this one means more, and I learned that these last two weeks, how important this game is. That's why I'm so proud of the team for the way we played tonight and getting that Stanford Axe back in our house.

Q. The way you guys played in the second half and sort of really dominated both lines of scrimmage, we able to run the ball, is that the vision that you see that Andrew has for this program...

FRANK REICH: No doubt. I think when I first got here Andrew's vision does include really dominant play up front. He understands how important that is winning football

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games and how important that has been in Stanford's winning tradition. That when we been at our best, that's what we do.

So tonight was good. Man, we did it on both sides of the ball. Took us a minute. Obviously didn't do much on offense in the first half. The way we ran the ball in the second half was a beautiful thing. Simi getting back in the action and playing the whole second half was a big deal. We felt his presence out there.

Q. Coach, just talk about -- on the second half what was the key to Elijah finding his rhythm, deep ball to CJ? Just what clicked at halftime to get the offense rolling and particularly Brown?

FRANK REICH: Well, I think the run game, getting the run game going. We hit some play-action passes. We had a feeling coming into this game -- not a feeling, just by looking at the film there were certain types of play-action passes that we thought we would hit against this particular defensive scheme.

I think we hit a bunch of them, and ones we didn't hit, we got pass interference on one of them. The dagger was the touchdown pass to CJ, so I think the run game helped Elijah get his groove in the second half.

But then offensively that dagger on the third and six or seven, whatever it was, and they're playing a three lock coverage zone in the front side, you know, the field side and playing man-to-man into the boundary. He just throws a perfect strike that basically seals the game. Credit to EB and CJ on that play. It was awesome.

Q. Of course are a veteran coach. Coached on both levels. Will you still be a stickler on, hey, we tied the most points we had all year, 31, but left six points on the board on the blocked field goal and the missed field goal. So will you be a stickler about this week even though you got the Notre Dame game coming up?

FRANK REICH: Yeah, for sure. I mean, not just that, there is -- I can tell you we left points out there in offense. When we kicked those field goals we shouldn't have been kicking field goals.

That's what we do, we hold each other accountable. Win, lose, or draw, we come in on Sunday, we grade the film, we highlight the things that we did well and try to -- want to repeat those and the mistakes we made as coaches and players, we own up to those and we hold ourselves accountable and we get those things corrected.

But that's just football. That's football. So every team, probably 90% of the games every team is saying the same thing, we left some stuff out there. You understand that as a player and as a coach. I think that makes it easier to say okay, listen, you play enough plays you're going to make some mistakes. We're not worried about that. Let's learn from it and get better.

Q. Coach, wanted to ask about the quarterback, JKS. When you're going up against a quarterback of that caliber it tough to game plan. How would you kind of assess how you guys did against him?

FRANK REICH: Phenomenal. I mean, phenomenal. I don't -- I mean, I think that, yeah, I think our defenses did a great job. I think we got good pressure with four-man rush. We had some blitz schemes that Coach Thompson and Coach April put together that were really well executed by the players. We won one-on-one matchups. We finished on our sacks. Got him to the ground. We hurried him. We had him off his spot a large part of the night and got him out of rhythm.

Then we played good coverage on the back end. That's some of best coverage I think we've played all year as a secondary, so proud of the way our secondary played as well.

Q. Just what's it like being part of a game where the defense is able to kind of dictate the scoring for the first half? Kind of a unique game. Talk about managing a game like that and being up at the half. Talk about the uniqueness of this kind of game.

FRANK REICH: It's great. I mean, as an offensive playcaller and offensive coach, man, when your defense is doing that, you just know you just got to keep grinding, keep being patient.

I think our defense has played really well all year for large and long stints, so this was really nothing new in it many respects.

But as a playcaller on offense, hey, don't force it. Our defense is keeping us in there. Keep believing. It's going to break for. It's going to break for us.

Let's just keep grinding it out. We know we're going to make plays. That's what we were able to do in the second half.

Q. Coach, I know the ambience, the emotions of this game is permeating, but got Notre Dame coming up. What does that mean to you as an ex player back at Maryland and your days of coaching? What does it

mean to go up against Notre Dame if you haven't yourself?

FRANK REICH: Obviously a great football tradition. Listen, where I grew up in Pennsylvania, Notre Dame football was everything. I grew up watching the Ara Parseghian Show, all that stuff.

They always had the -- so probably at one point I wanted to go to -- as a young player go to Notre Dame. So a lot of respect for the program and what they have done and continue to do.

It's going to be a great test for us. We want to finish strong. So we're going to prepare to win, prepare to play to win. You know, I know this: We've played a very tough schedule this year. We played a lot of really good football teams.

This is just going to be the next one, and so we are not going to get too caught up in their tradition and who they are. We'll watch the tape. We talk about faceless opponent. They're just the next team in one regard. We got a lot of respect for them. They obviously are having a great year. Had a big game today from what I saw.

So look forward to the week of preparation and getting a chance to battle against these guys next week in our house.

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Jahsiah Galvan

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Q. Obviously you guys allowed ten points against I think a pretty good offense. What does that mean to you guys?

JAHSLAH GALVAN: It means the world. It's just a blessing to be able to go out there and execute at a high level in the big game and super important game for everyone on the team, all the seniors, guys who have been here all four years.

So to be able to go out there and have that type of performance is huge and it means a lot to everyone on the team.

Q. Just talk about what was the key to your guys' ability to get not just one, but two defensive touchdowns in this game.

JAHSLAH GALVAN: It was just emphasized all week that we got to create turnovers. Scoring on defense was something that we wanted to do, and to be able to do it twice is awesome, it's amazing. Credit to all the guys that are around the ball that. That ball comes loose guys are right there to scoop it and take it back to the house. So credit to everyone on defense with amazing effort all the game.

Q. People talk about how great it is to win the big game and how dejected you are afterward. I guess you've experienced both, how would you describe it?

JAHSLAH GALVAN: It's truly amazing. It's unlike anything I've ever been a part of. True euphoria, be able to -- this game with so much history and so much tradition, go out and get a dub and bring The Axe back to Stanford, it means the world everyone that's a part of the program and who has been a part of the program.

So glad we were able to go out and do it, because it was amazing.

Q. So how important was it for you guys -- because the offense was struggling earlier and Coach even said that, so how important was it for you guys to say, hey, we need to find some kind of way to get points on the board and came like two fumble recoveries for a fumble six. So how important was it for you guys to help the offense out?

JAHSLAH GALVAN: It means a lot. As a defense we try not to worry too much about what the offense is doing. For us it's just go out there, one play at a time, and just execute. You know, so just being consistent, doing that throughout the whole game, just moving on to the next series, one play at a time, just focusing on doing our job.

And like I said, getting a score on defense was a priority this week, so being able to do that and do it twice was huge for us.

Q. Even though you had two turnovers for touchdowns which obviously overcompensates for a lot of stuff, but in the first half Cal really did move the ball pretty much, I don't know if at will, but pretty well. In the second half Cal didn't move the ball hardly at all until the game was over. What switched either at the end of the second quarter or at halftime?

JAHSLAH GALVAN: So they come out and have those first 15 plays, kind of scripted plays that they want to run, been working on all week. So we saw a lot of trick plays in the first 15 plays, a lot of miss direction, a lot of things we just hadn't seen on film.

Once they kind of got through that bag of tricks I would say it was just playing football 101. We went out there and executed at a high level, so that's what led to a better performance in the second half.

Q. You guys won the game so this didn't matter in the end, but just curious what happened on the punt return. You were out there and Caden was out there. What kind of happened there on that...

JAHSLAH GALVAN: Just a miscommunication. We had two number zeroes out there so that's what the flag was.



Just two of the same numbers out there.

Q. Is that something you guys are aware of? What's the normal protocol?

JAHSIAH GALVAN: Yeah, no, it's something we've practiced before in the past. Hasn't came up in a while. Yeah, we know not to -- that when he's in I got to come out or vice versa.

Q. Just what kind of impact has Frank had in getting the program going back in the right direction? How can you describe the impact?

JAHSIAH GALVAN: He's been amazing as a head coach. I've never been around a leader like him. To have him in the program and see the energy that he brings on a daily basis, he truly pours out for everyone on the team and everyone involved with the program. So just being around him is amazing for all of us to see what expectations he has of us, and it's just a blessing that he's here.

Been a big part of getting this program in the direction that it wants to go.

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Elijah Brown

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Q. So since you had the moment where you had the take over as starting quarterback. Teams rallied around you. How confident do you feel and how important is it winning this game and getting The Axe back?

ELIJAH BROWN: You know, it's very important, especially for the fourth years and the seniors, guys that aren't going play again. I know they haven't beat Cal, so I feel like that's a great team win.

It's a great win for the program and I'm glad to be able to help in that big win.

Q. Just what's the feeling on the offense? You go in at the half and the defense has given you guys the lead and you guys probably didn't play to the level you guys wanted to. What's that feeling to know that you still have the lead despite all that and what changed in the second half?

ELIJAH BROWN: It feels great. The defense played their butts off. Two touchdowns, that's like we couldn't ask for any more than that. I think we just brought it together, stayed calm. You know, we had a plan going into the second half and we executed.

I felt like the offense did what we needed to do to win.

Q. Walk us through the touchdown to CJ. What did you see on that play? Seemed to work out pretty well.

ELIJAH BROWN: Yeah, you know, it was press man. Safety rotated towards the middle. You know, that's a dream look for a quarterback. That's my guy, too, so if I can give him any kind of chance to score, you know, he's going to make that play.

Great call by Coach Reich, especially on that third and 7. You know, he was very aggressive on that and gave me the keys to go score like that.

Q. I know you're not playing against Sagapolutele, but I'm sure you know how good he has been. Kind of like when a pitcher in baseball is going against the other pitcher. He's not facing him, but in a sense he's facing him. Was there any extra motivation for you knowing you're going against a guy who has gotten a lot of well-deserved publicity?

ELIJAH BROWN: You know, he's great player, but I feel like as long as we stay focused on us, it's been a key saying is it's all about us. We're not worrying about anything else. We stay focused on what we need to do. I think that's how we're going to kind of -- how I kind of looked at it.

Q. Just to be the game winning quarterback in the big game, just how does that feel?

ELIJAH BROWN: It feels great. It's very unreal. You know, I'm really just glad we won. And for our seniors, you know, they haven't got that win, so that means the world to me. You know, hopefully we just keep on stacking these days and keep going from here.

Q. Since you took over, how important is it to be under the tutelage of Andrew Luck who was a phenomenal quarterback here and great pro, and then of course Frank Reich, phenomenal player in college and also really good pro? How important is it to emerge as the starting quarterback and have these two guys be your umbrella?

ELIJAH BROWN: You know, they're amazing. It's amazing to be able to be coached by Coach Reich and get pointers from Andrew Luck. That's kind of like every quarterbacks' dream, so I feel like just soaking up everything I can from them and just try to learn things that they teach me to make my game better.

Q. Just thoughts on the Notre Dame matchup. Just talk about early thoughts on that matchup.

ELIJAH BROWN: Yeah, great team. You know, we were kind of focused on Cal this week so haven't done any



preparation on them yet. I'm pretty sure we're going to go
-- I know we're going to go into the game, study what we
need to study on this team, and go from there.

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Jay Green

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Q. So Jay, sides the great moment of winning this game and getting The Axe back, how would you describe the play that you did, the scoop fumble TD return?

JAY GREEN: It was a testament to how we practice. I mean, we run to the ball. We make goals of trying to get three takeaways a day. I did get an end zone in practice this week, so it was fortunate to see that come to fruition during the game.

Shoutout my teammate O, because I mean, I get all the praise for scooping and scoring, but he called that play and I was just ripping and running to the ball.

Q. Obviously this was one of the season's best defensive performances. Would you rank it No. 1?

JAY GREEN: I would say -- I mean, I would think so. We scored twice on defense, you know what I mean? We had a lot of the sacks it seems like. No passing touchdowns, no rushing touchdowns or anything.

So I mean -- wait, one rushing touchdown. That's a stellar defensive performance anywhere in the country. So, yeah.

Q. Just talk about collectively what was the key defensively to winning this game and just what were the keys that you guys were locking in on going into the game that you felt you did the best job of executing?

JAY GREEN: It was three -- well, really five simple things: physical, smart, fast, rip, run, hit. I mean, it was pretty simple in this aspect. Our whole thing is run and hit, and I think we showed that. That caused two fumbles. Got us in the end zone a couple times.

My whole thing is i didn't want to make the game too big. It's the big game or whatever, but at the end of the day it comes down to wins and losses, and usually the team who

wins wants it more. So I think we showed that and put that on display today.

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