



OKLAHOMA FOOTBALL

OKLAHOMA QUOTES • HEAD COACH BOB STOOPS

OKLAHOMA 38, OKLAHOMA STATE 20 • DEC. 3, 2016

Opening statement:

“Start off by, as always but really mean it, my compliments to (OSU Head) Coach (Mike) Gundy, his staff, his team—what a good football team they’ve had this year. I thought they did a great job with seven straight victories coming into this game. A really good football team. Good players, well coached, really in every part of the game. Hard-fought, good game, and with that, I’m just incredibly pleased with our players’ resiliency this season, and in particular, just going through and battling to the end in this game.

“Really, it’s kind of, flipped the script at halftime. They were running the football a lot better than we were in the first half. We didn’t play good enough defense against the run, and we couldn’t run in the football. Then, in the second half, it was the complete opposite. We played really well against the run and we ran the football really well. I think that was a big part of the game. Some of it’s just overall execution. Obviously, some adjustments in the game, both sides of the ball. We talked about what the issues were and executed it better, obviously, in the second half. That’s a big part of this game up on the soaked field to be able to run the football, and in the second half, I thought that was a major difference in the game as well as the exceptional running of two great backs. Those guys were incredible: Samaje Perine and Joe Mixon.

“Then, you’ve got to give it to Baker Mayfield on a wet field, goes 13 of 19, and I bet those six were drops. We had more drops than we’ve ever had, and again, I’ll give the guys a pass today. It rained pretty much the entire time, so wasn’t the easiest to hold on to the football. Baker, again, was just outstanding: scrambling, finding players downfield, making big plays. Just really excited about what he did. Dede (Westbrook) misses a good part of the game and still has 111 yards, four catches and a touchdown.

“Defensively, I just thought our execution in the second half was much better. Guys tackled better. We were better being responsible in our gaps. The first half, linebackers took their turns getting out of position, a defensive end gets cut off, so we just had some issues early. Played much better, executed much better in the second half in what we did. Just thought, again, handled the football really well on a wet day. Proud of Austin Seibert and all our guys handled the ball on punts and things like that. I thought we did a really good job managing a tough weather day.

“It’s great to win another Big 12 Championship. I say first compliments to assistant coaches for sure; players’ heart, hard work and confidence, keeping it positive through a tough start to the year; a great administration that continues to support us and gives us opportunities to chase championships. . . We just celebrated in our new locker room, even though it isn’t finished, I wanted the seniors to have a piece of it, a taste of it, what they’ve left behind, so we had a nice celebration in the new locker room—hopefully didn’t damage any walls that need re-done. Anyway, this group of guys, they’ve earned two Big 12, back-to-back championships out of a trailer, so it says a lot about (them), that nobody’s ever belly ached about it and had a negative thing to say about it. Proud of these seniors for their leadership and going out this way.”

On what was said at halftime:

“Everybody will say, ‘Oh, he must have given this rah-rah speech, and they came out ready to play.’ That’s not the case. It’s both sides addressed, as I said, during some of those sets, you’ve got three backs leading up inside, doesn’t take but one guy to be out of position and there’s a sink, and he’s in to the secondary. They have good (running) backs and good, good people blocking. So, in the end, we were out of position, so some of it was schematic of us understanding and being disciplined to be where we were, as well as offensively, to be able to pick up some of the different movements they were giving us with their three-man front or four-man front, bringing people off the edge. So, you recognize it, go another way the second half, you’re in better position both sides of the ball, so some of it is just the execution, and other times it’s a little bit of scheme, too.”

On the resiliency of the team when Westbrook and Perine were injured:

“That was disappointing. That’s the one part where we got 2nd-and-goal, 2nd-and-5 at the 10-yard line, and we get an unnecessary roughness penalty, and then fumble the next play. That’s just awful football. That’s the one disappointment of the day. Anyways, no one says anything about our luck. It doesn’t matter. Think anybody’s going to be feeling bad for us when we’re missing a guy? We’ve missed all kinds of guys this year. I lost count. I couldn’t even keep up with how many we’ve been down throughout the whole year. It doesn’t matter. At the end, we still got a win, and our guys have done that.”



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On what it means to celebrate a Big 12 Championship at home:

“That was a big deal to the players through the week, that we’ve never had the chance to hoist a Big 12 Championship trophy on our own field. Did we need any more motivation? I wouldn’t think so, but the players thought it was pretty cool to be able to do that here.”

“I like all of them. I’ll take those ones back in Arrowhead, too, in two degrees. That’s pretty good too.”

On postseason expectations:

“We’ll see. I don’t know. A lot will happen here this afternoon and tonight. Probably realistically, probably more needed to happen last week to give ourselves a better opportunity, but, again, that’s the past. Whatever they’re going to decide, they’ll decide, but I’m couldn’t be more pleased with the way we continued to improve and work through the season.”

On losing Westbrook and the rest of the team’s performance after:

“That was a big part of the day. What it says about Baker: just exceptional. I guarantee you those six incompletions are drops. He has 288 yards, and it rained all day. Just handled the ball great, threw the ball great. Proud of the other receivers who stepped up. One that comes to mind, Geno Lewis, had a bunch of clutch catches that really helped us in the game. Jordan Smallwood—there’s quite a few guys who stepped up and made plays when we needed them to. But, Baker was great. His execution on third down—really, on everything—but on third down in some key games was really big too.”



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OKLAHOMA QUOTES · COORDINATORS

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DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR MIKE STOOPS

On improving against the run in the second half:

“We were disappointed that we didn’t play the run better. We had enough people in there that we should’ve played it better. The fits were off, we spilled the wrong way, the mike (linebacker) didn’t get over one time – it was just a lot of missed things. It wasn’t because of a lack of people in there. I just think we fitted better (in the second half) and our linebackers were able to see the run. We were kind of zeroed in on it in the second half and we were able to figure out what they were doing.”

On playing well in the second half:

“We played a lot of straight stuff and didn’t do anything dramatically different.”

On if it was the best half of football they’ve played all year:

“Yeah, we played good. I thought we’ve played well in halves before, and I thought Oklahoma State is a much better team than they were a year ago. I thought their line played well to create seams. We just played better and we executed. I’m just really proud of this group to endure what we had to endure all year, but we’re Big 12 champs again. That’s for all the naysayers or whatnot. This was a challenging year for different reasons that people will never understand, but I couldn’t be more proud of our kids to overcome all of that. All of the credit goes to them.”

On celebrating on their home field:

“I don’t know if it could’ve felt any better. Just for us to overcome so many things we had to overcome – for everybody just constantly berating you and belittling you is hard. Our players know that, and they didn’t say anything, they just stayed with it. We know we’re capable of playing better. Like I said, this has been a challenging year, but I feel it makes it that much sweeter. To have that kind of vindication on our home field against our rivals, that’s what it’s all about. I challenged them at halftime and they responded. To me, I really feel good for those guys.”

On what he told his guys at halftime:

“Just that we don’t want them to come in here and take our trophy, and that’s pretty simple. You can’t let our rival come down here and do that. I just didn’t like it. I thought they were more physical at the point of attack, out-executing us in the run game and we knew we had to stop the run to win the game. It’s really uncomfortable when people can run the ball on you like that. We were excited that we were able to regroup and finish the game better than we have throughout the course of the year.”

On bouncing back from the 1-2 start:

“The TCU game was probably the turning point for us. We were down 14-0, and we flipped the game, what 38 points? In two quarters. To be able to flip that game and survive the fourth quarter was the turning point. For us, defensively, we just lacked confidence and couldn’t be consistent against good offensive teams. We just weren’t able to sustain good defense. That’s what I think hurt us. Our inexperience, our youth, losing depth on the D-line and at linebacker was hard.”



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OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR LINCOLN RILEY

On the changes in the second half:

“Adjustments. We had to make a few adjustments at half and they [the team] came out at half, like everybody, they came out and did a lot of different things in the game than what they had thought. We were able to make some adjustments and I thought early in the second quarter, early in the half, in the throw game, we got the throw game going pretty good there in the second quarter. I think, honestly, the key portion of the game for us what that drive right before half to score points. They had a little bit of momentum. For us to be able to get down, Geno [Lewis] made a clutch play. No doubt that was huge. We made some run game adjustments at half and we jogged into half. We knew we were going to have to run the football better than we did in the first half. Our guys answered the challenge.”

On how quarterback Baker Mayfield played today:

“That’s the best I’ve seen him play. He didn’t really throw a bunch. He threw it 19 times and I would say, probably 18 of those were spot on. His decision making was outstanding. He was great in scramble situations. In those kind of conditions, he was awesome.”

On losing wide receiver Dede Westbrook and how they adjusted:

“We had to adjust a little bit. The way they were playing us early, it was going to be hard to do it. We gave Dede [Westbrook] some extra special attention tonight when he hit the big one there. There were a couple of other things there that were close. Once he went out of the game, there was some adjustments on our part. I thought A. We protected so well. Baker [Mayfield] had a lot of time. Protection was awesome. Then he, maybe the most proud of him I’ve been, when Dede [Westbrook] went out, he didn’t go try to do things on his own. He trusted the guys, the ball, on every play, the ball was, as a coach, right where you want it, right where it’s supposed to go, so that shows a guy was really bought in. His trust and belief in what we’re doing, his trust and belief in his teammates was incredible. That’s huge for us.”

On playing quarterback in the rain and how he prepared Baker Mayfield:

“I wouldn’t compare him to anyone else. He was great for us. Baker [Mayfield] was... it’s hard to explain how difficult it is to play the position. It’s so hard to play the position with a dry ball in perfect conditions, then everything becomes magnified. Just simply catching the snap is difficult. When you have to add those things in to everything we’re already asking you to do is huge. The margin for error is small. But he was fantastic. He was exactly what he needed to be. He gave our guys chances to make plays. He handled the ball great himself, had those two key runs. He threw the ball... the guy is really, really talented to be able to throw the ball like he did, there are not many guys that can do what he did. We do it [practice] a lot with wet balls. It’s something we started last year as we got later in the season. I think the Baylor game we had similar conditions. We worked with wet balls all week. It drives the guys crazy, but mentally it’s important. We probably get them a lot wetter than what they actually are. We have a pail and we just soak them before every snap and make them execute. We don’t allow them to use it as a crutch or an excuse, so when you get in the middle of it, that’s nothing more than you’ve done all week.”

On wide receiver Geno Lewis:

“Geno was awesome. He was talking last night, we let the offense guys talk in our meetings Friday nights before the games, he was talking about the responsibility he felt to come help us win a championship. What a great story. He wanted to win this worse than anybody. A new guy coming in, a graduate transfer who comes all the way across the country just to do this and he’s just been huge for us the back half of the season. He made the two third-down catches there either on the first or second drive of the third quarter, especially the one over the middle that was such a good play. Obviously the touchdown before half and the touchdown that got called back. He was awesome for us the way he played and he’s just been awesome for us with his mentality and his attitude has been a great thing for us as a team.”



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SENIOR LB JORDAN EVANS

On the win against Oklahoma State:

"I mean a win is a win. A win takes those kinds of things: toughness, physicality and stuff like that. OSU brought it to us and you'll see they out-physicaled us but in the end you'll see that we were able to come out with the better plays and hold them. Our offense put up points and that's how we came out with the win."

On the turning point for OU at halftime:

"Responsibilities needed to be better. We drew it up on the board and saw where they were hurting us and saw where we needed to fit and made it right. I don't know what the offense did, but they did what they needed to do and started dominating. OSU's offense only scored 3 points the second half, so that was good on us."

On if he felt like he contained Oklahoma State's Mason Rudolph:

"I felt like the weather played a little role into it, but he still made a lot of plays. He was able to make plays on his feet. If we were able to stop the hole, that's what I thought we did and that's why kept it to 20 points."

On his last game on Owen Field:

"A lot was happening. A lot of people were asking me, but I don't really think it hit me until I went to the sidelines where my dad gave me a big hug and told me he was proud of me. That kind of got me there, after the game."

JUNIOR FB DIMITRI FLOWERS

On how the 67-yard play developed:

"We just found some tendencies in their defense and we exploited it. Baker (Mayfield) did a great job, he got out of the pocket, and he threw the ball and put it in the perfect spot. I just worked my way down to the one."

On savoring days like today:

"Absolutely. The weather, its cold, its rainy, it is all of us versus all of them. Especially, after what we went through at the beginning of the season. It means a lot to be able to push through the adversity and ultimately go back to back and win another Big 12 Championship."

On how much fun it was playing in the second half:

"It was awesome. We were just running the play clock down. The tight ends are on the field, and we are just running it down their throat the entire second half. When we can do that as an offense, it

just makes things so much easier, because we stay on the field and keep their offense off the field."

REDSHIRT FRESHMAN DL NEVILLE GALLIMORE

On the feeling of being Big 12 Champions:

"Honestly, I just have to give thanks to the most high because this is just one of those things that you dream about being apart of. Just getting the opportunity to contribute on the team and be around the great guys that we have. It was just definitely one of those breathtaking experiences and I'm looking forward to having the opportunity again next year."

On the emotions of the game:

"The emotions were high even though I'm just a redshirt freshman. I just wanted to make sure that all the seniors went out with a bang and get the opportunity to get this Bedlam win and obviously get the Big 12 Championship. It was a big deal. I felt like it was my job, as well as the defensive, to do what we are supposed to do."

On the defense in the second half:

"That's the big part of the game. You talk about defense winning championships and that just goes to show you. I'm just thankful to have an offense like that. It was our job to obviously put a stop to them."

Changes in the second half:

"Just being more disciplined, being able to adjust a lot faster and to execute. That's what we were able to do. Oklahoma State is just a good football team. We just did what we had to do to stop them from their success."

SENIOR WR GENO LEWIS

On how the mood changed after Dede Westbrook left the game:

"We just knew it was next man up. Dede is a significant part of our offense, and we know at the end of the day that we have guys that can come up and make plays. We just back them up like we always do."

On owing this team a Championship:

"This is my first time playing in a championship game in college. I thought it was real big for this team, Coach (Bob) Stoops and the coaches. For myself, it is something that I wanted really bad and I was just happy that we were able to go out there and accomplish our goal."



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On Baker Mayfield's role:

"He is the core of this team. We play off of Baker no matter what happens, no matter who goes down, he keeps that same mentality of next man up and let's keep going, and let's keep grinding. We follow his lead each and every time, I am just grateful for him and humbled to have him as my quarterback and as a captain."

REDSHIRT JUNIOR QB BAKER MAYFIELD

On the weather:

"You practice all week and our equipment guys do a great job. They have spray bottles out there to help simulate what the balls during the game are going to be like. You practice with it and when it comes down to it there's no excuse. They have to play with the same ball in the same conditions as us. There's no excuse for not playing well and not doing your job. It's just a matter of getting everyone involved and making sure you do your job."

On the absence of Dede Westbrook after the first quarter:

"The coaches did a great job with that. We've had that mentality all year long of next-man-up so we looked at (Jordan) Smallwood and said it's your time to shine and he said 'let's go'. He had a great week of practice and he was ready for the moment. It's awful to see the best player on your offense go down, but we've had that next man up mentality and we did a good job of overcoming it."

On third-down conversions:

"The supporting cast has done a great job on third downs. (Geno Lewis) made some great catches and conversions in the second half and Smallwood had some key catches, as well. Those guys stepped up and did their job and sometimes they don't get recognized for it because Dede is, obviously, a very good player so it's good to see those guys get some recognition and play well."

On staying the course after Dede Westbrook went down:

"The old Bake would have probably try to do too much and make up for not having your best player on offense but I've settled in and kind of matured a lot in the past, recently here. I realize I just have to go out there and do my job and get my receivers the ball, who are here at Oklahoma to play football for a reason. They're playmakers so just get the ball in their hands and they will do the rest."

REDSHIRT JUNIOR LB OGBONNIA OKORONKWO

On winning the Big 12 Championship:

"It feels great. We came along way and got better every week. I feel like we are playing together now. There is a lot of love on this team which makes it hard to see the seniors go."

On the resiliency of the team:

"We have been through a lot this year but we kept fighting. We are fighters. We want to go out each week and put up a fight. We watch boxing matches before the games because that's what we see it as. We are willing to go into a slug match with anyone. That is not what we want to do but if need be were ready, we are going to swing till someone falls."

JUNIOR S STEVEN PARKER

On the Bedlam win:

"Words cannot describe how happy I am, just for the team and me being a part of the Sooners. It is a dream come true. To have two back-to-back (Big 12 Championships) is crazy and so cool."

On defense in the second half:

"We really were just getting pushed around a little bit (in the first half). We got pushed outside our gaps. We made some minor adjustments and came back out the second half ready to play ball."

On the importance of pressure on Mason Rudolph:

"It was very important. It had to be one of our keys to success. He has great eyes and a great arm. It was one of those things that we had to limit him."

JUNIOR RB SAMAJE PERINE

On being close to the school career record:

"I haven't thought about the record since we started the season. That's not really what I play for. I try to go out and do whatever I can to help the team win. Fortunately, with the nasty weather I got the ball more than I have and went out and did what I do."

On taking a knee at the end of the game:

"What's the point of scoring? We were already up by two touchdowns with only a few seconds left, so there's really no need to run up the score. I did what I thought was the right thing to do."

On the slow start to the running game in the first half:

"No. We knew they were going to come out hot and we had to just keep pounding them. We knew that things were going to open up and they did."

On his 66-yard run:

"I didn't see the guy. I heard him, but I didn't see him. I just put two hands on the ball to make sure I didn't fumble."



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OKLAHOMA STATE QUOTES • HEAD COACH MIKE GUNDY

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Opening Statement:

"I think it's pretty clear what happened. One of the things that I had concerns with coming in was them getting big plays, and that's what happened. Unfortunately, we played pretty good, in fact maintained some quality drives and had some defensive stands, but they big-played us. I was concerned about Mayfield and his ability to buy time, move around and sling the ball down the field, and he was able to do that. He's obviously really good at that. The two running backs together, if those guys can stay fresh, when they work together it's been an issue. We were able to rush the ball, and that's a good thing to establish some run, and I thought offensively our guys played hard. I thought our running backs ran the ball well and we were able to create some running lanes. We were very limited in our ability to throw. Right before half and in the second half, the big plays really got us."

On Oklahoma's big plays:

"He's (Baker Mayfield) really good at buying time and slinging the ball down the field. He's very accurate. They've got a couple guys that are pretty elusive in space, and truthfully that's what it came down to."

On having trouble in the passing game:

"We couldn't get a very good grasp of the ball. It wasn't a really good day for us to have an opportunity to throw it down the field. When you look at it, with a minute and thirty to go in the half, we were up by seven, and the big plays in the second half were what got us."

On not capitalizing on good field position early in the game:

"Not really. We, like I said, were up by seven with a minute and thirty to go in the half, so we had battled back and forth, established the running game and controlled the line. Then, the big plays got us. When you play on the road and allow big plays, the fans and momentum swing can really make it difficult."

On the rainy conditions:

"I don't think it was the field, we were just limited in our ability to run some of the things that we're comfortable with. That's why we feel like we needed to rush the ball better. They made a few key stops on us at times - they got us on a sack or two. (Ogbonnia Okoronkwo) got around our tackle a couple times and that hurt us. Overall, what really got us was their ability to make big plays."



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SENIOR SAFETY JORDAN STERNS

On what cost his team the game:

"They made too many big plays. That's a great football team with big playmakers. Their running backs run hard. Overall, I'm still proud of the guys We played out hearts out there... I think a lot of guys left it all out there on the field... They've got great players all around the field. They're a great football team and we've got to do a better job making open field tackles, a lot of it was on tackling. And I just feel like we lost our edge. We didn't have the same enthusiasm as we did in the first half."

On Oklahoma's offense:

"A couple of their big plays were just missed assignments. It was on me, I didn't get to the middle and that's exactly where the ball went, so we've got to do our jobs. But at the end of the day, (Baker Mayfield) is a great player and if you mess up, he's going to expose you. That's one thing we've got to take away from this game is that we've got to do our job."

On his tackle that sidelined Oklahoma's Dede Westbrook:

"I told myself the last two weeks that I was going to play as hard as I can. This was my last game. Of course I celebrated but once I realized he was still on the ground, I took a knee and paid my condolences because that's something you just don't want to see. He's a great player and does a lot of great things for the people of Oklahoma."

REDSHIRT JUNIOR LINEBACKER CHAD WHITENER

On Dede Westbrook's injury:

"We hope that he is okay because you never want to see someone go out. But we just thought that we could focus on the run but they still have weapons out there. They recruit very well here, and that's the reason that they won the Big 12 today."

On his team's second-half momentum:

"They made plays, we didn't make plays. Once they started rolling, the crowd got behind them and we just didn't capitalize when we got opportunities."

On Baker Mayfield:

"He's an incredible player — he's just able to move well and keep his eyes downfield and whenever he needs to tuck it, he can tuck it. He really makes you have to be assignment sound."

JUNIOR QUARTERBACK MASON RUDOLPH

On his team's performance:

"Just a rough day. Honestly, I'll take all the responsibility for the lack of production, especially in the second half. Obviously, it needed to be better."

On his performance:

"Not great at times. I think I try to do a good job managing the ball in the first half and taking care of the ball and pulling the ball when we needed to but I think our guys up front played well all game and I've just got to be more productive ... I think we had a great game plan. I think it was just a question of execution on my part and we've just got to be better."

On his grip on the ball due to the rainy conditions:

"We kind of practiced a little bit all week in preparation for it, but there are certain times when you're going tempo and the ball is a little more wet at the beginning of the drive than it is when you're not going tempo. But once again, no excuses. We've just got to be consistent."

On the defense in the second half:

"Our defense was doing a great job of stuffing them and stuffing them there in the first and second quarter, and then just a couple of one-play drives, long-play drives. But our defense played great all game and I don't think you can cut it down to momentum. I just think it was a lack of production in the second half."

Senior running back Chris Carson

On his team's energy in the second half:

"After the first couple of drives, the energy started to go down a little bit, but we stayed confident. When knew if we'd make big plays, it'd go up, but we just didn't come up with the big plays."

On why his team ran the ball more:

"We knew it was going to be kind of difficult because of the rain and the weather but... the pass game wasn't really effective early on so we decided to do the best we could to do something with the run game."

On the weather's impact on his team's performance:

"No big effect. We practiced with it this week. So you just have to go out there and play, execute."