



Allstate Sugar Bowl
Baylor
Post-Game Press Conference
January 1, 2020



COACH RHULE: First of all, a lot of credit to Georgia. I thought -- obviously they made the plays they needed to make. A lot of credit to Coach [Kirby] Smart, got his team ready to play.

As I told our team, I think we saw a team that played last year, didn't win the game, came back and found a way to get it done. And I think for our team, we know what we have to do moving forward to get back and win games like this.

So I was proud of our team in the second half. I thought the first half had us reeling. The second half they came back and, you know, fought to get back in the game, had maybe their a chance. But credit to Georgia. They made the plays they had to make and came away with the win.

Q. Matt, [George] Pickens, their receiver, he had a huge first half. Any reason he was getting open so much? Did you expect them to go to him so much?

COACH RHULE: Yeah, he's good. I mean that with respect towards him. They got us on the flea-flicker-type play. We were playing great defense and ran the flea-flicker-type play there. I'm not sure exactly how they did it but hard, hard play action. Got behind us. Another great play to run them down. That spooked us out of some of our stuff. Gave them some free access plays.

Thought they made great plays. Third and one, man coverage, they threw it out and made the play. We zero blitzed. They found him. I thought we played better against him in the second half.

He's a really good player. When we left him one-on-one, he made the plays. When we played off him a little bit, they threw it out there and he made guys miss. That had been their MO coming into it, was to get the ball to him. They continued to do that, and I think we played a little better against him in the second half.

Q. Coach, can you take us through what exactly happened with Charlie [Brewer] and sort of what information you have at this time?

COACH RHULE: They told me as I came in here they were checking his neck, C-spine. They said he cleared the C-spine just now. So that's what they were concerned about, was his neck. Didn't exhibit any head symptoms. I'm sure they'll continue to monitor him after this, throughout the night, just to make sure. But there was some concern about his neck and took him off and cleared him from that.

Q. Matt, you mentioned you know what you have to do to get better to get back and win a game like this. There's kind of two things here, this game and then the season. Obviously you wanted to play better tonight. But are you able to still look at this season as progress and all that?

COACH RHULE: I told these guys, I'm just so grateful for what they've done. I know tonight hurts. I know it's -- I know it's painful for our guys, but they can't let that deter what they've done this season.



Allstate Sugar Bowl
Baylor
Post-Game Press Conference
January 1, 2020



As I told them, we were picked to not even been here. We got to the championship game. We got to the Sugar Bowl and just quite weren't able to get over the hump. And so I think all of us were a little frustrated at halftime with the way we played in the first half.

But even then I thought we fought back and made it a game. There was some chances for us to win the game or get back in the game.

I'm very, very, very proud of what we did this year, very grateful for these guys to my left and for our seniors for what they've done. I said on the air before we went on the air, of the 11 guys that started on defense, ten of them started games on that 1-11 team. I think it was seven of the 11 that started tonight on offense. I can't remember how many we started, but you get what I'm saying. It wasn't like we brought in five grad transfers and redid the whole team. These guys have grinded and worked.

And so we went from -- jumped from one to seven the first year. Yeah, we went from seven to 11 and we lost three games. You know, so I told our guys, We're 11-3. We know what we have to do. And we have to be able to protect the quarterback better. We have to run the ball. We didn't take the ball away tonight. So there's things to work on, but that's just growth.

Q. Coach Rhule, in a game like this, against a team that's that talented, did you find the margin for error is really small?

COACH RHULE: Yeah, I think -- I think I said it at halftime. We moved the ball when we jumped up and caught it. We had lots of chances tonight to make plays on the ball. And when we -- someone catches Denzel Mims on the one drive, we're fantastic and scored. A couple other times it was just off our fingertips. We were just laying out.

They don't give you anything for free. Other than LSU, no one scored more than 20 points on them. We had a nice drive. I think it was the second drive where we threw the pick. I can't put that on Charlie [Brewer], hits the tailback in the hands.

I really, really, really regret my decision to go for it on the one fourth down, crossing the 50th. That was a bad coaching move by me. It just quickly led to points on their end. That goes on me.

You just can't make bad decisions like that. Even on that drive, again, it's a dropped ball here, it's a dropped ball there, hit a run and can't quite make it. It's a missed tackle. Again, I thought our defense probably was out there too much on the first half because we couldn't convert.

They're talented. They're a really good team. I thought as we got comfortable in the second half, we had no sacks in the first half. Didn't even hit the quarterback. A couple sacks in the second half. We certainly didn't pack it in. We certainly came back and fought.



Allstate Sugar Bowl
Baylor
Post-Game Press Conference
January 1, 2020



But, yeah, like I said, you can't just to make a couple more plays to be able to be in that game.

Q. I know the game just ended, so did the season. What will you remember? What's the legacy of this team?

COACH RHULE: Oh, that they stood here and rebuilt. When I took the job, I remember my press conference, I said we're just going to start building. I didn't say I'm going to start building. I said we're going to start building. That's Dr. [Linda] Livingstone. That's Mack [Rhoades]. That's me. That's Jeramiah [Dickey], our coaching staff, but really it's the players.

So to me the legacy is the guys that I said that started tonight that started in 2017, they've gotten so much better. When the game was over, usually I go around and find the other team and tell the guys -- I told a bunch of our guys what an honor it's been to coach you.

These two guys right here, what an honor it's been to coach them.

No one on our team -- not one young guy on our team doesn't know what it means to work because of these guys. When Chris Miller went down, they said MCL, I'm sitting there saying, You're done for the day. He said, I'm finishing the game.

Bravvion [Roy] had knee surgery after Big 12 championship, making big plays.

These guys play a thousand reps. So they've -- they've rebuilt and got us to this point. But more importantly, they also set the example for what we have to do moving forward.

Q. Coach, when Charlie [Brewer] went down, there was a lot of outpouring on social media of support and prayers for him. So I'm glad he cleared that first set. How would you summarize his contributions to this team, his legacy up to this point to get you guys here, who he is?

COACH RHULE: Charlie [Brewer] is just a competitor. He's a winner. He's tough. But he's just one of the guys, too. He's just a great guy. He can win all awards and never makes it about him. He's just a great -- great teammate.

I think what would be really cool with these guys gone, he'll have to step up and truly take on a leadership role. And I think we'll see him flourish.

Scary when they were holding his head and all that and stabilize his neck. And he's yelling at them to let go of him and let him go back in the game. He's just that kind of guy. He's a great player whose best football is ahead of him.

We have to become better on offense quickly protecting him so he can stay upright is a major thing.



**Allstate Sugar Bowl
Baylor
Post-Game Press Conference
January 1, 2020**



Q. Jordan, obviously the defense was improved in the second half, had a different spark. What was the message at halftime that brought you guys up?

JORDAN WILLIAMS: I feel like when we went out there, we weren't having fun. The first half, we weren't having as much fun as we should have. We should enjoy it. We're here, we've worked so hard to be here. We play good defense when we have fun. I feel like that energy just resonates with the whole team. The message was don't worry about it, just work, just keep on having fun, enjoy this last moment with your brothers.

Q. Matt, what did y'all see or take from that first half? And how big was that drive to start the third quarter where y'all went down and scored?

COACH RHULE: I think we got behind them a couple of times and didn't -- had a pass interference on one, didn't connect on the other. I lost a little bit, felt like we were grabbed. We were hitting behind them.

We thought we weren't going to be able to do that with the way they were structured. But Denzel [Mims] and Tyquan [Thornton] were winning.

But that was our message. Let's throw it deep and see what happens. So that was the main thing.

And then kind of what I said earlier, throw it up and go make a play. Let's go make some plays. We have good players. And because, Mack said, We'd hit a play, we'd get eight yards. it would be second and two, we wouldn't get it.

I thought it's kind of like the tale of our season. We get a little momentum going, we become pretty good. It certainly happened on that drive and maybe one or two others.

Q. It's kind of been a recurring theme that Charlie [Brewer] has gotten hit real bad all season. What do you guys need to do, do you think, to kind of keep him healthy? How do you keep him on the field long-term?

COACH RHULE: That play I wouldn't put on his teammates. He runs the ball eight yards down the field. He's always going to run. That's who he is. He gets hit with a penalty hit, out of bounds. I can't see the hit. I don't know if it really was. I heard the fans booing about the call.

So I do think we have to get better up front. And it's not new players. They have to take another step. Just like our defense took a step, we went out there tonight and we started a redshirt freshman, a true junior, a redshirt sophomore and a true sophomore. Those guys have to grow up and spend another year in the weight room and they have got to get big and strong. And we've got to get better up there.



Allstate Sugar Bowl
Baylor
Post-Game Press Conference
January 1, 2020



So we got better on defense this year when Bravvion [Roy] kind of came to maturation and when [James] Lockhart did and [Blake] Lynch did. The same thing has to happen on the O-line.

When we got here, that was the one -- that was one of the positions that was decimated. Guys like Tek (Sam Tecklenburg), he's a tight end, volunteers to go over there play O-line, and he's a really good player. I think that's what has to happen. Those guys have to grow up.

That play to me, I lump that in with some of the other things. That's Charlie [Brewer] being who he is. He's going to get down the field. He ran out of bounds. It wasn't like he took a hit. I thought he was really smart. He ran. He slid. He jumped out of bounds. Just he got hit on that play as he was going out of bounds.

To those of you guys who cover us all year long, I want to say thank you. You guys are the best. We appreciate you guys.