1999 University of Texas Football Quotes

Pre-Cotton Bowl Press Conference - December 15, 1999

Head Coach Mack Brown

On preparing for the Cotton Bowl after the team has had time off for finals...

"We haven't met with the guys, except once for the bowl preparation, since the Nebraska game. They've had some time off, and obviously we lost some momentum at the end of the year. More than anything else, we want to get back on track. We didn't like the way we finished. In fact, we have already reset our goal. Our motto for the bowl is '1-10-10.' On January 1, we want to win our 10th game, and that will hopefully push us from 14th to the top 10."

On what scares him about Arkansas...

"The thing that scares you about any bowl game is the amount of time you take off from the end of your season until the game and trying to gain that momentum back. We need to get back in rhythm, get back to the confident offense we were and continue to play good defense. Arkansas has great speed at the receiver position, and Anthony Lucas is one of the best receivers in the country. He is also tall, so I'm sure they'll match him against our smaller corners and try to throw deep against us. I also think the state of Arkansas is more excited about this game than the state of Texas right now. We have to regroup. I think the reason that we have won 18 games in two years is our fans. Our fans, as well as the coaches, have to pick this young team back up."

On the importance of bowl practices...

"Our goals are twofold for bowl practice. The number one thing is to get ready to play Arkansas. The second factor has to do with personnel and seeing about our depth. Pretty much half of the practice will be to prepare for Arkansas, while the other half will be to prepare younger guys for spring practice. We also need to get more guys in the game. At the end of the year, I thought we were a little tired. To that end, we're going to play Chris Simms in the bowl game. We're making a conscious decision now that Chris will play in the game at some point because he needs to play. More than anything else, we have to develop more depth. We need to win the football game, but we also want to prepare these guys for spring practice. Even Monti Collier and Quentin Jammer will be able to practice in drills now."

On Arkansas quarterback Clint Stoerner...

"He's been around a long time and is very smart. He has also played very well. A lot of people blame him for the loss at Tennessee last year, but they should probably talk more about the number of games he has won. I think he's the ultimate team leader. He's done for them what Major (Applewhite) has done for us."

On the Arkansas defense...

"They are a multiple defense with a lot of speed. This is a much more talented team than in 1995 (vs. North Carolina in the Carquest Bowl), but they're still bringing everybody on every play."

On Arkansas head coach Houston Nutt...

"He is one of the bright young coaches in college football. He has brought to Arkansas football what they needed. He's not only brought excitement, but everybody knows who they are now. They have had big wins, two-straight bowl appearances and sellouts at every home game since he arrived. He and his staff have put Arkansas back on the map, and I think that will make this game very special."

On Texas kicker Kris Stockton...

"Kris Stockton has done everything for us. He has even become a quiet leader. He is a young man who works on the field in the same capacity as everybody else, and has made some super kicks for us. He never says anything negative, and he's one of the best young men and students that I have ever been around. I really hope that he can be honored next year in New York as one of the top scholar-athletes in the country because he really deserves to be."

On convincing the team that this Cotton Bowl is as important as last year's game...

"The thing we need to do is win 10 games. It's really important for us since this team is a team that wasn't supposed to be very good. There are six teams that have won 10+ games this year, and we'd like to join that group. If we could finish up with 10 wins, that would be more than I could have ever dreamed of as a head coach for team to accomplish. In fact, when you look back, it's the first time since 1982 & 1983 that we've had consecutive nine-win seasons, which really surprised me. It just shows how inconsistent we've been. It's also been the first time we've finished the regular season ranked in the Top 15 in back-to-back seasons since 1978 & 1979, and the first time we've been to consecutive Cotton Bowls since 1973 & 1974. We've been good at times, but we haven't been consistently good."

On using the Nebraska game to prepare for the Cotton Bowl...

"What we've tried to do after a win or a tough loss is move on. What we can do on defense is take it as a very positive experience. We played them much better on defense than at any time since I've been here. Our defense gave us a chance to win the game. Offensively, we haven't been on track like we want to be since Major (Applewhite) got sick. We will just try to build on it in a positive way."

On balancing recruiting duties with preparing the team for Arkansas...

"It's a very difficult time for us. As soon as practice is over, coaches will hop on planes and go on home visits. We're really burning the candle on both ends. Still, we would rather balance the problems of being in a bowl than get fired for not being in one."

On opponents bracketing Texas wide receiver Kwame Cavil like Nebraska did...

"I think we'll be more prepared for people bracketing Kwame, even though they've bracketed him all year. What Nebraska did was not a problem. The speed and energy they did it with as compared to our execution against them, was the problem."

On what his team learned from the Big 12 Championship game...

"The Big 12 Championship game was a good experience for us. I think our players now understand the speed of a championship game better. I was really proud, in a strange way, of how the guys hung in and fought when the game could have gotten away from them. I was also very proud of our defense. They stood in there face-to-face and fought Nebraska better than we did in the previous games. Offensively, we've got to be tougher. We've got to run the ball more consistently and make more plays in the passing game."