

Arkansas at LSU, Postgame Quotes

LSU HEAD COACH LES MILES

Opening Statement...

"This football team down 14 points did not flinch. There was never a question in anyone's minds on that sideline that we were going to respond. Some uncharacteristic mistakes cost us seven. A couple of five-yard penalties slowed our production. But it really was just a matter of time. Of course, Tyrann Mathieu's return for touchdown certainly was a fast answer. I think we've played a lot of good teams this season, and we took on all comers. I think this team is a very special team. They have quality leadership. They are a team that plays from behind, from ahead and in big games. I think the bigger the game, the better this team plays. I am proud of them. This is the style of win that really speaks to the assistant coaches, the people that surround my team and the people that support us in every way. We're 12-0, certainly this team deserves it."

On LSU being able to lose next week and still play for the BCS Championship...

"I just want you to know something. There would be no way that this team could come to Atlanta and not play their best. Just so you [know]."

On the defensive performance...

"I think the first momentum shift was Tyrann Mathieu's return. The defense, even in the early going, was in and around that quarterback (Arkansas' Tyler Wilson) a lot. The plays that he made scrambling out, the plays that he made under duress, and he did make some plays, it kind of told him that the pocket was not going to be a friendly place for him. Our guys were coming loose, and it spells a problem for a team that throws the ball as well as they do."

On LSU being the best team in college football history...

"It would be without propriety for me to make a determination about the history of college football. I can tell you this, when it comes to strength of schedule, playing week in and week out, six games on the road and so many ranked teams, I would have to say that they are qualified. Qualified for what? I don't know. But they are qualified."

On Jordan Jefferson...

"His leadership, his want for his team and how he plays gives us the opportunity [to win]. When the quarterback is under duress, he is that guy. He handles that well."

On the running game...

"I think that the offensive line came off the ball today. I think that [Kenny] Hilliard played well, Michael Ford played well and Spencer Ware played well. Those full backs came into the game and gave us some contact."

OFFENSIVE PLAYER QUOTES

RB Michael Ford

On the offensive line ...

"The offensive line and wide receivers, everything we do goes to those guys because they're doing the hard job. We just run through the big holes they have for us."

On the atmosphere after Arkansas ran the fumble back ...

"As the ball came out of my hands, I thought the world had just dropped on my shoulders. As the No. 1 team, we have to go through adversity, so coming off and scoring 21 points in that first half was a great thing."

RB Kenny Hilliard

On playing the fullback position ...

"When I first got here, I was discouraged about playing fullback, but I got better at it. J.C. Copeland helped me out because in high school I really didn't know the

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techniques. Guys like Spencer Ware, Alfred Blue, Michael Ford and Terrance Magee helped me out to get where I am today. I thank God for each and every one of those guys."

On the game ...

"We never put our heads down. We told each other on the sidelines to keep our heads up, and we're going to do what we have to do to win. That's what we did."

WR Rueben Randle

On coming back from being down 14-0 ...

"We had to keep our focus. We put ourselves behind like that. We just kept our focus, went out there and did the little things right that we were messing up and came out in victory."

On his performance ...

"It was a big game, and I wanted to make plays. I did it for my team today. Whatever they needed me to do, I wanted to do it. Whether it was catching or blocking, I wanted to go out and execute."

DE Sam Montgomery

On being 12-0 for the first time in school history...

"It feels great to be 12-0. It's a great feeling to know you can be apart of the history book. It's a great overall feeling."

On coming back from a 14-0 deficit...

"I knew we could do it, we just had to go out there and dominate them. We were down to start with, and a tear ran down my face. I knew I had to go back out there and do it for the team. It wasn't just about me."

DB Morris Claiborne

On players getting more intense as game went on...

"When the older guys are in and we get a big lead, we put in the younger guys. Younger guys are hungry to get on the field. They want to get their stats up, and they want to make tackles too."

On this being his last home game at LSU...

"I don't know if this is my last home game. I love it, I love the guys and to be 12-0 right now, it feels amazing. This team has worked so hard to get where we are now, and there's no reason to stop."

On Tyrann Mathieu filling in for Eric Reid at safety...

"He picks up on everything good, he's an athlete and knows what spots to be in. The coaches did a good job of putting him in the correct spots, and he did a good job of learning the position."

DB Tyrann Mathieu

On filling Eric Reid's position...

"You have to have confidence in yourself. You never want to give up on yourself, and you never want to give up on your team. When you get the chance, you make that big play."

On the BCS ...

"At this point, we're just trying to win next game and that is against Georgia."

On performance of the team...

"I think we did a good job on a lot of different things although a lot of people doubt us. We just keep our focus and listen to our coaches."

ARKANSAS HEAD COACH BOBBY PETRINO

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Opening statement...

"Well, we got beat by a better football team. You know they have played better offensively. Defensively, we started out well, took the lead, but we made some crucial errors. We gave them a punt return, and then we didn't play very well two-minute defense after we fumbled the ball when we were driving it. I think that was a huge turning point in the game."

On his team's start...

"I am proud of our football team. It has obviously been a tough week for us, but we did a good job in our preparation. I thought we practiced well all week long. Our players came out, competed hard and stuck together as a team."

On the LSU defense getting to Tyler Wilson...

"Yeah they did get to him, particularly in the second half. I think that caused him to not look down the field sometimes and certainly made a difference in the game."

On Tyler Wilson's overall play...

"I thought we were where we wanted to be in the first half. We had a chance to drive it and take the lead, but then the second half we really did not execute well at all on offense."

On how he felt going into the second half...

"I definitely thought we had something going. I felt we had our opportunities, and we were right there in the game at one point, but we couldn't stop them or their run in the second half. We were standing on the sideline a long time, and then we had a couple of three-and-outs. That really hurt us, besides the turnover."

On the punt return by Tyrann Mathieu...

"That was a huge turning point in the game. We were trying to get the ball punted to the sideline, but he missed hit it a bit and punted it to the middle of the field. We had guys right there, and he made a tremendous run. He made a great cut and made us miss at the point of attack. He made a great play."

Arkansas Defensive Quotes

S Tramain Thomas

On LSU's running game...

"They have the mind set of running the ball down your throat. They came out and did just that. After that play [the fumble that Thomas returned for a touchdown], we were not able to stop them."

On the preparation during the week...

"It was a tough week, and our team handled it great. We came out each day, worked hard and came together as a team. We just have to keep fighting."

DE Jake Bequette

On the fast start...

"We came in here wanting to start quickly and score fast. We had a big play on defense that made it 14-0 right off the bat. After we had them in second and long, we got the facemask. They just marched down the field."

On trying to stop the run of LSU...

"We had hoped that if we got a lead on them early they would abandon the running game and start throwing it. They did a really good job of staying with what they do best. They were able to find the creases. We weren't able to wrap them up and get those guys down."

On the long drives...

"You can't stay on the field for that long and those extended drives. That's what

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they want to do. They want to get four or five yards a play and wear you down. We were not able to stop them to do that."

Defensive Coordinator Willy Robinson

On the week's preparation...

"We showed tremendous character this week. The leadership that comes from Coach [Bobby] Petrino, and the character that we have all built helped us stay together. They did a nice job with it tonight. It was a tough week and we competed as a team to the end."

On the emotions of the game...

"When you go into the game, you need to have an even feel. The highs are going to come with the lows, and we just had to stay focused. It was a great opportunity to stay ahead. For us to dwindle away the lead was really hard."

ARKANSAS OFFENSIVE PLAYER QUOTES

TE Chris Gragg

On the game ...

"We went out there fighting hard. I always believe that we can win, but I guess things just didn't go our way today. I don't know if we got complacent, because I thought the energy was still good. We just need to go out there and finish games, especially when we're playing top three teams. Both of our losses came from the top teams [No. 1 LSU and No. 3 Alabama]. I still think we're a BCS team. We went through the SEC with 10 wins and two losses. I think that's good enough to go to a BCS game."

On LSU holding them back throughout the second half ...

"I don't know if it was the pressures, and I don't know if it was the defensive live. (LSU) has great defense, I'll give them that. But I think we just needed to go out there and execute. I try to go out there, work my hardest and play my best for this team."

WR Jarius Wright

On the game ...

"It was a rollercoaster. We have a good group of guys, and it's important for a team to be there for each other. We've had our ups and downs. I wouldn't call this a down. We played a great team, and they came out on top. They're the No. 1 team in the nation. Of course, we're upset about the loss because we definitely could have finished better. I still think we definitely deserve to be in the conversations of the better teams in the country. Regardless of how it ended, the end of the game was very different than the way the game went the rest of the time. It definitely could have gone either way."

On LSU's Defense ...

"I felt like they did a great job in blitzes and getting to our quarterback. I really don't know what it was that they did special. I feel like the momentum definitely shifted when they took that punt return back. They needed a big play, and (Tyrann Mathieu) came up for them big time."