



POSTGAME QUOTES | STANFORD

USC vs. Stanford
LA Memorial Coliseum • Los Angeles, Calif.
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2015

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"In the pregame talk I had all the guys stand up who had played in Pac-12 title games and that's half the team. Our guys are used to playing in big games. We need to act like it and play like it. We're five out of seven in last seven games vs. USC. No discredit to them. These are tough, physical games. They beat us two years in a row, we beat them some before. Every game will be like this, exciting and physical. Thankfully we got the lead at the end and a huge kick to make it two scores with two minutes to go."

"We talked about it at halftime. We'd get their best shot and they stopped us to open second half and went down and scored. Our guys knew it was coming. We batted down the hatches and got back to work and played great in the second half."

On Kevin Hogan directing the offense

"He was huge. Coming off a first game when we didn't play well and second game we didn't start well, we knew we had to come out well against a good team and it starts with your quarterback. Yes we ran ball well, but our QB has to get us in right plays and he made some huge third downs with his arm and his legs. He played really well."

On TE Austin Hooper

"Really since last year and into this year, we knew Austin would be one of best tight ends in the nation. We had to make sure we got him opportunities to make plays because he's a tough match up. He made some big catches. Dalton Schultz made some big catches. Devon Cajuste made a big catch on a touchdown. The entire team played well."

On is it perplexing how one week team plays much better than another

"So the difference between football coaches and the rest of the sane world is we understand sometimes you don't play well. Outside of the coach world, people look for something to blame. It's got to be play calling or personnel. Sometimes you just don't play well. We didn't play well the first week, for whatever reason. We didn't start the game well the next week. Our guys are a good team and we still have to grow together. "

On the significance of win

"The guys were celebrating after the game, but I reminded them we don't get a trophy for this one. It's a regular season game against a conference opponent that we won on the road. That's great. But we get back to work. We can't do the highs and lows that everyone else does. We get one night to celebrate and we start school this week and we need to get ready to play next week."

On Stanford's defensive line

"They'll sleep well tonight. That's a front line that might be the biggest in college football. They're big guys and still athletic. They can move. A lot of credit to our guys for finding ways to make tackles. They survived and we needed them to survive. My hats off to them.

KEVIN ANDERSON, Stanford Linebacker

On playing a USC defense with many weapons

"We came in and said everyone has to do their job. We don't like giving up 31 points to anyone, so we need to go back and work and improve. They have so many weapons, so you can't pinpoint one. We came in with mentality that if everyone did their job, we'd be successful."

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On the offense's success.

"It was just base plays that we called. Kevin did a great job of checking to the right plays and ran what we do in practice.

On the win

"It's huge for the program. The past couple of years we got really close. This year we put four quarters together and finished the job.

KEVIN HOGAN, Stanford Quarterback

On offensive strategy compared to first two games

"It was no different than the others, just go out and execute. Trust our preparation and game plan. We felt like we had an unbelievable week of practice. Everyone put in extra time in the film room after practice to make sure we were ready to go. We made sure we stuck to the game plan and executed and it's a nice feeling to go out in the second half and run the clock out, playing our style, running between the tackles and wearing them down."

On beating the No. 6 team

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HEAD COACH STEVE SARKISIAN

Opening Statement

"I think first of all Stanford came ready to play like we knew they would. They are an extremely well coached football team and came out and executed their game plan on a high level. The things we talked about being important in the game were important. Like how important it was defensively to force them into 3rd and long, and didn't happen as much as we'd like. We kept their offensive on the field and our offensive off of it. We lost containment too many times to where Kevin (Hogan) was able to use his legs. When they were able to get ahead they would do things up front on defense. They were able to get more pressure on Cody (Kessler) than we'd like. We took a penalty and had to settle for a field goal. I thought we had some momentum, would have loved to have gotten seven there and changed the complexion of the game. Football is a humbling sport. Emotions can go from high to low quickly. We have to do a good job as leaders of this program so that we don't lay in the weeds of 'Woe is me.' We have to get back up and go on the road at Arizona State and fix the things that need to be fixed and get a win in the South Division. We need to play football the way we're capable of playing. We did some good things tonight but we didn't do them consistently enough. We played a quality team tonight."

On what went wrong:

"It was a variety of things. I think, uncharacteristically of us, we had eight penalties, and that hasn't been us in the first couple games. Plus they were eight major fouls; 87 yards in critical moments. We lost the edge more than we should have against a team that runs to the edge. It was important to turn the ball back inside and that didn't happen. They made three or four plays that were really 50/50. They made some really tough plays at critical moments that we didn't. We need to get our game back where it needs to be."

On Cody Kessler's performance:

"Cody played a good game and I thought a lot of guys played well. We evaluate everything after the game. We need to fix the things that need to be fixed. Everybody has stuff to work on from week to week. We try to fix it in the film room and then we take it to the field. When Saturday comes you have to apply what you learned individually and make us better collectively. I don't know if that happened tonight."

On second-half defensive adjustments:

"When they were going to the big people we started going to big people. To try to get wins on first down, runs of three yards or less. That didn't happen enough for us. They kept getting to third-and-1 or -2 and then their momentum builds. I thought we came out with good energy, got a stop and went down and scored, but we have to look at the tape and see what needs to be done."

SU'A CRAVENS, Outside Linebacker

On what happened defensively:

"We had them in situations, but we didn't execute and we couldn't get off the field. They kept converting third downs. They were able to make some long drives. It's hard to stop them."

CODY KESSLER, Quarterback

On the limited number of possessions and getting a rhythm:

"It hurt the rhythm a little bit. We have to capitalize when we do get possession. Some drive we had momentum but penalties killed us. Every year we go in knowing they [Stanford] are a first-rate team."

On the impact this game will have on the season:

"This one hurts obviously. You put work into something and it doesn't work out and it hurts. We have a tough road game next week against ASU. This is the turning point in the season that can define us. It depends how the team can respond to adversity. The biggest thing is for leaders like us, when we come in on Monday, that everything from tonight is out the door. We must move on completely to ASU. I believe there's a lot left for us out there this season."



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- The 41-31 win by Stanford makes it six consecutive seasons the USC-Stanford game was decided by 10 points or less
- USC Sr. QB Cody Kessler has now thrown for at least one TD in 26 of 30 starts and at least two TDs 18 times and three or more 11 times. His 54-yard TD pass to JuJu Smith-Schuster in the second quarter was his fourth scoring pass of at least 41 yards this year.
- For the second game in a row, Kessler opened 16-of-18 and was 17-of-19 before his third incomplection. He finished at 25-of-32 for 272 yards and three touchdowns.
- After three games, Kessler has completed a combined 70 of 89 passes for 922 yards and 10 touchdowns with a completion percentage of 78.7% .
- Kessler, going back to the 2014 Holiday Bowl, has now gone 101 passes without an interception (he opened last year with 190 straight plus five from end of 2013).
- So. WR JuJu Smith-Schuster's 54-yard second-quarter TD reception was his team-best fourth, one less than his season-total last year. He finished with 8 receptions for 153 yards, his second straight 100-yard-plus receiving game and the fourth of his career.
- So. WR Steven Mitchell Jr. had his first multi-TD game with TD receptions of 6 and 1 yards, giving him 3 this year.
- Sr. TB Tre Madden's first-quarter 5-yard TD run was his fourth this year, one more than his career rushing TD total entering this year. He had five carries for 50 yards on the opening drive.
- USC has scored at least 14 points in the first quarter in each game this year.
- USC's 31 points marks just the second time in the last 39 games that Stanford has surrendered 30 or more (also 45 at Oregon on Nov. 1, 2014).
- USC's five scoring drives (4 TDs, 1 FG) averaged 2:29 and 64.2 yards.
- Jr. OLB Su'a Cravens' first-quarter sack was his team-best second this year, seventh of his career. He also registered a career-high 13 tackles.
- True freshmen CB Iman Marshall and ILB Cameron Smith started today.
- Fr. CB Isaiah Langley became the 15th USC true freshman to play this year.
- USC has scored a TD on each of its game-opening drives this year.
- 14 true freshman played tonight, 15 on the year.
- Jr. PK Alex Wood connected from 36 yards in the 4th quarter, his second FG in as many tries this year.
- Stanford won the time of possession battle, 39:29-20:31
- Since 2008, USC dropped to 3-5 in its last eight Pac-12 openers.
- USC had eight penalties for 87 yards tonight. USC had a total of nine penalties for 92 yards in the first two games.
- USC's last drive was its first red-zone drive this season without a score (14 of 15).
- USC held Stanford to one sack tonight. The Cardinal lead the FBS with 246 sacks since 2009 and has at least one in 48 of the last 50 games.