



Notre Dame
Post-Game Quotes
Notre Dame vs. Clemson
Saturday, December 29, 2018
AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas



TE'VON CONEY, Linebacker

What's going through your mind right now as a senior?

“A lot, you know. Just not knowing what’s next for me. But I just put my faith in God and believe in that everything happens for a reason. This is a tough loss. Just knowing how hard we worked to get to this point, you know. It just kills me inside to know that it just didn’t turn out in our favor. But you’ve got to move forward, have faith in God and keep going.”

JERRY TILLERY, Defensive End

After the fumble was called back to Clemson, talk about that bad break?

Yeah, it was a tough game for all of us. I think we all played hard, we all played our hearts out. I know everyone had invested so much into this program and this season. And it hurts to go out like this. But I have faith in this program and what we’ve built and I look forward to watching what they do next year.

What was the difference after the first quarter when Trevor Lawrence heated up?

The big plays were the difference. You know, it’s tough to win big games when you give up big plays like that. But I’m proud of what we did and what we accomplished this season. I love this team. I love this program.

In your heart of hearts, could you have imagined ending this season with a 30-3 loss?

No. Absolutely not. It’s not what we’ve wanted, it’s not what we expected, it’s not what we worked so hard for. But that’s the way the ball bounced today. But I know that this program is in position and a good spot to move forward and win those big games in the future.



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TYLER NEWSOME, Punter

What are your thoughts on the season ending this way?

“It sucks now, for us. These boys worked so hard and will take it into next year. I just wish I could be a part of it all, but I’m happy to just be a part of this foundation.”

AARON BANKS, Offensive Line

What will you take from this game into next season?

“We take every game personally. It was a loss, but I’ll look at it as a learning experience as I prepare for next season and get ready to come back to the playoffs and win it.”

Any specific takeaways from this game?

“Not really. Clemson has great players but I had to stick to what I was taught and play the game the way I know I can play.”

How do you assess your individual performance tonight?

“I don’t know, it’s never as good as you think or as bad as you think. I need to watch the film when we get back so that I can see where I played well and what I can work on.”

DEXTER WILLIAMS, Running Back

This obviously was not the outcome you wanted. What are your thoughts on today?

“It was a day I wasn’t looking forward to. I wish we could have had a different outcome, but at the same time, we didn’t make enough plays and Clemson stepped up and made a lot of plays. Now, it’s a lesson learned, an experience for the younger guys. Once they get a chance to get back here, they know what to do.”



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DEXTER WILLIAMS, Running Back

They know how to execute. They know exactly what to do to get the win and get to the next playoff game. I see everything as a blessing and an opportunity for not just me, but the younger guys as well. It's a lesson learned. We have to continue to push, keep our heads up and move forward as a team.

DANTE VAUGHN, Running Back

What are your thoughts on the game and your play?

I have to make plays. I just have to step in there and make those plays that need to be made.

You had good position on the touchdown catch by Tee Higgins. Recount what you saw develop on the play.

I knew it was a fade. I turned my head and knocked the ball out, but he made a great catch.

What was it that Clemson's offense did well that was hard to stop when they made plays?

Really it was just our execution and stepping up and making those plays that needed to be made.

ALOHI GILMAN, Safety

What allowed Clemson to get ahead and make big plays which you haven't allowed all year?

"A combination of stuff, not being on the details like we should've, not executing our scheme on the details specifically. They got some momentum early, in the first half obviously. But second half obviously, I think that big run with Etienne was kind of a mental changer. They played really well. We didn't make the plays that we were supposed to."



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ALOHI GILMAN, Safety

Did you feel that there was a mental edge that wasn't sharp enough tonight?

"I can't pick out anything specific; it's just a combination of everything. In the playoffs and big games like this all levels have to click – special teams, offense, defense. It's just being able to put it all together and we didn't put it all together."

Did you come out of this thinking that Clemson is actually four touchdowns better than you guys?

"No, I still don't believe it honestly. I think we could've competed and we definitely could've won this game. That's my honest opinion. It just came down to small details that we didn't execute. They were physically more dominant than us, a lot faster than us. We didn't execute the way we were supposed to."

MILES BOYKIN, Wide Receiver

When will you decide about next season and will it be a tough call?

"I don't know. I've got to get back and talk with my family and the coaching staff, and decide from there. It will definitely be a tough call. If I were to leave this place it would tear me apart. I love my teammates, I love this school and like I said it's business and I want to win a national championship."

How do you think Ian held up against the pass rush?

"Ian did what he could do. We were asking the world of him against that defense and he did some things good but I think that this game is going to help him out as well. I'm sure he'll tell you that when you face a D Line like that, I don't know how many we're going to face like that. I thought he did a good job. We just need to be more consistent on the offensive side of the ball."

Where do you think this ultimately went wrong for you guys today?

"Just mistakes, too many mistakes. As an offense, we had missed opportunities and we can't do that in big games."



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MILES BOYKIN, Wide Receiver

Can you express the frustration that comes from not putting your best foot forward on a stage like this?

“I think I’d be fine with losing if we played as good as we could have and that just didn’t happen, obviously there’s frustration from that. Obviously the competitor in me, it’s hard losing in a semifinal game when you give it all you’ve got. It’s taken all season for us to get here and just one game can wipe it out like that.”

For people who don’t know how far you guys have come from 2012 and even two years ago how would you put how this loss is different from the last time Notre Dame was in a position like this?

“It’s kind of hard by looking at the score but if you go back and look at the film you see from 2012 that there’s a gap in the kind of athletes. Now I don’t think that gap is there. I thought we played just as athletic as them and just as fast as them and it came down to execution and we didn’t execute today.”

Why weren’t you able to execute?

“Yeah, that’s a good question. One of the biggest things is turnovers. It’s hard to execute with turnovers. We’ve got to stay out of third and long and we can’t have penalties.”

Is there a moment you feel like the game got away from you [the team] a bit?

“I don’t know. I try not to think about it in the game. I just go out there and play my heart out. So from that standpoint, no. I mean maybe the last time when I came off the field, that was tough. But other than that, I’m just playing and not worrying about the score.”



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SAM MUSTIPHER, Offensive Line

On containing Clemson's defensive line...

"I don't know I would have to look at the film first. They are a talented defense, we knew that coming in. A talented front-seven as a whole."

On Clemson's score before going into the half...

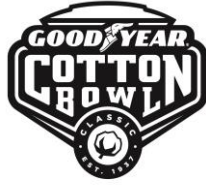
"This team never really hangs their head about anything, I didn't expect them to. Obviously it was a dagger. We have to bounce back and respond and we believed we could do that."

On what he is going to take away from today...

"I'm proud to be a part of Notre Dame, proud to be a part of this tradition, proud to be a part of the group of guys that went out there and competed today. Nothing to hang my head about, we went out there and competed. I thought we prepared well all through bowl prep, things happen."

On not showing the nation their best side today...

"We made too many mistakes. When you are on this type of stage and you turn the ball over and have penalties, those are drive killers specifically for our offense. We obviously didn't play our best game today and it wasn't our most disciplined and they (Clemson) made the plays when they needed too."



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DRUE TRANQUILL, Linebacker

On his journey at Notre Dame...

“I am forever grateful to the gold and blue and for all the fans, the coaching staff that believed in me. All the players that have put so much into this. Notre Dame will always be family. It will always be in my heart.”

On Notre Dame’s senior class and the legacy they leave...

“We want our legacy to be winning National Championships and that was certainly the goal this year and we fell short. Just setting the bar higher each and every season. I think they are going to have a great opportunity next year to get it done.”

On shutting down Clemson’s run game early in the game...

“We played within the structure of the defense, vertical through the gaps we played on edges, played in the backfield, and the defensive line was getting movement.”

On Clemson’s run in the second quarter...

“They made two or three big plays down the field for touchdowns and that resulted in 20 points so for me that was a swing.”

On losing players to injury during the game and how it impacted the defense...

“It’s big, they are great players and they made plays for us all year and so when those guys go down it obviously hurts a little bit.”