



Texas
Offense Press Conference
December 29, 2018



2019 Allstate Sugar Bowl – Texas Offensive Coordinator
Tim Beck Quotes - 12-29-18

OC TIM BECK: First of all, obviously, on behalf of the University of Texas, we're super excited to be here. Very honored and privileged to be in a great bowl, great tradition against a great opponent. So we're really excited. Town has been awesome. Been taking great care of us, our players. And we just want to say thank you for the opportunity to come here and go out and do our stuff and have a good time and play good football.

Q. Tim, in the time you've gotten with him since the OU game, how has Sam [Ehlinger] looked health-wise? And what do you expect from him in a couple days?

OC TIM BECK: Sam has been good. Obviously, the time off for our entire football team has been well. Our guys have had the opportunity to rest up, recover from all the bumps and bruises. They've had a chance to heal any injuries, and we're coming in healthy. And.

I like what Sam has been doing. He's had really good preparation through this. We've been able to monitor him through everything that we've needed to do to get him to a point where he's going to be 100% for the game and he's ready to go.

Q. If you can just talk about what's going to be required in this game, especially up front. Didn't seem like your offensive line was the more physical group against OU the second time after they were the first time. And the challenge of what you're seeing in this Georgia front?

OC TIM BECK: Yeah. Obviously, we've got to control the line of scrimmage better than we did in the championship game. No question. Your assessment is correct. I think we felt that way. I think we left some plays and some opportunities on the field in that game. And you can't do that against a great opponent.

And we're going to face one. There's no question about it. They're an excellent offensive football team. They're big. They're physical. They run the football. They do a really a good job of stripping the football. They've created a lot of turnovers. We've harped on that consistently for the last month with our players. So, I mean, we've got to control the tempo of the game. We have to play physical and control the line of scrimmage. And we've got to execute -- when we have to make those plays, be it a third down, be it a big conversion, a red zone, we've got to take advantage and score points, touchdowns in those red zones. Can't be a field goal game. Got to score touchdowns in the red zone. I know everybody is going to say the same thing when they come up here. That's what you have to do.

But that's what we have to do to beat this team. There's no question.

Q. Two questions for you. The loss -- Georgia losing Deandre Baker, him choosing to sit the game out. What does that do to their defense? How do you plan to take advantage of that? And are you surprised by that? And also what do you see from J.R. Reed from them in the secondary?



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OC TIM BECK: He's a great player and had a terrific season for them. And, obviously, our hats are off to him, have a lot of respect for him.

But we're moving forward. We focus a lot on us, like what we need to do.

The guys, as far as who they play out there, they're going to be quality players, quality opponents. The University of Georgia. They're a really good football team and won a lot of games. They have depth. They have good football players.

So, for us, our job, as I've kind of mentioned a little earlier, is we've got to do our job, regardless of who they put out there. Whether he was playing or not, we've got to get open. Whether it's going to be him or somebody else, doesn't matter. If we can't get open, we're not going to be able to throw the football. That's a big task for our a wide receiver group.

So, for us, as we look at those guys, they're a really good football team. Good secondary. [J.R.] Reed does a great job for them. I mean, he's everywhere. You can tell he's a leader of the defense for those guys as well.

So you know, like I mentioned, I think they're a really good football team. They're very sound.

It will be interesting, obviously, for us as a coaching staff of how they change. So perhaps tendencies will be a little different. Philosophies may be a little different. I don't think the technique and overall coverage and front of what they are going to do, but maybe when they do it, maybe some new wrinkles, we expect that.

Q. Coach, you got Cameron Rising and Casey Thompson, they're obviously, in the transfer portal. What reason did they give you as to why they wanted to examine their options? And what's your concern level about the possibility of them leaving?

OC TIM BECK: Obviously, we live in a different time. Coaching this game is now -- you know, players have the opportunity to explore by using the portal. So there's not a lot for us to say or be able to do. They're allowed to be able to do that.

Obviously, we think a lot of both of those young men. That's why we recruited them. That's why they're here. They're very talented guys that we want to keep here.

As far as their reasonings and things that they want to look or perhaps see what's out there, it's kind of really between us. I don't want to get into their reasonings behind what they are. That's something, if you wanted to ask them and they felt like they wanted to tell you, they could. But that's for them. It's not really for me to say necessarily. I don't want to air all that stuff out.

But there's no ill feelings. I think you're going to see more of this. You are. It's going to happen. It's going to happen more at the quarterback position because you only play one guy, maybe the running back position



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because you only play one guy usually. But you're going to see this happen more and more every year because of this portal and guys having the opportunity to explore what else might be out there for them.

Q. I wanted to ask you about what I think was one of the pivotal moments of the year and that was y'all's decision to stay with Sam [Ehlinger] after Maryland. Tom [Herman] never wavered on that, at least not with us. And I wonder in retrospect now, just how big a moment was that internally to say, "No, this is our guy despite what happened at FedEx Field. This is our guy for Tulsa and going on."

OC TIM BECK: Obviously it was. Really going into this fall camp our conversations were we needed to find a starter and name him the starter and allow him to become the leader of our offense and build the offense around that young man with the tools at running back, receiver, tight end, and to create an identity of this is who we're going to be this year.

I think that was a huge part going in that we named him early. You remember a year ago we waited until game week before we named the starter. This year we named him early to be able to start establishing that, and we felt that was important.

We certainly weren't -- it's like getting a flat tire and you go cut all four of your tires because one of them is flat. You don't do that, right? Okay. We got a flat tire. We lost to Maryland. Let's change the tire and we'll keep going. So just plug with it and stay with it and just keep going. We believe in him. Our players believe in him. Our staff believes in him.

And we knew it wasn't his fault in the course of the game. We just didn't play well, and we turned the ball over some. And I know we had a couple of them in the two-minute drill towards the end there. But for the most part there was some good things he did as well. So, unfortunately, at that position you get a lot of blame at times.

But Sam is a competitor, driven, loves University of Texas, probably as much/as anybody on our football team and very talented guy. I'm sure glad that he's our quarterback going into this ball game for sure.

Q. Being an offensive coordinator, what have you been able to learn from Coach [Tom] Herman also being obviously an offensive coordinator in the past? And how have you seen him develop as a head coach in this big role at Texas over the last two years?

OC TIM BECK: That's a great question. First of all, Coach is extremely involved in what we do. We're a "we" group, not a "me" group. There's great input from all of our staff, even on game day. It's nothing for whether it's our tight end coach, running back coach saying, "Hey, let's do it like this" or "Put the running back here," or "Hey, let's run this route on third down" and us to kind of marinate on it in between series and say, "Okay. Let's do it. Let's talk to our guys and put it in".

So there's a lot of closeness with the staff and connection through Coach Herman. And I think Coach has grown tremendously as a head football coach in just the two years I've been with him just to see him see the overall function of the whole program. It is hard. He's really good at what he does in calling plays and game planning.



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He's a, smart tremendous, offensive-minded coach, Coach Herman is.

So it's tough at times for him to walk away knowing I can help, I can help, and he does. He's very involved, but you see him also evolving as a coach with the defense and special teams and all those areas, recruiting, all those areas. I've learned a lot being able to watch him and see him transition from an incredibly successful head coach -- I mean incredibly successful offensive coordinator into that as a head coach as well. It's been a great experience for me.

Q. You guys haven't faced a defense this good, at least not statistically this year. Probably watching film might feel the same way. How creative and how innovative do you have to get to get Lil'J [Humphrey] and Collin [Johnson] involved early in this game?

OC TIM BECK: Yeah, you didn't have to remind me about how good they were. But, yes, we're going to have to.

Like I said, Coach [Kirby] Smart and their entire defensive staff, they're good. They're going to do a really good job of trying to take away your best players. And they'll find ways to do that. Those are the little tweaks you see each and every week.

So we've had a month and we've been able to sit down and game plan and go through some things that we think will help us help our football team move the football, stay on the field. That's going to be important for us in the course of the game.

I agree with you. We're going to have to be able to get the ball to our playmakers, and they're going to have to make plays. It goes back to what I said. When we get those opportunities, there may be five, there may be ten. Through the course of the game, we've got to make those plays, whatever they are. Whether it's a down-and-distance deal or whether it's a, "Hey, I've got a one-on-one with Lil'J" for the first time all game and we've got to make those things count.

Q. Tim, last year the offense probably wasn't where you wanted it. Other schools were negative recruiting that the offense wasn't where it needed to be. What were the keys to the turnaround this year, and what are you most proud of?

OC TIM BECK: I think the keys to some of the turnaround was staying the course, to be honest. We didn't really panic. We knew last year we struggled. We had some young players, and we have some injuries. You can't talk about it. You're not making excuses about that.

Obviously our job as coaches is to win, right? So it fell on us, but we didn't panic. We didn't get off course. We didn't have to create new things. We didn't make a lot of changes. What we did was we just tightened our chin strap a little bit and said, Let's go to work and let's keep developing our players.



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And Coach [Yancy] McKnight did a fantastic job in the off-season. They got bigger, faster, and stronger. They've got, I think, for the first time in six years maybe the same offensive coordinator and the same offense. So there was some continuity. There was some guys knew what to do. So now it was how to do it better.

So things I'm most proud about this year, honestly probably I think Sam [Ehlinger] has played really well. I'm really proud of the way he's grown as a quarterback. There's so many things that have helped us offensively because of some of the things he's done in terms of playing the position in the run game, the passing game, protections, whatever it may be in one year that jump -- in my eyes as his coach behind closed doors has been really, really well. It's impressive.

And he's put in the work, and I'm proud of him for being able to do that. I'm proud of him trusting in us even at times when it may not seem right. It is and those guys -- really the whole offense just trusted. Okay. Coach, we believe you, we believe you, it's going to happen, it's going to happen. We still got a ways to go, and we've got a really monumental task coming up against a really good football team. Our guys are excited and ready for the challenge as we all are. So should be a good game.

Q. Collin [Johnson] and Lil'J [Humphrey], what areas have they grown most in the offense over the past couple years? And how much of your input have they requested going into this tough decision on whether to come back or not?

OC TIM BECK: I think very similar to what I talked about just as our offense as a whole. I think their development in the weight room, Coach [Yancy] McKnight, their development of continuity of an offense, of not having to learn new plays, new formations just how do I do this better, how to recognize coverage and have a plan. How do I beat this coverage?

And Coach [Drew] Mehringer and Coach [Corby] Meekins as receiver coaches have done a great job with those guys of demanding excellence, right? They want to be great players. It takes a little extra to be great players. It takes that extra time, that extra film. And those coaches have been available to be able to do that for them.

As far as your question about have they asked for input, I think it's kind of weird. There's a small circle. We tell those guys trust the small circle, the people that you're around. Obviously their position coach, Coach [Tom] Herman will be directly involved in those conversations. I'm on the outside and have those conversations with them and share my advice and my experience over the years. But in the end, we want what's best for those young men in the end for sure. No question about it. We love those guys and they've done a great service to the University of Texas. And I think they've got bright futures next year no matter what.