



**Texas**  
**Defense Press Conference**  
December 30, 2018



**2019 Allstate Sugar Bowl – Texas Defensive Coordinator**  
**Todd Orlando Quotes - 12-30-18**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Just it's an honor to be here. I know I speak on behalf of our team. This setup is awesome. We've got a lot of work in, had opportunities to practice at the site. Thank Tulane, too, who gave us an opportunity to practice over there today.

And just the people in the city, awesome experience for our kids but we're at that point right now where we're ready to get this game going.

**Q. We had a chance to look at this season defensively. What do you feel like you've done the best? Where has it maybe not come up where you wanted it? And what's it going to take Tuesday night?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** We've settled in a little bit on our lineup. I think that's been important for us. We've had a little bit of a rollercoaster of injuries. I think the thing that we probably need to do a lot better job of, I know we've talked about this before, is on our thirddown defense. I think it's noticeable right now. It's one of those things. And we're going against a very good thirddown offense, the extension of drives with the more chances of explosive plays.

And I think college football has come into making sure the ball is in front of you, but more importantly is turnovers and thirddown defense. And those are the two things that I'd like to see majorly pick up this game coming up.

**Q. This morning a lot of the Georgia players talked about how your defensive backs are really physical, and they want to be full on tackling as opposed to just trying to chop guys down. How proud does that make you, when you hear another team talking about the physicality?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Yeah, it's good to hear because I know that was one of the gripes before we got here in terms of our physicality. But it's practiced.

I think anybody that's come up and seen one of our look teams or just us going one on one versus our offense, it's not one of those things you can turn on and turn off. You have to do it all the time, and there's an expectation.

And your kind of rite of passage to get on this defense is you have to be physical. That's the one thing. I think that's kind of the demands when we came in here. But now it's player led. So if a player sees somebody being soft in practice or turning down hits or whatever it is, they're kind of looking at us before they get on and saying, You know what? He doesn't belong on this field.



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That's a great compliment, but it's one of many things that our kids bought into when we first got here. This is the way we're going to do it. And once you put it on film in a game or once they figure out, like, this is something that's unique, something maybe not a lot of people are going to do in practice situations, and they feel like it's an advantage when they go to the game. So it's a good compliment for us.

**Q. When you look at Georgia's offensive line, the size and athleticism there, what do you see from those guys and the challenges that is going to be for you defensive front?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Just massive. That's the biggest thing, the bigger bodies, they can move. They're a zone team, so they can get that wave rolling on you and they can gobble you up.

So it's going to be a heck of a challenge. A lot of the times, you see bigger bodyguys when they get to 320, 330, that you may be slow footed or you see guys that just can't move very well. These guys can.

And when you look at the matchups, all this stuff, you look at how they recruited in the last couple years, they're getting these top guys that can play ball too. They're just not big, pretty looking kids. They can play. It's going to be a tremendous challenge for us. We're going to have hold up. We're going to have to tackle really well and we're going to have to anchor down especially with our front three guys.

**Q. When you look at [Elijah] Holyfield and [D'Andre] Swift, that onetwo combo in the backfield, what kind of challenges does that present?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** They're kind of pushbutton speed guys. They can turn a corner as fast as the guys that we've seen.

Me personally, it's been a while. It's a credit to those guys. When you think about the tailback position in the last couple years and the guys that they've had come through their program, both of them, the thing that I love about both those cats is they will try to run you over. They're not just allfinesse guys and they're not just, "Hey, listen, I'll outrun you." They'll put their shoulder down.

Honestly, I love that part of it. They're going to hit DBs. They're going to hit linebackers. And those guys are going to remember them. That's how they play, with that kind of street to them, but also to say "I can make you miss," both kids are great at onecut decisions. They can put their foot in the ground.

Every team that we've watched stacked up the box, eightman fronts, nineman fronts where they've got to make somebody miss. They've done it consistently. Heck of a challenge to run behind a big offensive line too.

**Q. Your many years of coaching, is there a team that Georgia reminds you of with this running attack where they have two guys like that, one can run you over and the other can make you miss?**



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**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Not off the top of my head. I just go back to the recruiting part of it. I just think it's a heck of a job by Coach [Kirby] Smart and his staff to be able to get these kids in their program, to really wait their time, and the way that they develop them.

To me, that's where I think they've done a tremendous job. The second he got in the door, they were going to make this a "Look, we're going to recruit the best kids out there," but not only that, we're going to develop, too.

And so to go back and compare them to somebody I've gone against, I'm sure there's somebody. Off the top of my head, I can't say. I've just been so impressed with the amount of depth at a lot of these skill positions to keep these guys motivated and to develop.

**Q. When you face the Big 12, third down is important like any game. You may face fewer third downs because they go a little bit slower. Does that put even more of an emphasis on it?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Sure. It's going to be unique. They will push the gas at times and go up tempo, but there will be a lot of times where I think Jake does a good job of getting them in and out of plays that he likes.

But third down, I mean, the way that we've been running, we've been in the third and 3, third and 4, and third and 5. And we just got to do a better job in those situations of cutting it loose with our kids and playing it.

But to answer your question, if in our league maybe play 17 thirddown attempts in comparison to maybe 12 to 14, everyone one is going to be critical because they have so much speed and so much explosiveness that if they extend drives or get you in space, they can hit homeruns.

So I think you saw that a little bit with the ClemsonNotre Dame game, especially early. You saw that with the Oklahoma game early in the game, that this game is a lot about third down, thirddown turnovers. If you can get stops and get your offense in the field and at least minimum change field positions, if you don't get scores, it's a big part of what the game is now.

**Q. You always have messages to your team every week, just kind of things that you just want them to focus on, especially a mental standpoint. What's been your message to your players leading up to the game?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** I think it's a little bit twofold. I think it's a great opportunity here at the Sugar Bowl. We get it.

But to go out there and remember the way that we've trained, it's been five months. I mean when you really think about it, we started in, like, the first week of August. These kids have been together, we've been together



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for five months. Cut it loose. Cut it loose. Don't go out there and hesitate and do that stuff.

I think when you get into these environments. And back in 2010, 2012, when you're talking about our program at Texas, been on those big stages and we hit a little bit of a lull and then all of a sudden we get back into the bigstage moment, this is still a learning process for our kids.

But I want them to understand that the way that we practice, the demands that we put on you, that stuff is there for a reason. So when you get into stages like this, don't wait. Don't evaluate. Don't hesitate. Go out there from the kickoff and cut it loose. And I think that's probably the theme that kind of collectively overall goes along with this kind of the normal stuff that we talk about: Control the run game, get turnovers, and limit them on thirddown conversions. That's kind of the defensive philosophy.

But I can see this. We got an opportunity to play in the Big 12 championship. We went out there and I thought for the most part there was some plays during the game where you feel like, Hey, man. Cut it loose. Cut it loose. Go, go, go. I think this will be the same thing, where you get into a big stage versus an opponent that you have not seen before.

Oklahoma a little bit different because we have played them before. There's a comfort level to go out there and just cut it loose. We'll just go out there talking about that the next couple days.

The cool part about it in my opinion is this is it. There's no next game for the guys that are seniors. This is collectively our last game together as a group. So what is there? Just cut it loose and go have fun and go play really, really hard within our system and the way that you practice.

And that's why the practice part is so important because you kind of earn that right to go on the field by what you've done. And I thought we practiced, in my opinion, very well since we've been here. And I thought we've had some really good practices back at home in Austin.

**Q. Speaking of those seniors, we're not going to get to talk to you again until probably the spring. So when you're lacking at what is ahead for 2019, are you going to rebuild the line? You're going to lose some DBs. What are some things at the top of your list that you're going to be addressing in January, February, and March?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** Not to get into specifics of that part, obviously, we will have a lot of experience that has gone. So I think that what it will come down to is how these guys go on winter workouts, how they go in spring. How do we have to modify things? Because we can throw a lot of defense at these kids because a lot of them have played a lot of defense. So I think that will be a decision there.

But I think at the end of the day, I think we're all focused and concentrated on the guys and what they've given



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to us. I think about Anthony Wheeler all the time. I think about a guy that's gone through multiple coordinators. I think about a guy that didn't have an opportunity for two years to go to a bowl game, now has an opportunity in the Sugar Bowl.

So I think we'll get into that stuff after this game, after we get a chance to decompress, after we have one more run at the second signing date. And then we'll look back, and we'll start looking at the cutups. We'll start looking at individual players and say, Okay, this is what he really does well. This is what he doesn't. And we'll modify that way.

But to give you a blanket kind of "We're the whole defense," I don't know that. I haven't even went to that land yet. But we will. We'll go there in February and March before we go out in the spring.

**Q. Todd, you've been asked about the offensive line and the running backs. We've talked quite a bit about the opposing quarterback. What's your take on Jake Fromm and his receiving corps?**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** The receivers are the same way. Big speed. Big speed. Great catch radius. And from Jake's standpoint, it's distributing the football. To me, he's in a checkwithme system. We'll get up to the line of scrimmage, make share they're not in bad plays. If they're in a play, they'll run.

But if you think about it, it's almost like a point guard distributing versus an NBA AllStar team. They're all great shooters. His job is to get the ball out to his playmakers. To go along with to me does a really good job of reading coverages and not making bad throws.

So the combination, once again, goes back into distribute the football. And a lot of these guys can just their topend speed is incredible. Reminds me a lot of our league with some of the elite guys, some of the guys from Oklahoma where it's just push button. And if you take a bad step or you're nonfundamental or you're high in your pad level, they'll go right by you. But just been impressed. And, once again, it goes back to just a great job of recruiting and developing by their staff.

**Q. I want to ask you about Gary Johnson. I know this is your last game with Gary. He's got some rareness to him with the sprint background. But when you look at his skill set at 230 and just run like he does with the physicality aspect, is he really kind of the perfect linebacker you need not just for the league, to defend against offenses, but to play against a team like Georgia. And that skill set, as rare as it is, how have you tried to identify that in recruiting? Because some of the guys you just signed a couple weeks ago seem to have some of that kind of skill set.**

**DC TODD ORLANDO:** That's a really good question. Yes, on kind of the mold of that linebacker. From our standpoint, that's seen on film, but it's documented through times. That was the one thing about Gary that was documented. He went like 10:52. Once you see that, you know it's real.



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Sometimes on the actual recruiting film somebody might look fast, but they might be going against not great competition so they look a lot faster than what they do. But that's what we're looking for.

I think they come in all sizes, too. I think the one thing, especially in our state, that, if a guy is a safety, if a guy is a running back, if a guy is maybe a dualthreat quarterback, they come in all shapes and sizes. Because sometimes there might not be that bigtime athlete that they're playing at inside linebacker or outside linebacker.

It's identified that way. Gary is kind of the example that we want to get. And I think you're going to see that across the country because of the amount of spread that people run and the amount of big plays that are made just because guys can't run them down. Everybody's going to miss a tackle. So the more speed you've got on the field, the better off you are getting them off the ground.