



2018 MAKERS WANTED BAHAMAS BOWL

FIU Postgame Quotes

Dec. 21, 2018



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Head Coach Butch Davis

Opening statement...

"Well obviously it's spectacular to have won this game. These kids, the things that our entire football team has done for the last 10 or 11 months have been amazing. The hard work, the dedication, the unselfishness - you don't win nine football games and set a school record for the most victories or win a bowl game without an awful lot of great plays. I will tell you, the three guys that I'm sitting here on the stage with, there's three of the most amazing stories about these guys. Ed being here as a grad transfer that came to us from the University of Texas when we desperately needed someone to come in and be a big-time player for us, and for him to win this award tonight and do what he did this entire season, it's just absolutely amazing. At the very end, with Anthony Jones, it's truly a blessing by God that not only is Anthony here and alive and he played, and the motivation and the love that this football team had for him and Mershawn [Miller]. I really truly believe that was the glue that held our football team together the entire season. Coming back the second half of the Old Dominion football game when everybody knew that Anthony and Mershawn were going to be okay, that set the stage for the entire season. For him to come back and be able to play, you got a dose of what he's capable of today. He's electric. The guy in the middle [Christian Alexander], I hardly know how to talk about him. As a parent and a coach, you want players who absolutely put the entire football team ahead of themselves. He is a leader, he is a solid Christian. The love he has for his team and what he did today, there was no doubt that he was going to play as well as he did today. He's worked hard the entire season, he's always had an unbelievable, upbeat, positive attitude. I couldn't be prouder of Christian Alexander. These three guys, I love them to pieces."

On Christian Alexander's performance at quarterback...

"It was a huge lesson we learned last year. I wish I could do last year over again, we would have played Christian significantly more last year. It was a huge benefit for him that he took the entire 15 practices in the spring as the No. 1 quarterback. That helped him know that 'I can step into this huddle and lead this team.' We made a commitment that no matter what happened in the course of the season, especially through four games, we were rotating him in and putting him no matter what the score was or where the ball was. We truly believe in Christian. Obviously James [Morgan] got on a roll and he was playing well. We never batted an eye that when Christian came in against UTSA or against Marshall, he drove the team down and scored a touchdown. You knew that he could win games for you. It couldn't be a more positive finish for him this season to be able to pull that off."

On limiting Toledo to 2-of-11 on third down...

"Going 2-of-11 is a big thing. A lot of the calls we made on third down were really, really good. We mixed it up. Our defensive coordinator [Brent Guy] did a good job of mixing in three-man line and four-man line, some man-to-man stuff, some blitzes and some pressures. Getting them off the field was a huge challenge."

On the team recovering from adversity to have a successful season...

"What you don't know is there was a lot more behind the scenes of things that happened with other kids on the team that lost members of their families. The amount of time that they spend with each other and the way they pick each other up, when someone walks into that locker room and they've had a cousin who's been killed or an uncle who had a heart attack and died, and the way they rallied around them, it's hard to put words to it to be honest. When Anthony got shot and Mershawn got shot, the hospital got flooded with teammates. Everyone in the world was praying for their lives. When they pulled through, and when I went back to the facility and the rest of the team was waiting in the team meeting room. I told them that Anthony was sitting up, and crazy Anthony down there was like, 'I let the team down,' it's like, come on Anthony, you didn't let the team down at all. He said, 'coach, I'll be back next week,' like okay. Anybody that coaches, I don't care who it is, if you coach for any other reason besides that you love the kids, you're in the wrong profession. You've got to be there for them, good times and bad times. I love them to pieces."

On setting the program record for wins...

"Yeah, that's good. That was one of the goals, to win the bowl game and set a school record and finish the season with nine wins. We talked about that several times the last couple weeks. And also, to send the seniors off in their last game. It was a little bit sad last year...what those seniors did last year to help us get to a bowl game, kind of set the precedent and expectation for this year. Now let's do something better, and it took a lot of hard work and the kids did it."

On the whole experience in the Bahamas...

"I was told that there are around 1,500 Bahamians throughout the islands who are FIU grads. We were kind of the adopted brother this week by the Bahamian community. It was awesome. I think a lot of them know about the team because of close proximity to Miami. It was really need to be the adopted son...You couldn't ask to go to a better location for a bowl game. Lea Miller, what she did to put this game together five years ago, and for us to get an opportunity to play in it, everything that we were a part of was first-class. From the functions at the hotel - they were spectacular. The rooms, Atlantis, you couldn't ask to go to a better place. The food was spectacular, I think our kids got the opportunity to eat Bahamian food and a lot of seafood, and they loved every bit of it. Hopefully we'll be back here some year."



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Redshirt Junior Quarterback Christian Alexander

On earning the starting nod on late notice...

"I found out in the preparation for the bowl game when we found out what James' injury was. I knew I had to carry the reins. James helped me along the way. Obviously he started all season long so he gave me pointers here and there, today especially. He showed me things he saw, things like that. I couldn't have done it without my brothers."

Redshirt Junior Running Back Anthony Jones

On his battle through adversity...

"I just want to thank God first. I want to thank my brothers, and my head coach, Butch Davis. Through everything I went through, my coach, my brothers, the whole university, everyone was behind me. I couldn't ask for a better support staff than I've got at FIU."

On how he'll remember the season...

"We went out with a bang. For our seniors, for the guys who won't be back next year, we went out with a bang. This was for them, we're extremely that we went out with a bang and ended the season right."

On how to describe the team's togetherness...

"To be honest, I don't think you could understand if you didn't play football. Being with each other, we build bonds, a brotherhood. We're with each other more than our families. Each and every day we're together half the day doing film or at practice. In our off time, we're all together in our rooms. It's something you create through football, these guys will be my brothers forever."