

Gildan New Mexico Bowl:

New Mexico vs UTSA

Saturday, December 17, 2016

Bob Davie

Richard McQuarley

Lamar Jordan

New Mexico Lobos

New Mexico - 23, San Antonio - 20

COACH DAVIE: After the game, I brought our team up in the locker room. I was getting them ready, was going to speak. Garrett Hughes, our defensive end, looked at me and said, No words, coach, no words.

I think that's what this is. There wasn't a whole lot of jumping up and down, a whole lot of screaming, a whole lot of carrying on. I think after a win like that, after the season we've had, I think it's more a feeling. You don't get to experience this a whole lot of times.

These players, I've talked to them in-depth about enjoying the moment. Definitely this afternoon was a great moment that doesn't come along very often. I'm so happy that these players, we're sitting here December 17th, and they have a chance to go home to the holiday season with their families, get around ex-teammates, ex-coaches, and feel good about what they finished.

I think it would have been a hollow feeling, even though we had a good season at 8-4, I think it would have been hollow if we couldn't have won this game.

With that said, UTSA was everything we thought they would be, everything we thought they would be. This is the third time we've played them. Every one of the games have been two equal teams. Today was that.

Some keys to the game, you know, to play in these conditions with the wind the way it was, it really takes away your focus, it really does. It takes away your focus. The fact we came out of the game with only two penalties, on a day like today, is very impressive to me.

Obviously we didn't have a lot of offense. When we needed it there in the fourth quarter, after UTSA scored to make it a field goal game, we had enough offense.

I thought Lamar Jordan, again, competed, showed his athletic ability when he got outside the pocket. The



throw he made to Gambo on that last drive when we went in and scored was key.

Richard McQuarley really stood out today. It's a great example of I think what's ahead, what's in his future. I think he's a heck of a player. He just showed me on video, he did that double backflip, whatever the heck that was, at the end of the game. So I know he's a good athlete.

It wasn't our best offensive performance, but I think UTSA obviously had a lot to do with that. Jason Sanders, again, the 52-yard field goal before the half, Chris Davis fielding punts in the wind, Chris Davis recovering the on-side kick. We did have an extra point blocked.

The one negative, fourth-and-one, we went for it, didn't make it. But we did go for it on fourth down and make it, punched the ball in the end zone.

Defense, first of all, I think their quarterback is a really good athlete, really hard to tackle, takes off and runs. They've got two good tailbacks. They head us a little bit on a lee draw. For the most part our defense played solid all afternoon.

It was a well-played game. I thought the atmosphere was fantastic. Credit to UTSA for bringing all those people over here. Very educated. You can tell they've been around a lot of football. They responded when they needed to respond.

Our crowd, I thought our crowd, I don't know what the numbers were, but there was some energy in that stadium, there was some excitement in that stadium. Just the emotion of people after the game, the things that they said to our coaches and to our players of appreciation, resonates with me.

Again, I mean, there's not much to talk about. We all know what kind of season it was. To play the first bowl game of the year on ESPN, get a win like this, finish up with nine wins, is a credit to these guys, man. It's always, always has been, about players. I'm very proud of these guys.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Bob, they were very strong in the middle defensively. How important was it not to give up on the dive and keep Richard in there, convert some third downs?

COACH DAVIE: There's no question they were athletic. They also had some depth up in there. They rotated guys in there.

I could see in pregame warmup they had some size and they had some athletic ability up front. We really didn't get the ball going like we normally have. Probably held us, I don't know what the numbers ended up, maybe our lowest offensive production of the year.

It's not because they had extra time, because people have had extra time before. I just thought they had a really good plan and they executed.

I think we could have thrown the ball a little more. I think we had opportunities to throw it. The conditions were so tough that we couldn't.

With a guy like Richard, he can make yards when there's nothing there. He does. He can make something out of nothing.

At the end we rode him. He became the guy that was hot, had the hot hand. I think it's important to know he's not just a short-yardage back. He can break the thing. He can get outside, and he has speed. I'm expecting big things from him next year.

Tyrone Owens reinjured his foot, didn't play the second half. Also note Daniel Henry didn't play the second half. Ryan Santos didn't play the first half. We were up against it a little bit with some key players out.

Q. It's been a long journey from where you started to get here. How can you use this win, this victory, going forward as another block for the future?

COACH DAVIE: Yeah, I think that's what it is. I met with our young players this morning, our young players, our developmental guys, all of our young guys. I brought them in at 9:00 after these guys ate breakfast. Had a different breakfast for all of our returning players. I talked about, Okay, you've made it through the difficult part. Now from this moment on, it's on you.

There's no question the young players having a chance to see the success that older players have had, and more importantly feeling the responsibility of what older players have done, is the most important thing. That's what a college football program is. Just keep taking steps and building and building and building.

I met with them this morning setting the stage for what

I hoped would happen this afternoon. Again, that's how we'll use it. It's another building block. Again, we graduate a lot of really good players. But it does come time when it is time for guys to move on. As much as we hate to see Dakota leave, Donnie White, Nik D'Avanzo, it does become time when it's time for those guys to go on and do things that are going to come their way, and it's time for other guys to step up.

Yeah, winning the last game of the year... I remember two years ago, three years ago now, we beat Wyoming out here in this stadium. What did they win, our fourth game of the year? We had a goal line stand, they threw the ball four times from the six yard line. That win was big. If you look back to that win right now, that probably got us jump-started.

There's no question that winning the last game is big.

Q. Bob, could you speak about the drive they had where they had first-and-goal at the one late in the second quarter, then you got the big field goal into the wind right at the end of the first half.

COACH DAVIE: Yeah, I talked to our players about the biggest, to me, factor with wind is to keep your concentration. Everybody worries about the kicking game. Everybody worries about what the wind does to the football.

But to me, when that wind is howling like that, it's concentration. UTSA did have some mistakes, penalties, got a little bit discombobulated, which helped us.

I do think two penalties on a day like today, I really appreciate. It does distract you. It does distract you. It plays kind of a mental game with you when that wind's blowing.

Q. Coach, you mentioned briefly earlier the fourth quarter pass. Was that something you just saw an opportunity there?

COACH DAVIE: No, I told Lamar at halftime, We're going to let it rip a little more. For us, we threw six passes, I guess five in the second half. We really I felt could have thrown the ball. I have confidence we can throw the ball.

But, no, there were some things that were there. It was just the way the conditions were. We didn't do it as much. I'll let Lamar talk about it when he gets up here.

Q. You were talking about the energy from the fans. What was that like? I saw you in that scrum, all the fans around you showing they really support you. What was that like?

COACH DAVIE: Yeah, it meant a lot. Again, it was kind

of like after the 1:12 a.m. game against Nevada when they asked fans to send an email saying they were there and give a reason why they decided to stay for the game. I think we got 150 emails. It wasn't 22,000 emails, but it's what they said.

Just like after the game, I don't know how many people were there, but more important to me is what they said. I mean, there were legitimately some tears and people saying thank you.

I've said it many times. A lot of times we want to blame everybody, pick whose fault it is that there are not more people there. I think what we really ought to do is really appreciate the people that are there and start building with that.

It's what they said to me after the game and to these players, the sincerity. I know we made a difference to somebody, some people today, as we moved this program forward. It meant a lot to me, it really did.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: We have Lamar Jordan, Dakota Cox, and Richard McQuarley.

Q. Lamar, you and Dakota are walking with the player of the game hardware from both sides of the football.

LAMAR JORDAN: Yeah, I mean, to be honest, you really got to give the player award to the offensive line because none of this could happen without them.

From Reno to Chris Lewis, Blaise, Big A.J., Avery, they are the real MVPs.

It's a blessing to get this award, but those five up front really deserve it, as well as Richard McQuarley. That's on his own, to take on two, three people. You got to thank him as well as the receivers. Very well-disciplined, blocking on the edge. You got to thank the whole offense.

DAKOTA COX: It was a great opportunity to go out there for the last home game here in the Lobo uniform for me. It meant a lot for me to go out with that award.

Credit the whole defense. We did our job the whole time. We held them to a lot of field goals. I credit a lot of people out there. Kimmie did an awesome job. Everyone stepped up. Safeties. Stan filling in. It's just a huge opportunity to build off this going into next season. It just feels great to get this win for this community.

Q. Lamar, the fourth quarter pass you completed there, how big was that to get that drive moving?

LAMAR JORDAN: I mean, it's big. We practiced that play almost a hundred times in practice. I trusted Gambo. One-on-one with Gambo, that's a win automatically. That's how we roll in our receiver group.

Like I said, I saw him, I knew I had to get it to where he could catch it. You have to thank the O-line.

Q. Lamar and Richard, how can you guys use this for all the returning guys, confidence, what you can build on for next year?

LAMAR JORDAN: There's definitely momentum, like I said. Last year when we lost, there was a lot of momentum. The next day we were in there working. Like I say, to get this win is truly a blessing.

Me and Rick, we got one more year together. That's my boy since he came in. He's a ju-co, but we're always with each other 24 hours of the day. It's good to have one of your best friends back in the backfield with you.

RICHARD McQUARLEY: I feel like starting off we wasn't really like what we are now. I feel like we can tell the younger guys about this motivation, have them continue to grind hard in practice, let them know what we could be.

We need to go in there and do the whole 110, stay focused, listen to the coaches, execute.

Q. Lamar, the crowd was pretty electric today. Did you feed off of that, all the positive energy?

LAMAR JORDAN: Oh, without a doubt. In every interview, I'm always trying to get the fans to come out. We feed off the fans. I can speak for everyone in that locker room, the whole building. When that stadium is packed, we play our best game.

If this could just be a lead-on to next year, hopefully we can have this every home game. We want to put on a shows for those guys. We do it for them.

DAKOTA COX: Yeah, I definitely think just for the fans coming out to support us, it gave us just a tremendous energy throughout the team to go out there and play every down, get them pumped up. They were great the whole game.

Sticking through the wind, all that, not wondering if it was going to rain again like it was this morning. I give credit to this whole community. I know this win means so much to them.

Q. Dakota, in the past big plays have been a problem for the defense. They moved the ball, got some yards, but only had one play over 25 yards.

How important was that?

DAKOTA COX: I think playing every play no matter what happens, it shows the discipline of this defense and the maturity that we've grown up together. We've all been through it.

The whole defense stepped up when they needed to. No matter what happens down the field, if they get a big gain, we're going to come back, we're going to bend but not break every time.

Q. You came into the game today leading the nation in rushing. UTSA held you to 125, below average. What did they do to make it so difficult for you? Did they surprise you in any way by what they were able to do containing both the offensive guys?

LAMAR JORDAN: They did a great job. They did a lot up front. That was really new to us. They contained the outside very well. You have to give credit when credit's due.

Like I say, we kept grinding, we kept pushing. Like I say, when you got guys like Gip and Rick who can make one, two, even three guys miss, you really can't scheme that at all. You got to tell them to try to tackle those guys. Really got to thank those guys as well as the O-line.

RICHARD McQUARLEY: Defensively, they rushed to the ball. At the same time, like what Lamar was saying, we're real humble at whatever we do. We always compete. We have the best hands out of the backfield.

I'll mess with them, I'll hit you. It's just a thing to keep everybody going, to let Gip know we can do whatever we put our mind to. Like I say, they physical, but we was more physical.

DAKOTA COX: I'd like to add one more thing about this guy. It's fun watching him progress every year, be more than just a power back. You saw a little bit of his speed tonight. Being a senior, I know he's going to put this offense on his back, and Lamar is going to help lead those guys.

It's exciting to watching both of these guys progress. I'm excited to see what they can do next year.

Q. Rick and Lamar, since both of you are coming back next year, talk about the significance of nine wins. That's really a lot to build on. You have a good foundation.

RICHARD McQUARLEY: I feel like that's great. Nine wins, that's a biggy. A lot of people doubted us. That's what we really wanted to do, use the people that

doubted us as motivators.

It hurt us a little bit because their coaches were saying that we were New Mexico State. We were really bothered by that. Everybody had one mindset, and that was to win tonight. I feel like we gave him the answer that he wanted.

LAMAR JORDAN: Just feeding off of what Rick said, I feel like this whole year nobody really respected us. You look at October against Boise, I didn't play my best game. Like I said, they were a lucky team. That's the vibe we were getting.

Like Rick say, when we heard the Wyoming coach say New Mexico State, the whole week was, Man, we just need to get our respect. It's more than just this win, just respect in the whole country.

I feel like, I mean, nationally televised game, ESPN first bowl game, I feel like we really got our respect.

Q. Lamar and Dakota, a couple weeks ago we talked about the Utah State game being a breakthrough. How does this game compare to that? And Lamar, what happened when you missed those two plays?

DAKOTA COX: Getting that ninth win, going out there, it's a huge achievement for this whole program. It hasn't been done in a little while. So it feels great.

Building off what Lamar said, we wanted to go out there and earn our respect, understanding that we're here to play, we're going to go out there and play hard every down.

Going out there and getting the win just means so much to this whole team.

LAMAR JORDAN: Like I say, feeding off of Utah State, this game, defense played their butts off. When you can keep a team below 21 points, the offense has to win that game. Both those games we kept them under 21 points. It's on us.

You got to thank those guys. Dakota, countless games, double-digit tackles. You don't really hear about that a lot in America. You really got to thank him.

You got to thank the D-line, Nick Hughes, D'Avanzo. The secondary, you have Nias Martin, Lee Crosby, IB Brown, you really got to thank those guys. When they play good, it's like a muscle offense. You got to put points on the board.

Those two plays, I mean, I fell on the ball and I couldn't really breathe. I was trying my best to get air. I mean, I knew the whole time it wasn't going to be a repeat of

last year. I wasn't going to sit out that game.

I went right to the sideline and told coach, I'm ready to go back in. I just needed to relax myself, talk to God a little bit, ask Him for some more oxygen.

I'm good. Thank God.

Q. Dakota, last game, it was a defensive battle, you killed it. Can you leave the University of New Mexico knowing you left it all out on the field?

DAKOTA COX: I think I definitely can. I've been honored to play for this program, Coach Davie, Coach Cos gave me the chance to come in as a freshman and trusted me to play. To go out there, really get that award, it's something I've been wanting to do ever since I saw Skippy Wright do it last year. Going out there and doing that shows off all the hard work I put into everything.

I mean, I just give credit to this whole team. It's never one person, it's everyone. I've created a brotherhood, friendships for life that I'm going to have a long time down the road. That's one thing I can take away from this whole thing.

Q. Richard, your first touchdown, you ran the ball four times in a row, you called a timeout, you put your hands together. Were you pleading to get the carry one more time?

RICHARD McQUARLEY: I told coach, I know things happen, the majority probably knew I would get the ball in any type of close situation. I really was, like, upset because I like to compete, like I said. 55 linebacker, it was a good hit. I don't take credit away from nobody. Like I tell coach, the Lord man win. I wanted to get him back.

I told coach, Don't try to change the play, just let me get the ball, get my chance back.

At that time I didn't. My last touchdown, I did. Like I say, it was a successful game. Everything went as planned.

Q. Lamar, we spoke earlier in the season, you talked about some of your goals. You said you wanted to do some things for Markel Byrd. You scratched all the things off the list. Talk about what that means to you and the team.

LAMAR JORDAN: I mean, this whole season, ever since he passed away, it's coming up in a couple days on a whole year, we wanted to do it for him.

A lot of guys knew Markel, as well. Like I say, me and ha bib, we probably knew him the most. My foundation of this season was for him because I know if he was

here, he definitely would compete his butt off. He'd probably compete with Dakota on offensive MVP of the game. I love him to death, I miss him.

This whole season, this win, any award I get is for him. It's not only one season for Markel. It's a lifetime trait for me. As long as I can play football, I will definitely honor Markel.

Q. Lamar, after they cut it to 16-13, you drove 75 yards, took seven minutes off the clock. What was the mindset going into that drive? Did you say anything to the guys on offense?

LAMAR JORDAN: It was nothing different. Like I said, every drive get points on the board, get six. You have to thank the O-line as well as the backs and receivers.

It's kind of simple. I tell the boys, Let's get six. If that's what you want to hear, that's about it. We got six. You got to thank God for that.

Q. Now that the season is over, what is the one word you would use to describe it?

LAMAR JORDAN: I'd probably say blessed. You look at us three, completely three different backgrounds. I could tell you countless stories. You got a guy like Gambo who lost 12 people this year as well as Donnie lost his whole family. I mean, this whole team is full of different stories. A lot of people really coming out of the mud, coming from nothing.

I'd say blessed. You really got to thank God, that He put us all together. He put us together for a reason, made this day happen for a reason.

DAKOTA COX: I think it was just very exciting, the whole season. To go out on a win, a nine-win season, for these guys to build off of it next year, I think the best word to describe it is exciting. The way we pulled through everything, going through a little bit of a rough patch at the beginning of the year, pulling it together after that bye week, really just pulling it together, guys understanding what we could really do if we all worked together. I think it's a season to be remembered. Just a very exciting season to build off of.

RICHARD McQUARLEY: My word, as a team, we humble because we really started off, we going one back to two backs, then three backs in the backfield. That was something new to us. It was kind of different because it was confusing, for one. We was always mad at the coaches or us because we didn't know what to do.

What we did, though, we stayed afterwards, put in extra work. If he wanted the year to be ours, we had to do what it takes. I feel like my word for this team is

humble.

Q. (No microphone.)

DAKOTA COX: I think he learned after last year not to throw out those dance moves anymore.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.