

SOUTH CAROLINA (6-4) VS. CHATTANOOGA (6-5)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.

POSTGAME QUOTES

SOUTH CAROLINA HEAD COACH WILL MUSCHAMP

Opening Statement...

“I thought our guys came out and handled business like they’re supposed to do in a game like this. (I’m) pleased with our preparation all week, very business-like. It was good to play a bunch of guys and get guys in the game. Eight-straight conference games is always hard. It was great to get some guys out there and play on game day. That’s where they improve and get better. (I’m) really proud of our football team, bouncing back and getting this one done today. I like how we went about our business in all three phases.”

On being bowl eligible for the third-straight season...

“It’s an expectation here. That’s something I expect every year.”

On special teams production...

“Yeah, I was pretty pleased. Some of the alternative kicks we’ve been given have been frustrating and they’ve done a nice job of (getting) great field position so our return game doesn’t look as good as it really is as far as the field position that we’re putting our offense in because of all the alternative kicks. Will Tommie has done a fantastic job kicking off. He’s touching about every ball back, which is what you’ve got to have. I’m really pleased with his production. I think Parker (White) is kicking extremely well. He hooked that one tonight, but he’s been steady all year for us.”

On Jake Bentley coming back from injury and if anything has changed...

“I don’t think Jake played very well in Lexington. That’s my personal opinion as a football coach that watches a lot of film and a lot of practices. I don’t think he played very well in Lexington, and I think he’d tell you that. Jake’s played really good football for us. He’s completing close to 70 percent of his passes, and we’re throwing the ball down the field. He’s played at a very high level since the second half of the Texas A&M game against some very good defenses.”

On if the offense is getting into a groove...

“I think we’ve played well. We’ve done a nice job. Certainly we’ve got a huge challenge and opportunity with Clemson, and Brent (Venables, Clemson defensive coordinator) does a really good job. We’re gonna need to play well again.”

SOUTH CAROLINA (6-4) VS. CHATTANOOGA (6-5)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.

POSTGAME QUOTES

SOUTH CAROLINA JUNIOR QB JAKE BENTLEY

On the Clemson game coming up...

"I try to take each game by itself, and I think about 'what-ifs' and what it's going to be. We've got to approach with the mindset this is the 2018 Carolina team against the 2018 Clemson team and just go from there."

On first half scoring...

"I think it's just a great plan by Coach (Bryan) McClendon and really understanding what's going to work. Through his film work and through all of the coaches, just seeing what's going to be the best plays that we can run. I think the guys have done a great job of having the right mindset, the mindset to go score. That's one thing we got better at, we think we're going to score when we get the ball. It's been really good for us."

On teammate Deshaun Fenwick...

"I think he did really well. He didn't get rattled; he stayed confident. That's kind of his big thing since he's been here, when he runs the ball confidently he looks really good. I think he did that tonight, and I think that was huge for him to get into the end zone. I really liked what I saw today from him"

SOUTH CAROLINA SOPHOMORE WR SHI SMITH

On first half scoring...

"I think it's preparation and tempo of the offense, and just going and doing what we have to do."

On the Clemson game next week...

"It's our rival; it means a lot, but we're going to take it just as we did last week."

SOUTH CAROLINA SENIOR DB JASON SENN

On playing his first game after growing up a Carolina fan...

"It's was pretty cool. I grew up a huge Carolina fan, so it meant so much to me to be able to go out there on Senior Day and put it all on the field."

On his first career game ...

"I ran with the second team most of the week in practice. They told me 'just get ready, you're probably going to play.' They prepared me the entire week, so I kind of knew I was going to play. I just didn't know when."

SOUTH CAROLINA RS JUNIOR DEFENSIVE LINEMAN DANIEL FENNELL

On his preparation to play in a three wide-receiver set...

"Coming into the season, we always took reps at Sam, we took reps at Buck and at End. They just always kept me prepared to do different things, because I knew there could be a chance that I have to go in."

On the keys to the next week's game at Clemson...

"We just need to be consistent. Need to play our game. As the defense is called, we have to all do our job. The offense has to score the way they know they can. The way they have in the past couple weeks and we'll be fine."

SOUTH CAROLINA RS JUNIOR RUNNING BACK A.J. TURNER

On his three touchdowns...

“I feel good. Pretty confident. Give a lot of credit to my o-line and Jake (Bentley). Jake passed me the ball and the o-line blocking. You can never take all of the credit for that. Got to give credit when it’s due, so I definitely recognize my boys.”

On whether this was his best game of the season...

“I feel like maybe stat-wise, this was probably my best game. I’ve never, in college, scored three touchdowns, but it’s not about touchdowns. I feel like it’s more about us being able to play together. That would have never happened if we had never been doing that in practice, if we had never been repping that. Once again, I had three touchdowns, but the credit to Jake (Bentley) and my o-line for allowing me to do it. The chemistry that we have doing stuff like that, practicing like that, does a lot for us, carries over to game time and it showed this week.”

SOUTH CAROLINA JUNIOR LINEBACKER T.J. BRUNSON

On the defense bouncing back after last week’s loss and the play of freshman linebackers...

“It feels really good to win, especially after last week. It gets the bad taste out of your mouth. Definitely for Ernest (Jones) and Rosendo (Louis), it’s really cool to see them go out there with the confidence that they had. Just play fast and line everyone up and make calls and everything.”

On next week’s game at Clemson...

“It’ll be like a regular week of preparation and everything, but there’s always a chip on your shoulder going into the week with our rivalry game and everything. We can do a little bit extra meeting and things like that, but preparation has to stay the same.”

SOUTH CAROLINA (6-4) VS. CHATTANOOGA (6-5)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.

POSTGAME QUOTES

CHATTANOOGA HEAD COACH TOM ARTH

On the environment

“It was a great environment. I think it was everything we anticipated it to be. Great crowd, great place to play, great energy throughout the stadium throughout the game. I think our players handled it well and I think they fed off a lot of that energy.”

On the main difference in the game

“I thought early on, they were putting some drives together but really, defensively, we were making them earn it. They were having to convert third downs, we weren’t giving up big plays, but really with the exception of the slant route, the play down on the sideline where we missed a couple of tackles, and there was another play later in the game where we missed some tackles. I thought we really forced South Carolina to execute offensively to move the ball down the field. We came up with a huge fourth down stop after a turnover, so I thought there were a lot of positive things. Unfortunately, we let them get loose on some big plays that we should have tackled for a minimal gain, 12 or so yards, but unfortunately some of those turned into 50 or 60 yards. Offensively, I thought early on we had some opportunities that we didn’t capitalize on. Obviously, South Carolina is a great football team. Very talented, big, strong, fast. I thought we left some plays out there unfortunately, but that’s the hard part, trying to challenge our guys. We need to challenge ourselves and tell ourselves that for the last 20 minutes, we have to leave everything out there.”

On what the program needs to do to take the next step forward

“We have a long way to go. It’s so interesting, I talked with some of the coaches about this last week. In some regards, we feel like we’re right there and we’re a possession away or a touchdown away on offense from coming into this one 10-0 or 8-2, whatever the case may be. That margin for error, as small as it looks, is really big and it’s difficult to close that. We have a lot of work to do to get where we want to be, but I’m very proud of our team and of our resiliency throughout the season. [I’m also proud of] our players, the fight that they have in them. It shows at the end of the game, to be able to get a stop on fourth and one against a team that’s probably three inches taller and 40 pounds heavier across the board up front. To be able to stop them on fourth and one tells you a lot about that group. The fight is there, and the will is there. It’s going to be my responsibility to get us to that point where we can close that gap.”

On Bryce Nunnelly’s play this year

“Bryce has been great all season long. He got off to an incredible start to the season and has been very consistent throughout the year. He had a big game tonight and had some opportunities where he was able to get some balls down the field and he converted them. I’ve been really pleased with Bryce and his work ethic, just the way that he prepares week in and week out.”

SOUTH CAROLINA (5-4) VS. CHATTANOOGA (6-4)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018 | WILLIAMS-BRICE STADIUM | COLUMBIA, S.C.

POSTGAME QUOTES

CHATTANOOGA JUNIOR QB NICK TIANO

On the environment of tonight's game...

“For me, it was great and I enjoyed it. My mindset and what I was trying to tell the guys let's just enjoy it and have some fun, make the most of it, we don't get to do this every week. I don't think it affected our play, I think we had fun with it and enjoyed the environment.”

On his play tonight...

“Obviously there's things that I look back on, throws I wish I could have had back, for sure. The O-Line played a great game, the receivers got open tonight, and I thought we moved the ball pretty well. I was able to end up with some decent numbers, and that's what you work for.”

CHATTANOOGA SENIOR LINEBACKER TAVON LAWSON

On takeaways from tonight's game...

“Understanding the tempo better. That would be the only thing. Coach Feeney did a good job executing the plays and scheming up defensive plays, so I feel like it's just their style and tempo. We have never played a team that plays with the tempo they do.”

On his play in the final game of his college career...

“It was very important, because after fighting injury and fighting to get back in the rotation, playing fast, playing without thinking about the knee. It felt good, and I feel like I needed it to secure myself and go out on a high road. I feel like as a senior, leaving with the play that I did, no head is hung. I'm proud of my defense and myself for the way I finished out the season.”