



ROCK CHALK JAYHAWK
QUOTES
// 2019 KANSAS FOOTBALL

HEAD COACH LES MILES // AUGUST 26, 2019

Opening Statement

Enjoyed my team. Enjoyed the outcome. The interesting thing is for me is to put a team in position that they want to be dominant and they want to play in the best and the biggest games. And then the opportunity with a little crisis in the back end of the game, we found that that team played awfully hard. They played in tight quarters and played extremely well. Very proud of how they responded.

Imperfect, not certainly everything you wanted, but a game in which the future looks pretty strong.

Any questions?

If you want, I can kind of ramble. I'm serious, I can. (Laughter.) Like as an example, Hasan Defense's first pick six, what a tremendous start to the game. We're going to give some awards, now, because we've won. Andrew Parchment will get the MVP. You know, I haven't given it to him yet, so I take it back, okay. I want to give it to him first. I don't want to give it to you guys, everybody will be talking about it and he'll say, I guess I'm the MVP, so please strike that from your records. Hang on a second, you know that Men in Black thing? Give it to me. You're done.

Any questions?

Q. Pooka (Williams) is coming back this week; what does that bring to the offense? How much more dynamic does that potentially make your --

LES MILES: Well, I think he's a very strong player. We'll have to integrate him into the team yet again, and I yet I suspect he'll give us some Pooka plays. We're looking forward to having him back, I can tell you that. He's enjoyed by his teammates, and he's really -- we'll enjoy him in the huddle; we'll enjoy him eating; we'll enjoy that man.

Q. After you guys reinstated him, did you have him talk to the team about the off-season issues that he went through or anything like that?

LES MILES: I suggested that, and he got scared. Yeah, yeah, I suggested that he do it, and he's going to, just not when I suggested.

Q. Along those lines, do you expect there to be any rust or anything like that, because I know you had mentioned any rust, for Pooka, because you had mentioned in fall camp --

LES MILES: I think he's played a lot of football in the meantime. I think he's caught balls and done some -- he's taken plays.

Q. And then big picture, following the win, a lot of your players talked about how you guys came in and kind of were able to identify the top guys at each position. They gave you a lot of credit for that. How did that process work for you, and do you feel like you guys have done a good job of that thus far?

LES MILES: I think they give me too much credit. I think what reality is is they improved, and they continue to improve. Yeah, I think it's the job of a coach is to assess the players' skills that they have, improve the ones that they have, and put them in a position where they can show those skills again and again and again.

Q. Can you talk about integration of tight ends and fullbacks and good old-fashioned smashmouth football and out of the I-formation at times, you ran it well? And particularly No. 29, I thought he led well; I just want you to talk about him as a player.

LES MILES: Yeah. We enjoy a smidgen of two-back. Certainly there's ways to attack a competitor, an opponent, that way, as well, differently. And I think that that's something that the staff and certainly myself looks forward to.

No. 29 (Ben Miles), 240 plus, tough kid, plays hard, and will continue to improve. My son, Ben, he has good ball skills. If you want, I can go into detail after the press conference.

Q. I've got a couple. One thing I'm curious about, you were in North Carolina I think for Manny's senior day, for the KU-OU game. Did you watch that? Did you watch Pooka that night on TV, or were you busy doing family stuff?

LES MILES: I did not. I got bits and pieces of that game. I don't remember the specific Pooka plays. But we did -- we were in the press box and enjoying TV, as well.

Q. I just wondering what you make of your front seven as a whole on Saturday.

LES MILES: Defensively?

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Q. Right.

LES MILES: I think they're really good. Imperfect. I can tell you specific and strategic misalignments, but I can also tell you that those things will be corrected pretty quickly, and we have some guys in there that are playing hard and playing good old-fashioned knock-back defense.

Q. Saw what you were hoping to see then?

LES MILES: Yes. Yeah. How many missed tackles did you see? I didn't see any. I didn't see many I should say, having watched the film. Not many at all.

Q. Going a little bit another direction from what David asked you about the fullbacks and power, also some no-huddle, hurry-up. What was that like for you?

LES MILES: Well, that's the right stuff as far as I'm concerned. I enjoyed change of pace tempo. I enjoyed the fullback and the tight end you put in the game. It gives you differing ways to attack an opponent, again. Yeah, that's kind of my background. It's kind of who I am. I enjoy that.

Q. I wondered, late in the game you guys had a chance to close it out. You've talked a lot about physical football and you weren't able to get yardage there. What did you see from film on the breakdowns just late when you guys could have grinded out the victory a little bit earlier than you did?

LES MILES: Yeah, that was certainly something we would have loved to have had happen, but the opponent made a good play. We're going to let that kind of stand. But that was the plan, and our guys certainly -- they wanted that opportunity.

Q. You mentioned the front seven a little bit. The secondary, as well, you had a large rotation of bodies. Is that something that pleased you watching the tape, the depth you were able to play with on defense?

LES MILES: Yeah, you have to have fresh bodies. You have to have fresh legs. Those guys in the secondary, they're chasing things down and making hits and defending balls that are thrown. It's important. It's important that you have fresh guys. Glad to have the depth that we have in our secondary.

Q. You mentioned Andrew Parchment a lot, but the whole receiving corps was able to make really tough contested catches late in the game. How impressed were you with their ability to go up and grab the ball in tough situations?

LES MILES: Yeah, I felt like our quarterback certainly helped in that situation. I mean, here you are late in the game, and now you have to drive the length of the field or thereabouts to score the game winner and/or the go-ahead touchdown, and he stepped right in there, handled it comfortably, did the right things.

Our receivers fell in line and made some significant catches in that drive that led to the score. Again, Andrew Parchment did some special things in that game, and really enjoyed how they played as a group and individually. Some special guys.

Q. I know traditionally week one, pretty conservative at least so you don't put a whole lot of stuff on tape for maybe some opponents to see. Did you feel like you were able to keep it pretty simple and anticipate a bigger change maybe in week two?

LES MILES: Yeah, we have some things that we might play a little differently. But I think it will look very similar to what we just played. I don't think it'll be that different. As we go forward, this is the kind of game where it wasn't perfect, but certainly it was victory, and this is early enough in the season where our guys will look at that film and go, we can be better, and when they say that we can be better and we can improve, that's what we need to hear, because a great coach whose name I don't know said that after week one, it's about a 20 percent improvement for week two, and I find that to be true.

Q. Just staying on top of looking ahead to next week, what's something that sort of stood out on film from Coastal Carolina that you've seen that they've done particularly well?

LES MILES: I think they're a real quality football team. I know they've got a really good kicker, a guy that can kick it with distance and kick it with consistency. You know, it's a physical team, and I wish them the very best because I know that they're traveling now to I think South Carolina to enjoy the rest of their practice schedules, considering that they'll have this time away from home and away from college. I wish them the best. Having been through the Katrina and some of those pieces of other hurricane seasons, I wish them well.

Q. Kyle Thompson averaged 49 yards a punt. He was Second-Team All-Big 12 last year. What's it like to have a punter like that?

LES MILES: I want you to know something. The one punt we were backed up, and I said, Okay, baby, we need a punt; come on, big boy. And it looked like that ball was dropped out of a plane. I'm serious. Did anybody watch -- because sometimes you don't watch the punt. You're getting -- you know there's a group that's going to change, you want to get the personnel right and you're doing other things, but this was important, we needed to know it and we needed to see where we were going to be. And honestly, it looked like it was pushed out of a plane. Did anybody notice that? I mean, it was like -- it was up there and then somehow it got higher somehow. Like I think our -- I think it was a 4.9 hangtime, 4.9. Oh, my gosh. I promise you, I could not have caught that ball with a net.

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Q. A bit of an off-the-wall question, but Coastal Carolina's mascot is Chanticleer. Do you know what that is off the top of your head?

LES MILES: It's a rooster that handles the barnyard with real moxie, and tough and smart. Yeah, I kind of know.

Q. After watching the game or re-watching the game, were there any position groups that you felt like you really need to see a lot of improvement at? What was maybe your biggest concern leaving the game?

LES MILES: I think the group question would be more team related because I really think that we're in a position to improve jointly as a group, and I think we'll be fine. I think that group, whatever group that you might want to talk about, is within striking distance of being much better and improved, so much that it could help our football team significantly. To answer your question, yeah, there's some significant improvement expected.

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