

Louisville vs. Florida State
September 16, 2022
Coach Mike Norvell Postgame Press Conference

(Opening Statement)

“First off, I am just so very proud of our football team. We essentially started back in January. It's about the investment, the work, the relationships; and we've got a very competent football team in times of adversity because they know that they invest in work. I thought that tonight, even with the adversity that showed up, you had guys that went down or some guys who were not available and didn't make the trip – some of our best football players. Tonight our guys, they just pulled themselves to victory. I'm so proud of Tate Rodemaker. I knew we could win with Tate. I knew we could win with Tate. I've seen it in practice. I've seen him work. I've seen so much investment in being prepared for the moment. He got put in a challenging situation on the road. But, he just went out there and responded in the second half. It is just an incredible example of what this team is built on. I'm just so proud of the players and our coaches. It was just a special night. That's one that I will remember forever. Because there was an incredible atmosphere that you're having to play in and a lot of adversity showed up. We talked about that heart, we talked about the identity. And the identity of Florida State football showed up tonight on the national stage. So I'm just proud of our team. I want to give credit to Louisville. That was an incredible, incredible game. There were some tremendous players. Those guys compete hard. It was physical, tough, back and forth with coaches. Schematically, it was just a fun game to be a part of. And we're just so happy for our guys. At the end, it just took one more play. Same thing that showed up in the Superdome a few weeks ago. We got our one more play.”

(What was it like to see Johnny (Wilson) step up and make plays?)

“Johnny has been incredible. Just his growth from spring practice to this fall. We believe that we got a special player there. He sees them all, with his size and his speed and going in and attacking the ball. That was really, really an impressive performance. Tate put the ball in great places for it. And you see those two connecting (Rodemaker and Wilson). That's what it's all about. A lot of guys showed up big tonight. It was a fun performance for our football team. When guys seize the moment and we tell them you never know when your number's going to be called but you got to be ready. To see guys like Trey Benson out there in the second half, some of those runs were incredible. Treshaun Ward continued to just be an incredible leader for us. We had guys on the offensive line that battled, playing different positions, moving around. And on the defensive front, you had Patrick Payton coming in got Jared Verse when he went down. He was ready, even with Fabien Lovett not playing tonight we had to get more in depth at tackle. Just across our team, it's hard to point out any one specific. It was a heck of a response and I am just really proud of them. And yes, Johnny did exceptional.”

(Louisville scored to go ahead 28-21 at a television timeout and you talked one-on-one with Tate. What did you tell him at that point?)

“Just keep playing. Trust your eyes, trust your feet. Go out there and trust your training. That's the reality of it. What he did tonight, I've seen before. I've seen before, it's not been on Friday

night national television. But like I said in the beginning, I knew we could win with Tate. And for him to go on to the second half, being down on the road in a hostile environment – he just kept playing. And that was something special.”

(How big was it for (Tate Rodemaker) to just get a good play? The throw to Johnny (Wilson) in the middle of the field, how big was it just for him to do that in a game?)

“That’s part of the deep breath. You want it so bad, and ultimately, Tate (Rodemaker) can absolutely spin the ball. We’ve known that, he’s shown that time over time. In his preparation, things that we added in the game plan that he was able to go on and execute, even some of the checks and things that we were able to put in. He got out there and just did what he did in practice, and once you connect on the deep ball to Johnny (Wilson), it probably puts you in a lot more comfortable situation. He just continued to be our quarterback for that game and bringing us back to clicking.”

(I know he was probably spending more time talking to you or talking to Coach (Tony) Tokarz in the box, but what was Jordan (Travis) doing? Was Jordan talking to him (Tate Rodemaker), how was Jordan staying involved, he seemed like he was down on the sidelines a lot?)

“I told Jordan (Travis) at halftime, when I knew that he wasn’t going to be available in the second half, I told Jordan, “Alright, you got a job to do.” Everybody has a role. Jordan is special when he is on that football field, inside the white lines. He’s special when he’s off on the sideline too. The impact that he makes, his encouragement. These guys are brothers, they care about each other. I’ve said that since we started fall camp. You asked me about what I thought the identity of who these guys were. They are a family, they care. Even though Jordan couldn’t make a play in the second half on the field, he was definitely there to help support his guys off the field. That’s what this is about. That’s the thing that makes Florida State special. It’s the people, and yes, they’re incredibly talented young men and they’re growing up, and we’re still at the beginning of our journey. Just like the mistakes we made, we have a lot to clean up. But, what matters to me is our character, our identity, the foundational elements of this program that we’re so worried about. When guys can’t go on the field, when they’re not available, but they’re still making an impact. That’s what makes it special.”