



ARKANSAS

FOOTBALL



PORTLAND STATE vs ARKANSAS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31 | FAYETTEVILLE, AR

ARKANSAS HEAD COACH CHAD MORRIS QUOTES

Opening Statement

"Never will I ever apologize for winning, there is no such thing as a bad win. You win and you correct. Now, you may not have played as well as you wanted to play, and we didn't, but we won and we're going to be able to use this win to make corrections."

On struggling in the red zone...

"It was really frustrating, you know we had a big play in Kam Curl's interception. We get the ball down there and we couldn't get it into the endzone, and actually just turned the ball right back over to them. So, it was disappointing that we couldn't come away with some type of points. Then right before halftime, we thought we managed our time outs as well as we could have to get the ball back and we got down the field and then there was a miscommunication...that was completely on me."

On Ben Hicks and Nick Starkel...

"I thought Nick (Starkel) did well. I thought Ben (Hicks) managed the game, he got us in some right calls in certain situations. We weren't in all the right calls, but I thought he was just okay. I didn't think we played very well, offensively, at all. We did run the ball for over 200 yards which is a goal of ours. Overall, the flow of things, offensively, just wasn't what we wanted, entirely too many third downs."

On how Ben Hicks bounces back next week...

"We are one 1-0, I feel good. We got a lot of stuff we must get better at, I didn't think anyone played great, to be honest with you, from the quarterbacks all the way down. I thought we missed some runs, even though we ran the ball for over 200 yards. We had an opportunity to make some plays out on the edge catching the football, we missed a few of those, and those are things we have to get better at. A lot of that comes with timing and a lot of it come with just continuing to gain experience, and practice until you are blue in the face. Until you put them in a game and put an opponent out there, that's when you make adjustments, that's when you really grow. Ben is a veteran; he's been in this situation before and as a starter he is 1-0. He knows he has to improve."

On if Ben Hicks starts next week...

"Yes, Ben is going to start next week."

On Portland State getting the ball back late with a chance to tie the game...

"First of all, I was excited that we caught the punt to down it inside the five, but again - those are things you get better at, that won't happen anymore. I thought our special teams unit played well, I really did. I thought that they were exceptional in some areas today. I thought our punt game was good in pinning them. That is a huge improvement for this football team moving forward. I would've liked to see them kick it to us, so we could've returned a kick, but I thought overall we kicked the ball well. So those are some areas that we are going to build off of and we will continue to get better."





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ARKANSAS PLAYER QUOTES

Quarterback Ben Hicks

On his performance overall...

"I thought I played ok. I mean nothing spectacular. I tried to go out there and do my job. I thought we moved the ball well; we just didn't punch it in the end zone enough. We will go back and watch film tomorrow and figure out what we need to do going into week 2. We moved the ball but, like I said, we just didn't score. We just have to score points especially when our defense gets turnovers like that. You have to make teams pay for turning the ball over. Like I said, we will go back tomorrow and watch film and see what we need to do."

On wide receivers Treyton Burks and Trey Knox...

"I thought both of them played well for their first time out. They have a chance now to go watch film and see what they can do better. They got a little bit of experience under their belt and know what it's like to play college football. That will be good for them going into week two. I think having the film will be big going into Oxford. I thought both of them played well. Treyton (Burls) made some plays and Trey (Knox) made some plays. We need that out of them. We are counting on them and we need them to make plays. I think that will be an emphasis going into next week. I think they will respond and I thought it was good for their first time out."

Running back Rakeem Boyd

On if the game was tougher than they had anticipated...

"We knew they beat North Texas last year so we knew they were going to bring the punch. We just had to finish the game. We just fought, kept fighting and finished."

On what he thought of QB Ben Hicks' performance...

"I thought Ben played really good. He managed the game pretty well when he was in the game and I think he made some impressive throws. We just have to come up with the catches."

On opening up SEC play against Ole Miss...

"I think we're ready. Last year, we held them so, I think this year we will come in with a bang. We just have to go in this week, fix up some corrections and go beyond."

On the split between the running backs...

"We just lean on each other. This one goes, that one goes and we just keep rotating. I thought it worked really well today. It kept us healthy."

Defensive lineman McTelvin Agim

On if it was a tougher game than anticipated...

"I honestly didn't even know we were favored by four touchdowns. The only thing our coaches tried to preach to us was that we were going to get their best shot, that these guys were very confident coming in and that these guys could play. They've played big games already, so we understood that they were coming in here like this was their super bowl. We were going to get their best shot. We were just trying to counter, and make sure we got through the punches."

On getting two sacks on an elusive quarterback...

"Basically, just running to the ball, relentless effort. That's what (Coach Chavis) tries to preach all the time. Just relentless effort, getting to the ball, full tilt. That was what I was trying to do. Sometimes you are going to miss tackles. You can't rely on your teammates to just make tackles all the time. Sometimes you just got to make sure he's down, so that's basically what we were doing."

On the defense's mindset on the final drive...

"Get a turnover and get down. That basically was the thought going through our mind. Get pressure on the quarterback. We knew they were going to throw the ball. Basically, get pressure on him, try to contain him, let him try to throw a ball and hopefully get a turnover like we did."



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Linebacker De'Jon Harris

On his defensive performance...

"I think we played really well. That's something we emphasize as a defense. We try to create turnovers. We feel like we can change the game. We didn't really do that much today. We tried to keep it simple. I feel like the team expected us to do that and that was good for us."

On Ole Miss next week...

"We will get an early jump on those guys tomorrow and put this feeling behind us. I mean, it's the SEC opener so it's a big game anyways. I feel we just can't go down there like we did a few years ago and get down 30. We just have to start off fast. I think it will be pretty fun against those guys".

