



## Arkansas Quotes Coach Chad Morris



Arkansas vs Texas A&M  
Saturday, September 29, 2018  
AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas

**COACH MORRIS:** First of all, it was a heck of a football game against a -- if you're just an average fan, and you wanted to come see a really good football game, you saw a really good football game today. I cannot be more proud of the players in that locker room, the coaches in that locker room, and their fight.

These guys have continued to show up every day and continue to hit that tree in the same spot. As I shared with them in that locker room, if you'll continue to do that, it's going to fall. It's going to fall. And the effort, the care, the love that they have in that locker room for each other was very apparent today, especially after you took a huge punch on the first play of the game, on the kickoff.

And got guys in position, and a guy fell down. But the thing that you saw was the guys that rallied back. And they fought back. But to be able to put a defense on the field that held one of the top offenses in the country to well under their average, 370-something yards, and the play of Dre Greenlaw and Scooter [De'Jon] Harris and Santos Ramirez, and all those guys, they keep stepping up, like they have all year long. And creating turnovers. I know that was a big thing that we emphasized. But these guys did a great job.

Offensively, I thought that we got behind the sticks. We always talk about staying on schedule. And three first-down sacks and field position didn't help us at all.

But we did see some improvements and saw some gutty performance of Ty [Storey] and Rakeem Boyd and C.J. [Cheyenne] O'Grady did really good things today at the tight end position. And then special teams, after the first two, I thought we settled down. And I thought Reid Bauer did a phenomenal job in punting today and -- especially being a true freshman in an environment like this.

But I'll be honest, we're -- it is -- it's frustrating that these guys continue to -- and coaches continue to give the effort and work, and to walk into a locker room and to see their hurting.

But to know that we are getting better. This is a better football team than we've been this year. And we're going to continue to get better. And we're going to -- we're going to continue to do what we can do. And that's control our attitude and our effort. And these guys will do that. They have all year. They'll continue to respond. I absolutely love them. It's an honor to be their head football coach. And I promise you, we'll get better. And we'll get back on the plane, and we'll pull ourselves right back up, and we'll come back to work tomorrow and be ready to go.



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With that, I'll open up for questions.

***Q. So it's 17 to nothing. What happened at that point? How do you get the team back in the game? Can you just talk about what you did, both sides of the ball, to get back in the game?***

**COACH MORRIS:** I think you look -- obviously, defensively, you're playing really well. I think they had just a couple of drives in there that really kind of got them going. But just the fight. We've been in that situation before, and nobody's going to give in and nobody's going to give up.

The fight, the confidence on the sidelines, the coaches coaching, making adjustments, the players involved. And they're talking and communicating. It's what you would expect out of a championship sidelines. That's what you do. You come in, you respond, you get adversity that hits you, good. You step up. And what do we do? We got to make adjustments, and we got to keep putting our best foot forward. And if we do that, good things will happen.

And we kept stressing that, from an offensive standpoint, we just wanted to just start with first downs. Let's play one play at a time and get a first down. We had a spark right there in that second quarter. And C.J. [Cheyenne] O'Grady gave us the spark, a great pass with Ty [Storey]. And it lifted us. It gave these guys confidence. That's one thing offensively that we struggled with this year is confidence.

And to see that and then to see these guys continue to respond back and come in at halftime and we're in great shape. I mean, as I shared with the guys, even getting the ball back right there at the end. Man, you got to love it. This is what I told the guys, you got to love this. This is why we do it. And to be part of those moments, and to watch their fight, that's what really got us back in it, just these guys fighting. It's what they do.

***Q. It looked like Jeremy [Patton]'s injury was pretty serious. Can you give us an update? And then CJ [Cheyenne O'Grady] obviously has had some issues this year. But what did you think of his play overall? What got him going?***

**COACH MORRIS:** CJ was an ankle. We'll reevaluate that. Obviously, he did not come in. I thought CJ has continued to improve this year. And it was good to see him make some plays. I was very glad to see that.



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*Q. The next-to-the-last drive of the game, is that something you can build off of, the one where Ty [Storey] took them down the field and scored there?*

**COACH MORRIS:** Absolutely. It was -- again, they keep fighting. And, offensively, you got the ball. And, really, the drive before, as we shared with them, is it looked -- you've got a chance, you've got plenty of time. Let's go win the game.

And didn't happen. But, when they came back out on that field the next time, just their belief in each other. And then we had a couple guys make some plays in there. And that's what it takes in a game like this. You got guys that make plays. The ball's in the air, go get it. It's the time to make a play. And to be able to drive down the field and bring us back within -- make it a one-score game, I thought absolutely, we can definitely build and continue to build off that. And I thought we did that in the game here. We had the chance, again, ball in our hands, to go down and tie the game.

*Q. Protections. And what did you do at halftime? They've got a good player inside. What did y'all do to kind of counter that?*

**COACH MORRIS:** They were doing just a little bit different, not much. So we made a few adjustments that we saw from the first half. And I was able to communicate that to start the second half. They do. They're very sound up front. We knew that going in, very deep up front And very disruptive. And they've been that way all year long against every opponent.

*Q. [De'Jon] Harris and [Dre] Greenlaw -- 29 tackles, two interceptions, one sack -- talk about the performance of those two guys.*

**COACH MORRIS:** Unbelievable. I don't know if I've ever been a part of two guys that were that productive in one game, very much just all over the field and very impactful. Those two guys will probably be the first ones to tell you that the D-line, keeping those linemen off of them, allowing those guys to play downhill, we'll build off of that. I know they're very -- they're hurting. But, boy, they emptied their tank. And that's what you ask.

*Q. Coach, the center-to-quarterback exchange seemed to give you guys fits today. Your thoughts on that, and how do you get that corrected? And then second, a follow-up, if Cole Kelley is not in the game on the first touchdown, the snap, do you think it goes over [Ty] Storey's head?*

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**COACH MORRIS:** I do. I do. We've got to continue to work that position. You know, as a quarterback, it's hard enough to play the game getting a regular snap. When the ball dribbles back to you, it's even a little bit more difficult because you have to take your eyes off your initial read.

We'll continue to work on that and continue to fix those problems. But the one thing about it is that they'll definitely -- they recognize it and they understand.

*Q. On Reid Bauer, you touched on this a little bit. But have you seen this coming in practice? I mean, the kid goes from almost getting two blocks last week to 44 yards a punt today. Have you seen that coming in practice?*

**COACH MORRIS:** I think a lot of it had to do with the confidence that he had in the guys up front to fix the issues that we had last week. As I shared with you last week, everything was fixable.

And just his confidence in those guys up front and the battery of the snap was outstanding. And he has. He has shown that in practice. Very much a -- for a true freshman to come in an environment like this, very proud of him. And he'll continue to get better.

*Q. You made a couple changes on the kickoff team. I don't know who they were right now, but what happened on the first kickoff there?*

**COACH MORRIS:** Yeah. Ryder [Lucas] -- on the first one, Ryder went down and was trying to fold inside, and I guess lost his footing. When he did, we left a crease there on the field return. They showed a bound return all year long. And we knew they were going to come in with a field return. We gave the guy a crease. And our contain drifted inside. And, you know, you've got to have -- you've got to make sure you keep your contain outside. But we had a huge, huge hole right there. But, again, as they responded, they fixed it. We did, and battled back.

*Q. That last drive, Ty [Storey] ended up actually having pretty decent passing stats. He got sacked five times. What did you think of Ty's game and the way he rallied there despite getting hit quite a bit?*

**COACH MORRIS:** I think Ty [Storey] continues to play with grit and toughness, and I think the guys are rallying around him. And they see that. And, from a defensive standpoint, these guys coming down encouraging him, I definitely think that he is extremely tough. Eyes down



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the field, very confident. When he steps on the field, he's an extremely confident young man, and should be. And he'll continue to get better. And I think we've seen that this week.

*Q. On a positive note, it looked like the staff spent a week on the punt return coverage team. And can you talk about how different that was? It looked like a few new players -- I didn't get them all -- but what changes you did in punt coverage this week.*

**COACH MORRIS:** Yeah, as I mentioned, I guess, last Monday, the issues we had were fixable. We fixed them with a few personnel changes. And then we fixed them with some fundamentals that we needed to continue to work on.

And in games and environments that we play in, your fundamentals have to hold up in all phases, not just the punt, but all phases. Your fundamentals have to hold up under pressure. And that's what we challenged our guys with. And they saw it. And I think that was one of the reasons why, that you saw, that the punting was better. He felt -- he had a lot of confidence in those guys.

*Q. Coach, I'm not sure if Highland Park was the last game you attended here, their championship game last year. But your thoughts on now coaching inside this stadium. And do you like this rivalry, this game being here at AT&T Stadium?*

**COACH MORRIS:** Absolutely. I love it. I thought the environment was incredible. I thought our fans that traveled, I want to commend them. It was awesome to see. And I know that this season hasn't been what everybody wanted. But the one thing you love about it is you love the passionate Hog fans that we have following this team. And to see that environment today and them cheering right here at the end all the way up to the bitter end, I absolutely love it.

It's a great venue, incredible recruiting base. Absolutely. I absolutely love the environment and love the fan base that we have in this area and, obviously, a major footprint in our recruiting.

*Q. Chad, you're down 7. You got the ball back, almost two minutes. What's going through your mind? And, also, you got to play Alabama next week. Obviously, you're making progress. Those guys are pretty good. What's your feelings about that?*

**COACH MORRIS:** Down by 7, the ball in your hands. And we can control. We pick up first downs. I think it's -- the only thing in my mind was we're fixing to go tie this thing up or give us a chance to win it with a 2-point conversion. Who knows? That was really going through my

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mind right now was, okay, we pick up first downs. How do we kill the clock? We don't have no timeouts. So everybody was understanding that. We had great calls on it. And let's protect this guy and let's see what we can go do. And let's have fun doing it. Let's go. This is what you live for right here.

And so I thought that -- I definitely thought that. And I just -- you know, as we talk every week, it's about the Arkansas Razorbacks. It's about us getting better every week. That's the only thing we can control. And we're going to get back on the plane, and we're going to go get better. That's what we're going to do.

*Q. The read that Ty [Storey] had on that last play to [De'Vion] Warren, was that kind of where you wanted it? or how did that play shake out?*

**COACH MORRIS:** I think I saw what you saw. It was a corner ball. I don't know if the ball didn't come out clean, but it allowed the safety to come over and make a play on it. But, you know, again, I'd have to go back and look. I just saw -- I was watching the corner ball and -- or the corner route.

*Q. Coach, the penalties at inopportune times, just correcting those. And I know some of them were effort penalties, but just how critical those were throughout the game?*

**COACH MORRIS:** Obviously, we can't control that outside of our play. And the guys were playing extremely hard. They did come at a very inopportune time. But, you know, you got to go the next down and you got to play.

*Q. You said you got involved more in the offense last week against Auburn. Was there more of that today?*

**COACH MORRIS:** I'm always involved in the offense. I mean, I'm always in it. I'm in the meetings. I'm in the game planning. And I'm on the headsets and talking constantly to Coach Craddock. It was no different today than it was last week. And it will be the same thing next week. So we'll continue to keep working together and getting this thing -- getting better.

Thank you.



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