

MARYLAND QUOTES

September 2, 2017

Head coach D.J. Durkin

Opening statement: Obviously exciting win for our guys. That was a wild game. There was a lot of non-offensive touchdowns back and forth. A lot of big plays.

My overall take on the game is two things: Number one, I'm proud of our guys for how they hung tough and fought through adversity. There was a lot of adversity in that game. We started not only the game, but not only our season with a pick six going the other way and just there wasn't, no one flinched on the side. There wasn't anyone who panicked, flinched. It was like, 'Okay, let's keep going about our business,' and that was kind of the mentality throughout the whole game. So very proud of that, happy about that. That's a big step for us.

And then the other thing is there's a lot for us to clean up. There's a lot of, we've got to do better and make improvements on things. And we're certainly going to take a close look at that. It's a great win for us, a great way to start the season, but we certainly need to improve a bunch as we move forward.

On putting in freshman quarterback Kasim Hill after sophomore starter Tyrrell Pigrome left the game with an injury: That was one of the cool parts about it. There wasn't -- no one, I don't know we just went about our business. No one said a word, there was no one like, oh, no. Kasim came in there and was just, handled the moment. That's a hard spot, true freshman coming into the game his first ever college football game on the road third and 19, he goes and strokes the ball to DJ Moore. So that tells you a little bit about him.

It was just, that's a lot of the stuff we have been working on and talking about as a team. So it was good. You try and measure these things and you like to say you know where your team is, but you don't really know until you get out there and get in the fire. So it was good to see our guys respond that way. We're certainly going to have a lot more moments like that throughout the season and we got to build on that. And now we can say we have been there before and responded the right way and usually that's a great thing to have, experience.

On the pressure of the defense and a new defensive philosophy: I thought defense played really well. All their scores in the first half were not against the defense. We lost a little steam there in the end, we had some guys tired, we didn't, just made some dumb mistakes, we weren't lined up right. Kind of slow getting lined up. So credit to them. They were going tempo in the second half and moving it and getting us in some of those spots. But I'm happy with our defense overall. I'm not happy about that last drive of the game especially. We wanted to finish the game and play 60 minutes, I think we played about 59. But we'll certainly address that and clean it up. But it was good. There were some good

individual efforts. Antwoine Brooks I thought played really well at the nickel position. Jermaine [Carter] as always played really, really well. Our defensive line did a good job. There's a lot of three- and four-man pass rush situations where they got pressure on the quarterback, which really helped us.

On whether Hill was ready to play: If Hill was ready? Yeah, there wasn't an ounce of doubt. I mean, that's how he's been since the day he got here. It's just him. He's got that way about him, he's got that "it" factor about him, for sure.

On Hill's performance: Yeah, I'm proud of him. He bounced back. He missed the spot load on that throw, but he did hit the guy on the hands and it tipped up, pick six. He bounced back and played well. He made some great throws down the field, obviously ran the ball well, and I thought he was moving the offense really, really well for us. So, again, it goes back to not only him, but the whole team how we responded to adversity I think is the biggest take.

Q. (No microphone.)

DJ DURKIN: It's always good, it's easier when there's tangible success on the field. As a coach you can really take a hard look at things and see where there's improvement, where maybe it's not out there measured in wins or whatnot, but it certainly helps with when the players can see that. It's easier for them to see. Again, this was a great win, I'm really proud and excited for our guys. It's only week one, it's a long season, and we got a lot of improving to do and certainly a challenging schedule ahead of us.

On the showing from fans at the game: Wasn't it great? That was awesome. Someone sent me a picture last night of a restaurant or bar or something downtown and it was all Maryland. It was just great to see them up in the stands. I don't know what our number was, but we took all the tickets they would give us and filled it up. Our fans did a tremendous job. That was big. Our players noticed that. It was big.

On whether he's seen so many crazy special teams plays in a game before: I don't know. I would have to go back and think. I don't know. There was a lot of them back and forth. Two block field goals for touchdowns. Ninety-yard punt return for a touchdown. Yeah, it was wild. They went both ways. But I think that that's momentum swings in the game. There's little things that came after those that were really good. We responded in a good way. When we lost momentum, we had a big kickoff return right after that, kind of got momentum back for us. The offense did a great job of driving the ball. Every time it got close, we came out to ahead and we would lose momentum and our guys responded really, really well. That's what it takes. To be a team that's going to compete for championships, you got to be able to do that on the road because those things are going to happen. It was a good environment. Their crowd was into it, they were feeling it a little bit and we never quite let that go.

On the difference between his first game as coach last year to opening the season against Texas this year: Yeah, there's so many differences it's hard to even mention. I think we're a totally different team, I think. Obviously it was a totally different type of game, atmosphere, environment. I think it's really good. Our coaching staff, we're also I think much further along in terms of we're together now. So it was new for everyone when you come out last year. So I think that was good. There's a lot of familiarity with everyone on the staff and within the team and I think our guys are totally, mindset and physically, is totally different.

On sophomore defensive back Antwaine Richardson's injury: I have an update Antwaine Richardson. He's responsive and moving over at the hospital, which is great news. That's a tough one for us. He's a great, great kid and we love him dearly. So that was a hard one for the whole team to sit out there and see. But he is responsive, he's doing well and obviously we're going to get with him here soon.

On moving forward after this game: We came there and did what we planned on doing. But it doesn't -- this week doesn't affect next week and therefore so on and so forth. That's the beauty of this game, it's the most humbling game in the world. You got to strap it up and be ready every Saturday and make the necessary corrections and changes and prepare the right way and so that's what we'll do. That's what our team will do.

Junior running back Ty Johnson

On the game: It was one of the craziest games I have been in. Coach (D.J.) Durkin said all week that we would face adversity on the road. When adversity hits us we need to keep driving and not to worry about anything.

On the Texas defense: Our offensive linemen were doing what they needed to do. Coach (Walt) Bell came up with a great scheme for us and we have been preparing for them. Being able to read blocks was important.

On keeping Texas from taking the lead: This is a great stadium and a great fan base. We came out and wanted to go forward without stopping.

On the feeling of the program after the game: This is a huge win. A lot of people wanted to see what we could do. Coach Durkin said to come out there and play and we did.

On freshman quarterback Kasim Hill: He was really great at practice and detailed. He knew exactly what to do when he went in the game. He knew the situations on the field and executed.

Senior linebacker Jermaine Carter, Jr.

On the current team compared to last year: Last year, we wouldn't have been ready. This year we were so familiar with the defense that it was just the next man up. We expect every guy that goes in the game to do his job and do it 100 percent. That is what we did today. We had a couple injuries but we were still able to come out with a win.

On the team's future: We took some huge steps but we still have some things to improve on. We have to get lined up faster. I'm sure there are things to correct on film. We are going to watch the film with coaches and get corrections.

On the importance of playing Texas: It was important because we didn't come here to lose to a team. They were a good team. We had our ups and downs in the game, but coach always tells us to never flinch. That's what we did today, we never flinched. When you mention an injury, it was the next man up. Everybody was ready to go.

On the win: This is a huge stepping stone for the program. I have been here five years and we have not beaten a ranked team in those five years. They are a great team and we have to move forward and look forward to next week.

Junior wide receiver D.J. Moore

On freshman quarterback Kasim Hill's performance: Once (Pigrome) went down, we already had the plan ready. We told Kasim to get ready and he was ready to go in there and take over. We're happy for what he did and we were able to get the win.

On the importance of this win: It was a breakthrough moment because we worked so hard for this. Nobody really knew what to expect when we came out there. But we just went out and gave it our all.

On recovering after the interception on the first drive: I just told (Pigrome) to calm down and just relax. It's a kid's game. That's what the coaches emphasize to us. It's a kid's game so just relax and go out there and play. And that's what I told him after the interception.

On the difference in tempo between Hill and Pigrome: No, it just stayed the same no matter what. It's just like how we practice. Everybody got the reps. He (Hill) got the reps with the ones, twos and threes. So when he went in, it was just like practice.

Junior offensive lineman Derwin Gray:

On running their scheme: Like I said, Texas is a great opponent. We prepared well for them. We just came out and competed and trusted our plan. We took care of the football and played our game. We were able to control the line of scrimmage and that allowed our running backs to do the rest.

On his blocked field goal: That was my first time and it felt great to go out there and block a field goal. But most importantly, it meant a lot to help put our team up front even more and to extend our lead. It was a great feeling and it still feels unreal.

On the importance of special teams: Special teams was huge for us. Them being able to swing the field for us was huge. We always talk about guys making plays and being game changers for us and they were today.

On the significance of this game for the rest of the season: Today was a big step for us. We worked so hard over the summer. Working on pass protection so we don't give up those sacks that we did last season. Unfortunately, things do happen. But adversity is something we live through. We're just trying to get better. There's a lot of clean-up on the tape and we're going to go out hard next game.