



U.S. Air Force Academy

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Post-Game Quotes & Notes **Air Force vs. New Mexico, Oct. 23, 2008**

Air Force Head Coach Troy Calhoun

“That’s a gut it out win. I thought in the first quarter we really struggled. It was because we weren’t ready to play, our guys were stirred up, maybe too much so. After we settled down a little bit I thought we played pretty good football the last two and half quarters.”

“We created a few turnovers. They had a few miscues there. We find different ways to win. We’ve done that now over the last 21 games. There is no formula or exact prescription. We just found another way to win today. We’re just going to continue to have to be that way.”

“Our young kids, this is the first time they played on national television on Thursday night. They just needed to settle down and play.”

“He (Tim Jefferson) played extremely well. When he came over to the sidelines after the third one, there is nothing gun shy about the guy. You could just see in his eyes he was focused and ready to play. He’s one of the guys. These guys really respond to him and that’s hard to do in the first four months at the Air Force Academy.”

“There were times early we tackle very well, but we found a way. That’s us. That’s how we need to do things.”

“We’re going to have a tough one in nine days when we go up to play Army. Those are always tough ones. They are always very intense football games.”

New Mexico Head Coach Rocky Long

“I think that was the big momentum shift (fumble return for a TD). Yet, there was a lot of game left to be played. That didn't win the game for them. That got them back into the game.”

“We played hard in the first half. I thought we played hard in the second half, too.”

“It's a simple deal tonight (on fourth downs). If you turn the ball over and then you can't make 4th-and-short, you're going to lose.”

“We fumbled a kickoff return and we fumbled a punt. I don't know if we've done two of them in the same game, but we've had them.”

Team Notes

- Air Force uses honorary captains, along with game captains. The honorary captains for New Mexico game were Betty Bullard, Lance McDowell and Scott Thomas. Bullard is the mother of the late Brian Bullard, who played football at the Academy in 1982 and 1983 before he and cadet Dianne Williams were killed by carbon monoxide poisoning while returning from Thanksgiving vacation in 1983. Air Force head coach Fisher DeBerry established the Brian Bullard Award, which is characterized by unselfishness, 110 percent effort and total team commitment,

in 1984 in his honor. There is no higher honor for an Air Force football player to earn. McDowell, a 1989 Academy graduate and three-year letterman, won the Bullard Award as a senior in 1989. Thomas is a 1986 graduate and four-year letterman. He was a consensus All-American in 1985 while leading Air Force to a 12-1 record. The game captains were seniors **Aaron Kirchoff**, **Scott Howley**, **Ben Garland** and **Travis Dekker**.

- Air Force is bowl eligible for the second consecutive year. The Falcons improved to 6-2 overall and 4-1 in the Mountain West Conference.
- Air Force improved to 16-10 overall vs. New Mexico, including a 12-8 mark in conference games. Air Force improved to 9-3 all-time at home vs. the Lobos and has now won four straight in Falcon Stadium in the series dating back to 2000.
- Air Force improved to 4-9 all-time in Thursday night games and has won three of the last four since 2006. Prior to 2006, Air Force was just 1-8 in Thursday night games.
- Air Force improved to 2-0 this season and 7-1 under head coach Troy Calhoun in games played the second half of the season (last six games). Prior to Calhoun's arrival in 2007, the Falcons were 12-24 over the last six games of the season since 2001.
- Air Force improved to 3-1 overall and 3-0 in conference games this season in the month of October. The Falcons improved to 6-2 overall and 6-1 in conference games under head coach Troy Calhoun. Air Force was just 4-10 overall and 4-7 in conference games over the last four years prior to 2007.
- Air Force head coach Troy Calhoun improved to 15-6 overall and 10-3 in conference games during his career. Calhoun's .769 winning percentage in conference games is the fourth-best in Mountain West Conference history.
- Air Force improved to 8-2 all-time in Falcon Stadium under head coach Troy Calhoun. The Falcons are 2-2 this season and finished 6-0 at home in 2007. The win over New Mexico snapped a two-game losing streak at home.
- Air Force improved to 318-266-13 all-time in its 53rd year of varsity football. Air Force is now 171-111-3 at home.
- Air Force's defense held New Mexico to a turnover on downs on its first drive of the game. The Falcons have allowed just three points on the opponent's first drive this season. Air Force has forced five punts, two turnovers on downs and a field goal in eight games this season.
- Air Force turned the ball over three times (two fumbles and an interception) in the first quarter. New Mexico scored 10 points off the turnovers which nearly matches what the Falcons had allowed this season. Prior to the UNM game, the Falcons had allowed just 13 points off nine turnovers this season. Three of the scoring drives started inside the Air Force 20 yard line.
- The Air Force defense forced four turnovers in the game (three fumbles, one interception) to mark the seventh time in eight games that the team has forced multiple turnovers. Air Force has forced 20 turnovers this season (14 fumbles, six interceptions). The four turnovers vs. New Mexico are the second most in a game this season (5 vs. Wyoming).

Individual Notes

- Senior FS **Aaron Kirchoff** returned a fumble 96 yards for his first-career touchdown. The 96-yard return is the second longest in school history and longest since Adam Zanotti set the school record with a 98 yard return vs. Army in 2006. The fumble recovery is his second this season and fifth of his career which makes him the active career leader at Air Force. The fumble was forced by senior ILB **Brandon Reeves**, which is the first forced fumble of his career.
- Senior PK **Ryan Harrison** matched his career-high with three field goals which is the seventh time in his career he's hit three in a game. Harrison improved to 16 of 18 (.880) this season. He has hit 26 of his last 28 field goals dating back to last season. Harrison has hit 35 of 45 attempts in his career and his 77.8 career percentage ranks third in school history.
- Junior ILB **Clay Bryant** forced the first fumble of his career and sophomore OLB **Will Keuchler** made his first-career fumble recovery on the opening kickoff of the second half. The turnover led to a touchdown and Air Force's first lead of the game, 17-10.
- Senior TE **Travis Dekker** caught his first touchdown pass of the season, a one-yard reception in the third quarter. The touchdown is the fourth of Dekker's career.
- Senior FS **Luke Yeager** recorded the first interception of his career.

- Freshman TB **Asher Clark** carried the ball a career-high 23 times, gaining 86 yards to lead the Falcons in rushing for the second time this season. His 86 rushing yards are the second-most of his career.