

Auburn Coach Gus Malzahn Quotes | Ole Miss

Opening Statement... “First of all, I want to congratulate Ole Miss. They have a very good football team. Our guys fought. I’m proud of our guys, but obviously we are disappointed. We had trouble running the football, and that was a big factor in the game too. But really what stands out to me is the 2-for-15 on third downs, and you aren’t going to beat that many people when you go 2-for-15 on third downs. Coming into this game, we were either at the top, or one of the top in the league on third downs and I thought that was a huge factor in the game. Defensively, our guys came out with a lot of energy and got some stops early. I think the two turnovers were huge for us. Our guys fought and we had a few chances down there at the end, but just didn’t get it done. I give Ole Miss credit. They are one of the better teams in the country and they have a lot of talent.”

On Sean White’s health and performance... “He practiced just a little bit on Tuesday and his knee swelled up. He didn’t practice any of the rest of the week. We didn’t know if he was going to be good to go until pre-game, but he is a champion. He’s not 100 percent, but he stayed in there and fought. Our plan was to play both of the guys because we felt like some of the running type plays worked for both of those guys. He is a tough kid. He is not 100 percent, but he fought and he battled. He’s a tough guy.”

On Peyton Barber... “Yeah, Peyton was banged up. He didn’t practice earlier in the week. He was able to do a few things late. But he is banged up, so we felt Jovon (Robinson), it was his opportunity, and he is back to getting healthy. He did a good job for us. He protected the football, he ran hard and I thought he had some good runs.”

On when he knew that Carl Lawson would play... “You know, Carl practiced pretty well and we knew there was a good chance, we just wanted to make sure. In pregame he was looking pretty good. He definitely is a difference maker. I think everyone can see that he gives us a little different edge. He’s a disrupter and he disrupted a lot of things that put a little pressure in their backfield. He even got to him some and hit their quarterback. We probably had more hits on the quarterback today than we did all year.

On going for it on fourth-and-two... “The mindset was that we wanted to be aggressive. We were going to try and go for it on a couple of fourth downs and we liked the matchup we had, but we just didn’t execute the play. That was our plan. We wanted to be aggressive.”

On if it was a big play in the game... “I think so; there’s no doubt it was a big play.”

On how much a setback this game is... “Obviously last week was extremely tough the way we lost at the end. We are disappointed. Our guys fought their tail off against one of the better teams in our league and had chances to win and we didn’t. We have to reach deep down next week as players and coaches and we will. I will tell you what, this team is going to fight. We are going to play hard and get after it and hopefully we will be a little healthier next week too.”

On the plan for the running back position... “What we will do tomorrow is evaluate the health of everybody and we will get a good plan for next week. We will probably know a little bit more tomorrow or Monday.”

On if time will be split... "You know, we could. I just want to wait to tell you something when we see how they are doing physically. We wanted to see how Peyton made it through this game."

On opening up the playbook... "We wanted to be aggressive. We thought that we had to be aggressive. They held a good Texas A&M team to three points. They have some impact players on defense. They are a good defense, we knew that going in and that's why we went for it on fourth down. So as coach you have a plan going into the game and you have to go with it. We didn't execute on fourth and one and it came back to bite us. If we would have executed the play, we would have felt a little bit better about it. But, that's the way it goes."

On if there were specific things they did defensively... "I think that a part of the factor for me was that we had a little trouble running the football. We are a run to play action team and we need to be effective running the football. You have to give them credit though; they did a good job of stopping the run."

On if one SEC win is an accurate representation of how good this team is... "I think you can look at it and see we are playing hard. We have got some deficiencies in some areas and some young guys in some areas, but this team is growing. We did some good things, but like I said, if you take away the third downs at 2-for-15 and we score a touchdown on one of those drives instead of a field goal, it's a different game. I will just say this, we can play with anybody and I think everyone can see that. We just have to figure out how to take that next step and get a victory. We have been close, but we just have to figure out taking that next step."