



2018 College Football Playoff Semifinal at the Capital One Orange Bowl

No. 4 University of Oklahoma

Arrival Quotes

December 23, 2018

The University of Oklahoma Sooners arrived at Signature Flight Support at Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport this evening at 6:30 p.m. EST for their December 29th College Football Playoff Semifinal matchup against No. 1 Alabama.

Alabama will arrive tomorrow (Dec 24) at approximately Noon at Signature Flight Support at Miami International Airport.

The formal first press conference will be Wednesday, Dec. 26 at 8:30 a.m. at the Renaissance Fort Lauderdale Cruise Port in Fort Lauderdale where both teams' coordinators and 3 offensive and 3 defensive players from each team will be available. Both practices will be open for the first 15 minutes for gathering b-roll and still photography on that day as well

Today's weather: Norman -- High of 50, low of 32

Fort Lauderdale – High of 71, low of 50

Note: Videos and photos from today's arrival and all Capital One Orange Bowl events will be available via Dropbox on the Orange Bowl web site at <http://game.orangebowl.org/pressbox/>

Oklahoma Head Coach – Lincoln Riley

On being in South Florida at the Orange Bowl

We're excited to be here. You know there is a long history of Oklahoma in this bowl game. This is like our second home. It's great to be here. It takes a lot of hard work. A lot of things have to go your way just to get to this point but we're certainly not satisfied with that, but we've had a good couple of weeks of preparation. Our guys were antsy getting down here, but we're looking forward to starting our preparation down here tomorrow.

On what's the message for this trip knowing it's not a vacation but a business trip

"Our guys understand that. We've been in a few of these games and I think that serves us well. Still though, you have to enjoy the experience. Hopefully our practices help set the direction this week."

On if the South Florida weather have any impact on this week's game?

"I don't think so. We actually had some pretty nice weather to practice in back home. Not a huge difference; it will be a little warmer at night, but I don't think that will be an impact at all."

On how do you balance preparing your team this time of year the way the schedule works out

"It's a challenge. We're the only sport in the world that does this; after almost 30 days in between the end of your regular season and the semifinal. But that's part of it; we've worked hard up to this point; I think we've had a good balance of rest – getting their bodies back and getting some injured guys back healthy. And we've had a lot of good quality work just trying to get better ourselves; we really felt like we started playing much closer to our capabilities towards the end of the year."

On how antsy are your kids to get on the field and compete with Alabama

"They're excited. You get the chance to play a great team (Alabama); you get to play in the National Semifinal; you get to play in the Orange Bowl. That's one of the reasons you come to Oklahoma – to have a chance to win championships and have chance to compete for a National Championship. We're excited, but it's also where we expected to be."

On the Big 12 vs SEC matchup and the hype around it

"I think that is one of the natural things about college football that it provides. There's always going to be interconference rivalries. I think the leagues against each other have had equal degrees of success here in the last several years. The SEC has obviously had a tremendous run. I feel great about where our league is going and how we've played as a program the last several years, as well. I think that once you get on the field it's not Big 12 vs SEC, it's Oklahoma against Alabama. It's a National Semifinal and there are a lot bigger things at stake than just league bragging rights right now."

Oklahoma DE -- Amani Bledsoe

On watching Alabama film

We've watched a lot of film on them so far. We're just trying to break down tendencies and everything. They're a very good football team and we're excited for this opportunity.

On Alabama's Offensive line

(They are a) very physical unit up front

On being in Florida?

I've been here before, but not this part (of the state).

On learning from last year's experience?

I would say just people's mindsets when they come out here and attack these practices and just remember we're here on a business trip. It's easy to get distracted at these bowl practices. We're here at a new city and I just look forward to focusing on the job at hand.

I'd say adversity did help. We have a chip on our shoulder. We remember the hurt, the pain we all felt after the loss. It's a new year and a new team, so... I'm excited about this group.

On facing number one. It means a lot. I mean, (it's a) great challenge at hand.. We get to face Alabama. We obviously know how good of a team they are. (They are a) very physical and talented group. (It's a) Great opportunity for us.

Oklahoma OL -- Ben Powers

On what advice he gives the younger players on how to stay focused in a place like South Florida

I'll be in my hotel room the whole week...if not I might go to the pool or maybe the beach, but I won't be going out. You gotta have a good time down here but you also got to know how to control it, that's the most important part.

On preparation for the game

We're just going to do what we've been doing all year.

On balancing fun and bowl game preparation

We are down here to win this football game. I just try to stress to all the players that that's the number one goal.

On Alabama's defensive line

They are a good defensive line.