

December 31, 2009



Air Force - 47
Houston - 20

An Interview With:



THE MODERATOR: Troy, make an opening statement about the game, and then we'll open it up for comments.

COACH CALHOUN: Yes, sir. Just overall we played terrific football today. If you want to break it down into the three phases, you know, defense, offense, the kicking game, one by one, we really were outstanding.

Yet even above that, just the unity, the kind of team chemistry, the esprit that's part of these guys.

Special, special group. Be hard ever to not coach again and not have these guys that are seniors with us again. As much as they've given to our football program, and more importantly what these guys are going to do well down the road just through and through, these guys got the kind of heart and the kind of soul, they're going to do special stuff after they graduate from the Air Force Academy.

Q. Can you tell us what you did right before halftime with 17 seconds?

COACH CALHOUN: We tried to call a bootleg. What we wanted to do was either not get caught in the field of play, but the guys on the sideline, get out of their way, they're all prepped for that. We do that every week during the season. So it's something you put 'em through.

Probably realistically that's something that arises maybe once every two years, and yet to be able to have that occur, it just tells you our guys were sharp and really into it, hustled to get the ball snap.

I think it was snapped with about 3 seconds, so there was still a little bit of time there.

Q. Talk about your game plan offensively.

COACH CALHOUN: Just team-wise, I think it's easy to kind of get enamored with only a sector of the way you play. But we're one of those groups where you got to have contributions across the board.

I think anytime you're able to complement when you run the ball well with hitting some throws, that really opens up some big plays.

I think also some of those plays, two- or three-yard gains are now four- or five-yard gains after you complete a few balls.

Q. What made you so effective?

COACH CALHOUN: I tell you what, phenomenal preparation is where it starts. When we got here on Saturday, you could just sense something about our guys. I thought two years ago we were extraordinarily giddy to be here. Played with a lot of spark.

Last year, we were a little bit wide-eyed at some spots last year. Just being able to mix up some looks. We didn't bring as many five-man pressures today. We played a lot more where we rushed three. We played a lot more where we rushed three. Anytime you rush three, you still have to find a way where you have to make the quarterback maneuver. We did that with our front three guys.

And then being able to mix our back looks. There were times we were playing five-under, three deep. There were times we were rushing three, playing a form of four-cross, with having a guy that was a choker or a low player, a spy guy that could look for cross guys, be able to hug to a

screen, also be able to contain the quarterback.

We mixed it up. Ultimately it comes down to the execution. Our players were fantastic.

Q. There was a key player in the second quarter. I think it was fourth down and three, and I kind of want to hear from Asher on that play that y'all scored a touchdown on.

ASHER CLARK: It was an option to the right. T.J. saw the corner come down. He just had to pull it and pitch it to me. I was able to get around the corner with some good blocks and score.

Q. Troy, big picture-wise, what does this do for your program, just the exposure, winning a game like this on national TV?

COACH CALHOUN: It helps significantly. I think just to be able to be in a Bowl is a major accomplishment for our guys. Especially to have to work, to navigate through the Mountain West Conference. You have a winning season and you're able to win a Bowl berth. That's pretty darn good milestone.

Yet I think when you win a game like this, we beat a ranked opponent, somebody who is ranked 25th in the country, and I don't think we've done that in a while at the academy.

Yet it's awesome for the younger guys to realize what can be achieved when you look at only the football part of it, the program. There's just no better way for this guy and those 14 others to conclude the least the playing part of what they're going to do at the academy.

Q. You were more prepared for this game than the previous two years.

COACH CALHOUN: We were ready. You know, you never know exactly how that's going to completely translate and carry forth. I tell you what, these guys, practice this week, we were good at practice. That takes maturity. You know, there's just so many things that happen. Can you bounce, the fun part of it. You just sense it. These guys, there's nothing they wanted to do more than win.

He's not going to say more than two words unless you ask him. He's a model, somebody as a leader by example. Both these guys. I mean, they're workers.

Q. Does the victory today say a lot about the strength of the Mountain West Conference?

COACH CALHOUN: It's another feather; a good one in the cap. We know where we got to begin. We're a service academy. That's our focus. That's the mission. That's the purpose of the academy.

But certainly it speaks well of the Mountain West Conference. You look over all four. You're 4-0 right now, got a chance to win a fifth one. Three of the four have been very convincing wins, and the other one was a team that wasn't favored going in, but played really, really well in the first one in New Mexico.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

CHRIS THOMAS: It all goes into the preparation. Coach did a great job of putting us in the right spots to make plays. Up front, the front three, like coach was saying, kind of got in his head, kind of got into him. When he was on the run like that, feel like we had the advantage.

Q. Did it get easier as the game wore on?

CHRIS THOMAS: Definitely not. Their offense is great. Second best skill we played all year behind TCU. Speed. They run the up-tempo offense. Definitely I wouldn't say it got easier as the game went on.

Q. Talk about the emotions from the kickoff returns for touchdowns?

COACH CALHOUN: Two gigantic plays. 24-6 at half. You're thinking when you go in at halftime that we're going to kick it, come up with a stop, we're going to respond with a score, and now you got a chance really to take a pretty sizable lead.

All of a sudden they return, it's 24-13, and you realize you're right in the middle of a doozy.

It may be the first kickoff return we've had I think since 1985. Spike Thomas is here today. I remember in 1985 being a freshman at the academy and standing on the field when that happened. Tell you how good my math is. He returned a touchdown. It was against Rice in September of '85.

All of a sudden looked up at the clock, and there was 14:53. It was 101, or 102 yard kickoff. He ran pretty fast. As a freshman, you fall for it at the academy.

Q. Scored two touchdowns on fourth

down, but a fake punt that kept the drive going, kind of a jambo today.

COACH CALHOUN: I think hands down out of the 120 schools that play Division I football, we lead the most going forth on fourth down. I think you play to win. There's going to be some flack if it doesn't work, and there is.

On a fake punt on your side of the field, yet the kid made a heck of a play. We had three really good blocks on the perimeter. All three guys engaged in their blocks. Jonathan found were the sticks were and found a way to convert it. You just better be able to live with it one way or another.

Q. How important ways it to rebuilding the momentum right away after their kickoff return?

COACH CALHOUN: It was very much so. And yet that's part of playing in Bowl games. We talked last night as a team. Anytime you're playing a ranked team, they're good. They're going to make plays. They're going to land some punches.

Yet what you have to do is be able to counterpunch. And when you do connect on a punch, you've got to be able to come forth with some flurries, not just one jab.

Q. Can you talk about the difference between Jefferson, not completely healthy, but close.

COACH CALHOUN: He played well today. You see a bunch of our guys, and I -- just see the games that they make maturity-wise. These guys can share with you how much you change while you're at the academy.

I tell you what's huge, is for our guys getting a chance to go home. Our last two practices right after they finished finals. Their eyes are all dark and wrinkled. It was good for them to get home. Just across the board, all these guys, just in terms of energy and focus, and it certainly was the case with him, too.

Q. Once you continued to score, you were determined not to give them the run backs on the kickoff, rather give them better field.

COACH CALHOUN: Absolutely. Even on the kickoff return, we wanted to execute. There was a sky kick. That was a pretty well-hit ball. It was into the wind. Caught it two yards from the sideline. We're gonna make some plays. We had a chance where we had some angles, a couple guys had angles.

We have a puncture of the blocks that occurred. We got to be able to make a play, we should have been able to. Yet those are talented guys. They had four kickoff returns during the season. All of a sudden they're in the fifth right there.

Q. Asher, was there more getting to the outside, you were able to get to the edges pretty well?

ASHER CLARK: We were able to get to the edge because the line guys, they rarely get pushed off the ball. We got good blocks on the perimeter. The cornerbacks generally want to get cut, so we were able to push them out. We were able to get underneath most of the blocks.

Q. You talked about turning your two or three yard gains into six or seven or eight yard gains. When those pile up, does it make a difference?

ASHER CLARK: It does. It wears on the defense. They're a great defense. We had to turn those two and three yard gains into six and seven yard gains. We were able to do that with the push we had from the line.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

COACH CALHOUN: He was not. Our first day here on Saturday we practiced, he hurt his groin. The other guy in there a little bit, Cody Getz, who is going to be a good player, too.

Q. Any other injuries after the game today?

COACH CALHOUN: No, sir, no.

Q. Speak about how important it was to get out early with some points?

COACH CALHOUN: I think the hardest thing to resemble in practice is being able to simulate the speed of the receivers, the execution of the quarterback, how instantly and cleanly that ball comes off his fingers when he throws it. It just helps the adjustment.

Tell you what we did a good job of. Whenever the ball came out quick, even when we were in a three-man rush, there were times I've seen it, your three pass-rushers say, I'm a non-factor, and they go limp.

I thought today they realized, Hey, it's a quick ball, they got a pod. Probably happened

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about four times where that's the case. I think that's indicative of their effort, you know, just the relentless approach by those guys up front, our defensive ends, Benny Garland, Rick Ricketts, Ryan Gardner, Myles Morales, those guys that play on the defensive line for us.

Q. You came in wanting to throw the ball. You held the ball roughly two-thirds of the game. Were you expecting it to be that lopsided?

COACH CALHOUN: I think if you lay out a plan, you'd like for it to be that way. Yet getting to the point of that occurring, there's a lot of work that was done, and it was done by our team.

You know, I think sometimes whenever you run the ball well or you have the ball for a prolonged period of time throughout the course of a game, once it all adds up, you think it's only because of the offensive line, what it is.

There weren't very many prolonged drives that Houston had today. You know, there were a lot of times this year where they're up-tempo, but they have 10, 12, 14-play drives. Tells you our defense got off the field. I don't have it in front of me. On third down an fourth down today, we were good on defense.

Offensively, on the flip part of it, to be able to convert on third down, and especially on fourth down, too. I mean, now all of a sudden you're working it away where at the end of the game you got a chance to have that ball for 38, 39 minutes.

Q. The seven-minute possession at the end of the third quarter into the fourth quarter, was that kind of a turning point right there?

COACH CALHOUN: It was a good one. You know, I thought that. Then immediately, the touchdown to score, we go up 41-20, immediately what followed was an interception, too. I thought the interception was a pretty significant Black & Decker nail.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

December 31, 2009



Air Force - 47
Houston - 20

An Interview With:



THE MODERATOR: Coach, just make an opening comment and we'll open it up for questions.

COACH SUMLIN: That's a really good Air Force team we played. I think it's evident by, you know, the No. 1 pass defense in the country.

Obviously we were a little off. But they had a lot to do with that, too. As I told Troy after the game, you know, a well-coached team, well-prepared. You know, without reviewing it, they played very, very well and took advantage of the opportunities they had and created some opportunities on their own.

You know, we turn the ball over like that, you can't ever expect to win any game.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Coach, can you speak to the tempo and turnovers.

COACH SUMLIN: The tempo in their favor came from the turnovers, so... That's what happens. Like I said, you look back at all of our losses this year, it's been directly turnover related, inability to get off the field on third down.

There were some critical third downs defensively that we didn't get any stops, had a chance to get off the field, turned the ball over.

You add those two things up in any college football game right now, any football game, and it's a recipe for non-success, I'll put it that way.

Q. (Question regarding Keenum's performance today.)

COACH SUMLIN: I don't know. Like I said, we had some tip balls early. I mean, they're good. They created the breaks. The tip balls, they're hustling, got to the ball, made plays.

We threw the first ones up, hit our hands first, they got it. The next two were tip balls at or around the line of scrimmage that they got. You get those balls by playing hard.

That's a credit to them. They created their own breaks. You know, the ones later on in the game, he's just running around, trying to do something, get back in the game.

I'm not going to make any kind of generalization based on the overall numbers in the last two games for him. He's a damn good player, has been, and will continue to be for us.

Q. How much did the layoff affect Keenum? Was he sharp today?

COACH SUMLIN: No, he wasn't sharp today. We weren't sharp today at all. I think that's pretty obvious, you know.

The layoff may have hurt him. I don't know. We had a longer layoff last year that didn't hurt him that much, so... You know, every time something like this happens, you're always looking for a reason why.

As a coach, first of all, I've got to do a better job based on the results today. It starts with me. And, number two, you know, you're always as a coach going back and you're going to analyze the positives and negatives of the year and positives and negatives, mostly what went wrong with your losses.

We'll go back and look at that. I don't know that we did a whole lot of things differently than last year, and the results are a whole helluva

lot different this year than they were last year.

Q. You said earlier you were a little bit off today. Do you know why?

COACH SUMLIN: No. I just answered that, okay? Next.

Q. Talk about your MVP, Marcus, his job on the defense. Had to make the drive to make those tackles.

COACH SUMLIN: Yeah, but it takes more than one or two guys. Any time you play a game like this, it's a team effort. Obviously, when you're playing defense against an option type attack, it forces everybody to have responsibilities. One guy has never made a team offensively or defensively.

You know, to win games like this, all games, it's team efforts. But, you know, Tyron has been a really good player for us all year. Continued to play well here today, made some big catches, big return. Obviously Marcus is one of the leading tacklers in the country.

We expected it out of them. We've got to get some help from other people, too. When you play in those type of settings, as I told the team, you know, it takes a lot more than a couple people to win games. We had some guys looked to me like they were waiting around for somebody else to do something instead of doing it themselves.

You know, when that happens, you get the results you got today. And, like I said, don't get me wrong, we were outplayed today by Air Force. I don't think there's any doubt about that.

Q. Were you surprised at how effective Air Force was at the passing game?

COACH SUMLIN: Yeah.

Q. Were you out of position, especially on the long balls?

COACH SUMLIN: I don't know. We had guys there; didn't make plays. Wasn't like they were wide open, right?

Q. Could you speak about the seniors. You've been here two years. This obviously isn't the best way for them to go out.

COACH SUMLIN: You know, I told the seniors, I apologized to them for the way this ended up. They're still a part of a 10-win team. We have 15 of those guys, five of which we put on scholarship since we've been here. They're walk-on guys.

You know, we're still a very, very young team. But obviously to win 10 games, you know, it has a lot to do with your senior leadership and what happened with them. So we're appreciative of what they've done, brought to our team. A lot of those guys are special teams guys, they're not starters.

That's a tough role for those guys to see younger guys play and still be in a leadership role. I appreciate everything they've done, you know. I've visited with those guys this week and told them individually how much we appreciate what they've done, what they've accomplished since they've been at the University of Houston.

You know, I wish things had turned out differently for them today. But, you know, that doesn't take away from everything they accomplished this year.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports



December 31 Post-game Quotes - Air Force

Chris Thomas, Air Force DB

"We knew coming in we'd have to play our best game pretty much all year. They're so potent on offense. We knew it would be a battle for 60 minutes. We prepared real hard. Coach did a great job putting us in the right spots to make plays. With our team, we have to be more disciplined than just about anyone in country because of the personnel we have. It's something we take pride in at practice every day."

On six interceptions of UH QB Case Keenum: "Up front, they played well getting pressure on him, and then our secondary took advantage of the opportunities we had, I guess."

Asher Clark, Air Force TB

On being disciplined for all four quarters: "That's what we had to do to win the game. The offense tried to control the clock and not turn the ball over. Our defense had to contain 'em and came up with some key turnovers to change the momentum of the game."

On matching UH's defensive speed and physical stature: "We weren't surprised. When we execute, we can pretty much handle anybody. They're a really good defense and fast. They really flow to the ball well and we had to use some misdirection."

On the MWC being 4-0 in bowls: "Hopefully TCU can pull it out and we can all be undefeated in the bowl season and show how good the Mountain West really is."

Tim Jefferson, Air Force QB

"We hit 'em with everything we had in our arsenal. It was mainly running the ball, which is what we did best the whole season."

On AFA dominating a ranked team: "We're on the rise. We might have lost five games, but we're doing great things. We got our first bowl win since 2000, so it's a great feeling in this locker room."

On breaking a long losing streak at Amon Carter Stadium in the regular season and the BHAFB: "We'll see (if the jinx ended). Next year we'll be coming to TCU, so hopefully we can continue our luck today."

On surpassing the overall performance of UH quarterback Case Keenum: "I wouldn't call it showing him up. He's a great player, and he had some Heisman talk. He didn't have the best game of his career, but we've all seen what he's capable of. He's a great passer and we know that. I wouldn't take anything away from him or his offense or his team."

BOWL NEWS

12.31.09



December 31 Post-game Quotes - Houston

Quarterback Case Keenum – “We’ve got to give Air Force all the credit. I’ll take all the blame. It’s not the way I want to send the seniors out and I apologize to all of those guys. They played their hearts out and they deserved better than that. Those guys played incredible throughout the year. A 10-win season and there aren’t many teams around the country that won 10 games. I apologize that it wasn’t ended the right way. I’m going to learn from this. I’m a winner, I’m a competitor and that’s how it’s going to be. We’re going to take this into the off-season and we’re going to use it as motivation. Look for the Cougars to do something special next year because there are a lot of guys in this locker room that have a lot of determination. Things didn’t roll our way today. We made a few mistakes and they capitalized. But it’s over and that’s the best part of that game.”

Linebacker Marcus McGraw – “We weren’t ready to play. They came out ready to win and we didn’t bring our A game and they did. It might have been the break. With an offense like (ours), you can only try to be your best trying to get a look and it wasn’t as good as we thought it was going to be. A loss going into our off-season, it gives you something to work for. We didn’t finish the season like we wanted to but when we come back from the off-season, we want to work harder to make sure we don’t let this happen again. (What impressed you most about Air Force?) Their execution. They did everything to the T, from their defense to their offense. They did everything we expected, we just didn’t do our job. They ran the ball like we said on offense and we just had to stop them and we didn’t do that.”

Running back Charles Sims – “We just didn’t come out and play and they played harder than us. They just played harder than us. (On quarterback Case Keenum.) I wouldn’t say he had a bad day, I would just say that things didn’t go right. It’s on to the next game; we’ll keep on playing. Everybody made mistakes, that’s it. (On the layoff between games.) We just have to come out and work harder.”

Cornerback Brandon Brinkley – “Air Force was making the plays and we weren’t and they were capitalizing off of them. (What was the most difficult part of the day?) ”Not being focused, not going into the game ready to play, I guess. We just let them do whatever they wanted to. They run the ball, that’s the whole key to their game. Run, run, run and then go deep. It was real hard to try and stop all of it. I guess it was people trying to do too much and not doing their own job and that’s how (Air Force) got the big plays on us. In my perspective, you’ve got to take the good with the bad; we had bad games and we had awesome games, so I just take the good in with the bad.”



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Air Force Post-Game Notes

vs. Houston, Dec. 31, 2009
Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl

Team Notes

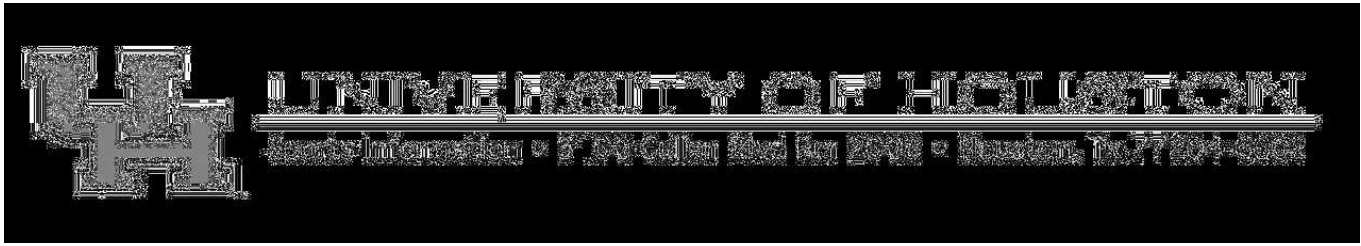
- The Air Force football team has changed its helmets for the bowl game to honor troops serving around the world. A blue/tan camouflage stripe has been added in the middle of the helmet. In addition, the signature bolts on the side of the helmet and the numbers on the back are in camouflage. Lastly, there is a sticker on the front of the helmet that says freedom and one on the back that says service.
- Air Force snapped a three-game bowl losing streak, winning in the post-season for the first time since a 37-34 win over Fresno State in the 2000 Silicon Valley Bowl.
- Air Force posted its eighth win which marks just the second time in school history the Falcons have posted three straight seasons with eight or more wins and first time since 1982-84.
- Air Force's 47 points set a school record for most points in a bowl game, breaking the old mark of 45 in the 1998 Oahu Bowl in a 45-25 win over Washington.
- Air Force's six interceptions tied a school record. The Falcons also intercepted six passes vs. Wyoming in 1992.
- Air Force snapped a 14-game losing streak to ranked teams with the win over 25th ranked Houston. The Falcons are 1-3 this season vs. ranked teams and 15-67-4 all-time. The win is the first over a ranked team since winning at No. 23 California, 23-21, in 2002.
- Head Coach Troy Calhoun improves to 22-14 in three seasons at Air Force. The coach is 16-8 vs. Mountain West Conference opponents, 2-2 in neutral site games and 1-2 in bowl games. Calhoun is the first coach in school history to win eight or more games three consecutive years.
- Air Force won for the first time ever in Amon G. Carter Stadium. The team snapped a six-game losing streak with the win.
- Air Force improved to 2-1 all-time vs. Houston, including a 1-1 mark in the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl. All three meetings have been played in the last 15 months.
- Air Force improved to 2-1 all-time vs. teams from Conference-USA. All three meetings have come against Houston. The Falcons improved to 27-8 all-time vs. teams that are currently in C-USA.
- Air Force improved to 9-6 all-time in non-conference games under head coach Troy Calhoun. The Falcons are 5-1 at home, 2-3 on the road and 2-2 in neutral site games.
- Air Force improved to 328-274-13 in its 54th season of varsity football. The Falcons are 177-113-3 at home and 151-161-10 on the road and in neutral site games. The Falcons improved to 9-10-1 all-time in bowl games.
- Air Force uses game captains. The captains for the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl were seniors **Brandon Geyer**, **Ben Garland**, **Peter Lusk** and **Nick Charles**.
- Air Force extended its school-record consecutive games scoring streak to 207 games dating back to 1992. The streak is the fourth longest active streak in the country. The 207-game streak is the 15th longest in NCAA history.
- Air Force forced turnovers on each of Houston's first two drives which mark the eighth time this season the team has forced two or more turnovers in a game.
- Air Force improved to 16-3 under head coach Troy Calhoun when it has a 100-yard rusher. Asher Clark did the honors for Air Force in the Armed Forces Bowl. The Falcons are 4-0 this season with a 100-yard rusher.

Individual Notes

- Sophomore DB **Anthony Wright, Jr.** recorded his fifth and sixth interceptions this season, which leads the team. The interceptions are his sixth and seventh of his career and he now has 11 career turnovers (7 INT, 1 FR, 3 FF).
- Sophomore WR/KR **Jonathan Warzeka** became the first Falcon to return a kickoff for a touchdown since Scott Thomas vs. Utah in 1985. The 100-yard return is an Armed Forces Bowl record and the first-ever in a bowl game

for the Falcons. It's also the first special teams touchdown in a bowl game for the school. Air Force's 297-game streak between kickoff return touchdowns was the longest active streak in the nation.

- Junior FB **Jared Tew** rushed for a career-high 173 yards and two touchdowns. Tew's 173 yards are an Armed Forces Bowl record breaking the record he set last season with a then-career-high 149 yards. He also tied his own school record for touchdowns in a bowl game with two, including a career-long 71-yard run. His 71-yard run ties an Air Force bowl record (Danta Johnson, 1995 Copper Bowl). Tew, who was Air Force's bowl MVP last year, has rushed for 322 yards and four touchdowns in two Armed Forces Bowls.
- Sophomore RB **Asher Clark** scored his first two career post-season touchdowns. Clark's two touchdowns tie an Air Force bowl record. He is the eighth Falcon to score two touchdowns in a bowl game and first since teammate Jared Tew scored a pair in last year's Armed Forces Bowl. Clark rushed for 129 yards to recorded his second 100-yard rushing game of the season and fourth of his career.
- Senior DB **Chris Thomas** recorded his fourth and fifth interceptions this season, marking the first time in his career he's had multiple interceptions in a game. The interceptions are seventh and eighth of his. Thomas has 18 career turnovers (8 INT, 7 FR, 3 FF) which are the most on the team.
- Freshman WR **Cody Getz** recorded his first-career reception. The catch was good for 13 yards and an Air Force first down.
- Junior WR **Kevin Fogler** recorded a career-high four catches.
- Sophomore QB **Tim Jefferson** hit 10 of 14 passes for a season-high 161 yards to mark sixth time this season he's thrown for 100 or more yards. Jefferson's 10 completions are a season high and the second-most of his career. His previous high in passing for 131 yards vs. Army.



2009 HOUSTON COUGARS FOOTBALL POSTGAME NOTES

2009 Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl

RV/#25 Houston Cougars (10 -4 * 6-2 C-USA) vs. Air Force Falcons (8-5 * 5-3 C-USA)

Friday, Dec. 31, 2009 * Amon G. Carter Stadium * Fort Worth, Texas

TEAM NOTES

** Houston is 24-13-1 (.644) all-time during the month of December.

** Houston is 2-2 (.500) when playing on Dec. 31... This marked the second straight season that Houston played on Dec. 31.

** Friday's game was the 61st non-Saturday game in school history... Houston is 35-25-1 (.581) all-time during non-Saturday games... Houston is 20-10 (.667) all-time when playing on Friday.

BOWL HISTORY

** This marked the fifth straight season that the Cougars competed in a bowl game, a first in school history.

** Houston made its 20th all-time appearance in a bowl game... The Cougars are 8-12-1 (.404) in bowl games.

** This marked only the seventh time in the history of college football that two schools faced one another in back-to-back postseason games... It was the first time since Ohio State and South Carolina squared off in the 2001 and 2002 Outback Bowls.

** Senior center **Carl Barnett**, senior cornerback **Brandon Brinkley** and senior safety **Carson Blackmon** became the 11th, 12th and 13th players in school history to compete in four bowl games during their careers.

They joined **Michael Bloesch** (2005-08), **Kenneth Fontenette** (2005-08), **Phillip Hunt** (2005-08), **Donnie Love** (1978-81), **Cody Lubojasky** (2005-08), **Ernest Miller** (2005-08), **Lonell Phea** (1978-81), **Chris Pilot** (2005-08), **Cody Pree** (2005-08) and **Quinte Williams** (2005-08) in that exclusive group.

SERIES HISTORY vs. AIR FORCE

** This marked the third time in the last 467 days that the Cougars faced Air Force... The Falcons claimed a 31-28 win on Sept. 20, 2008, at Gerald J. Ford Stadium in Dallas (The game, originally scheduled to be played in Houston, was moved to Dallas to avoid Hurricane Ike)... Houston enjoyed a 34-28 win during the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl on Dec. 31, 2008... Air Force won the third meeting 47-20 on Dec. 31, 2009.

** The Cougars are 1-2 (.334) during the all-time series against Air Force.

** The Cougars are 1-1 (.500) against Air Force in bowl games... Houston claimed a 34-28 win against the Falcons on Dec. 31, 2008, during the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl.

HEAD COACH KEVIN SUMLIN NOTES

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is the only coach in school history to lead the Cougars to bowl games during each of his first two seasons.

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is 1-1 (.500) in bowl games during his career.

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is 1-1 (.500) against Air Force in bowl games during his career.

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is 1-2 (.334) against Air Force during his career.

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is 18-9 (.667) during his collegiate career... That is the best start by any Houston football head coach through his first 27 games.

** **Head coach Kevin Sumlin** is 2-2 (.500) when playing non-Saturday games during his career... Sumlin is 0-1 when playing on Thursday.

INDIVIDUAL NOTES

** Junior quarterback **Case Keenum** joined Texas Tech's Graham Harrell as the only players in NCAA Division I history with multiple 5,000-yard passing seasons during their careers... Keenum now has 5,671 passing yards in 2009 after throwing for 5,020 yards in 2008... Harrell threw for 5,705 yards (2007) and 5,111 yards (2008).

** With 222 passing yards on Thursday, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** now has 5,671 passing yards this season... That ranks as the third-highest single-season total in NCAA Division I history... He trails only B.J. Symons (5,833 yards, Texas Tech, 2003) and Graham Harrell (5,705 yards, Texas Tech, 2007).

** Junior quarterback **Case Keenum** has thrown a touchdown pass in his last 30 consecutive games, extending his school record... The previous record was 18 consecutive games by **Andre Ware** from 1988 to 1991.

** With one touchdown pass, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** has thrown for at least one touchdown in 29 consecutive games and 38 of 40 games during his career... Keenum's last game without a touchdown pass came against Tulsa on Nov. 10, 2007.

** Junior quarterback **Case Keenum** set a career-high with six interceptions... His previous high was three at Colorado State (Sept. 20, 2008) and at East Carolina (Dec. 5, 2009).

** Senior cornerback **Brandon Brinkley** set a Houston career record by competing in the 53rd consecutive game of his career...

He topped the record of 52 straight games set by **Kenneth Fontenette** (2005-08) and **Phillip Hunt** (2005-08).

** Senior center **Carl Barnett** and senior cornerback **Brandon Brinkley** set a Houston career record by competing in the 53rd games of their careers... They bested the mark set of 52 games by **Kenneth Fontenette** (2005-08) and **Phillip Hunt** (2005-08).

** With his fumble recovery in the first quarter, sophomore cornerback **Carson Blackmon** recorded the second fumble recovery of his career... His first was against Tulsa on Nov. 7, 2009.

** Junior quarterback **Case Keenum's** 41-yard punt was the second of his career and a career long... His also recorded a 15-yard punt against Oklahoma State on Sept. 12, 2009.

** With his two field goals, freshman kicker **Matt Hogan** recorded the fourth multi-field goal game of his career.

** With his 79-yard kickoff return to start the second half, sophomore wide receiver **Tyron Carrier** returned his fourth kickoff return for a touchdown this season and the fifth of his career.

** Sophomore wide receiver Tyron Carrier's 79-yard kickoff return is the third longest in UH bowl history.

** With his 1,029 receiving yards this season, sophomore wide receiver **Tyron Carrier** passed the 1,000-yard mark for the second time in his career... He joins **Elmo Wright** (1968-69) as the only players with multiple 1,000-yard seasons in their career.

** With his 1,021 receiving yards this season, sophomore wide receiver **Patrick Edwards** passed the 1,000-yard mark for the first time in his career.

** By surpassing the 1,000-yard receiving mark this season, sophomore wide receivers **Tyron Carrier** and **Patrick Edwards** will join with junior wide receiver **James Cleveland** to give Houston three 1,000-yard receivers in one season.

KEENUM IN THE NCAA RECORDS BOOK

** ** With 222 passing yards, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into seventh place in NCAA FBS career history... Keenum finished the 2009 season with 12,950 passing yards during his career... Up next in the NCAA FBS records book is NC State's Philip Rivers, who compiled 13,484 passing yards from 2000 to 2003.

** With 248 yards of total offense (222 pass, 26 rush), junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into third place in NCAA FBS single-season history... Keenum finished the 2009 season with 5,829 yards (5,671 pass, 158 rush) of total offense... Only Texas Tech's Graham Harrell (5,976 yards, 2003) and Hawai'i's Colt Brennan (5,915, 2006) accumulated more yards in a single season..

** With 248 yards of total offense (222 pass, 26 rush), junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into seventh place in NCAA FBS career history... Keenum finished the 2009 season with 14,041 yards (12,950 pass, 791 rush) of total offense during his career... Up next in the NCAA FBS records book is BYU's Ty Detmer, who compiled 14,665 yards of total offense from 2003 to 2006.

** With 24 completions, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into 10th place in NCAA FBS career history... Keenum finished the 2009 season with 1,076 completions during his career... Up

next in the NCAA FBS records book is New Mexico State's Chase Holbrook, who completed 1,087 passes from 2005 to 2008.

KEENUM IN THE C-USA RECORDS BOOK

** With 222 passing yards, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** set a Conference USA career record ... Keenum now has 12,956 passing yards during his career... He moved past Houston's **Kevin Kolb**, who threw for 12,964 yards from 2003 to 2006.

** With 41 passing attempts, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into second place in Conference USA history... Keenum now has 1,562 attempts during his career... Up next in the C-USA records book is Louisville's Chris Redman, who set a C-USA with 1,679 pass attempts from 1996 to 1999.

** With 61 plays (41 pass, 20 rush), junior quarterback **Case Keenum** moved into fourth place in Conference USA career history... Keenum now has 1,817 plays during his career... Up next in the C-USA records book is Louisville's Chris Redman, who completed in 1,836 plays from 1996 to 1999.

KEENUM IN THE HOUSTON RECORDS BOOK

** With one touchdown pass, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** added to his Houston career record... Keenum now has 102 touchdown passes during his career.

** With 24 completions, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** added to his Houston career record... Keenum now has 1,076 completions during his career.

** With 41 passing attempts, junior quarterback **Case Keenum** ranks second in the UH record books ... Keenum now has 1,562 passing attempts during his career... Up next is **Kevin Kolb**, who threw 1,565 passes from 2003 to 2006.

** With 248 yards of total offense (222 pass, 26 rush), junior quarterback **Case Keenum** set a Houston career record... Keenum now has 13,741 yards of total offense (12,950 pass, 791 rush) during his career... Keenum moved past **Kevin Kolb**, who compiled 13,715 yards of total offense (12,964 pass, 751 rush) from 2003 to 2006.