HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Really good team win. I know that gets said by me a lot, but I felt like all three phases of the game had a big part in this.

Let me first start off by complimenting Baylor. We knew that that’s a really, really improved football team. That quarterback reminds me a lot of our guy in terms of the development and the improvement that he’s made over the course of a year, and they were tough. Again, Matt Rhule-coached teams are always very well-coached, as well.

We knew this wasn’t going to be easy and then obviously when your starting quarterback goes out in the first drive, I think it was, you know, there could have been some panic. Could have been a little shock to everybody, especially knowing that they went down and scored right after that, but you know, I have told you guys, and I want to tell the world: Shane Buechele is the most engaged; he’s the most prepared; he’s the most positive coaching backup quarterback I’ve ever been around in my life and I’ve been around some really good ones, really, really good ones.

I go back to even every Thursday, the ones practice a QB sneak in case we need it on fourth and inches. We had not run QB sneak in two years here. He has 15 yards behind the play, on air, no center, no nothing and he’s crouching down, got his hands under his make-believe center and he’s getting his mental rep.

I don’t think there was any doubt in anybody’s mind how prepared he was because they watch him every day, and what an unbelievable teammate he has been; especially considering, you know, what’s gone on other places in the country. To have him be so fully invested in this football team and his teammates is a credit to him, his family, coach Beck, and that quarterback room, I can’t thank Shane enough and I probably don’t enough. But after today, I certainly will.

And then just to address Sam. He’s got an AC sprain on his throwing shoulder. We’re going to obviously get an MRI to make sure that there’s no ligament damage, but you know, some rest and treatment and hopefully have him, from what I’ve been told, have him throwing the ball by the end of this week.

So the off-week comes at a very good time, and we need to rest. We need to heal. We’ve been playing football for 11 straight weeks, and the guys need to take a nice deep breath, exhale and get ready to come to work on Tuesday.

Questions.

Q. I guess what’s going through your mind in the second half when you’re not able to get any points on the board, but the defense bows up? And did you think of going to Cam at all in the second half?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: No, no. Shane is absolutely prepared for that moment.

Yeah, what was going through my mind in the second half was manage the game. You know, you’ve got a 13-point lead. Your defense is playing great. Your backup quarterback had just gone out and we tried to take a deep shot. Tried to stay aggressive and he throws an interception, which is probably more -- has more of a psychological effect than it does an actual effect on the game.

But was extremely proud of, you know, the second-to-last drive and the last drive of our guys, you know, churning out some very difficult yards on the ground that, you know, you’re not going to throw it in that situation. We did a couple times, threw a boot pass and a couple quick gain stuff on third down, but you’re not going to take any chances when you’re defense is playing that well. You know, manage the game. That was what was going through my mind.

Q. When did Collin Johnson take the step he needed physically to become kind of the man he’s become at receiver, and when did y’all know you could trust him in the enormous situations that y’all have started trusting him?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: I think he absolutely loves Coach Mehringer. They have got a really special relationship, and they have worked really, really hard in the off-season leading up to this season.

So I think I knew, personally, in training camp, we’ve got two really good corners, and when you go ones versus ones and he’s making plays -- you always, at least I do, you kind of judge wide receivers on when does the quarterback throw it to him: Does he throw it to him on third down; does he throw it to him when he’s... when all is said, we’re done®
only got half a step because he trusts him; does he throw it to him when he knows that the guy is going to go up and protect him.

Both of our quarterbacks, all of our quarterbacks love throwing him the ball because they trust him.

Q. Just for clarity, TV and radio said Sam left the game with blood on his hands. Was it really a shoulder problem?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Yeah, they actually -- he'd hurt it a few plays prior and he stayed in. I think actually made a throw or two after, but the reason they stopped the game was he had blood on his hand.

So as he's coming off, we thought, okay, he's going to be out for a play, just get the blood cleaned up as they do, any time you've got exposed blood, you've got to come off the field. And he came off, he goes, "Coach, my shoulder's messed up. My shoulder's messed up."

We said, okay. So we had the trainers look at him and the shoulder was messed up.

Q. So when he went to the locker room, at that point, are you thinking, Shane is going the rest of the way, or are you waiting on a diagnosis?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Waiting on a diagnosis. They X-rayed him, diagnosed it as a sprain, and then gave him some anti-inflammatories. They let that medicine take effect and then see how he felt at half-time. I think I told the TV people that, you know, he was going to be evaluated at half-time. Couldn't do a whole lot. But by the end of half-time, we knew he was done.

Q. Finally on a different topic, I know you have much bigger goals, but for protections to be Bowl eligible in mid-October is a pretty big deal. Do you even say that to them or do you want them thinking about anything like that?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: It's funny you said that because I didn't think even think about it. You know, I remember last year in the locker room in Morgantown, West Virginia and watching guys like Ford and Hughes and those guys, dancing around like we'd won the Super Bowl saying, "We're going Bowling! We're going Bowling! We're going Bowling!"

And also thinking, oohh, we got some work to do (Laughter). But no, there was -- I don't think they even know in there. I don't think that not going to a Bowl game even crossed anybody's mind when the season started.

Q. Coming off the win against Oklahoma, getting the Top-10 ranking, going 5-1 for the first time in seven or eight years here, were you disappointed by the low fan turnout, especially in the student section, today?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: No. I love our fans. I know this is always a difficult weekend with Austin City Limits going on, and Austin is ranked the No. 1 city in America for a reason, because there's a lot of stuff to do.

So no, I know what they gave us the three previous home games that we had, and I know what they will give us the next couple home games that we have but I didn't even notice to be honest with you.

Q. You've been around a lot of quarterbacks. An AC sprain in the throwing shoulder, if there's no ligament damage, is that something that lingers or is that fine moving forward? Your level of concern with that kind of injury.
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: I think any time you hurt a throwing shoulder, my level of concern is greater than zero, but I don't know enough. I've got to be educated more on it.

Q. You've got your first 100-yard running back game in 18 games. How do you see the value of that, and is Keaontay 100 percent? Could he even do 25, 28 carries a game, or is he that healthy yet?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: I don't know that it's a matter of health. I think it's a matter of physical development with him. I would say he's probably at about 90 percent, if I -- I mean, I hate doing that, you know, quantifying health. But you know, he's probably got a few things that are lingering but none that would -- would keep him out of the game.

But I think you're going to see the biggest jump in his workload between year one and year two when Yancy McKnight gets a hold of him for an entire off-season.

Q. Some anxious moments from the defense in the last four quarters, two fourth quarters back-to-back. What's your message to them? Almost gave up a 97-yard, but they got the stop. What's your message to them going into the bye week?
HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Great stop. Almost only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades. They came up when they needed to. We know we've got some work to do on that side of the ball in the fourth quarter. What that is, I don't know.

Again, what another great reason to have the bye week now to evaluate who we're playing and what we are asking them to do and how we are coaching it. But that's what I say to them, great stop. Great stop.
Q. On the defensive side, your mantra has been, you guys are going to win through yourselves, what you've said consistently. I think you guys have nine quarterback hurries, three sacks, ten tackles for loss. I think they converted maybe less than half of their third downs. Is that kind of -- may not look pretty, but more what you want to see and how you guys are performing?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Yeah, I think we could have done a better job on third down, being right around 50 percent, certainly not our goal. You want to have the offense be around 20 percent.

The one thing we're doing, everybody we played; you know, take Tyler Murray out of the equation, but we are doing a good job stopping the run. Now we've got to do a better job on third down and we've got to do a better job when we're faced with elite quarterbacks and elite receivers defending them when we do make teams one-handed but I'm proud of -- and that's where it starts. You can't play great defense if you don't stop the run, and you know, they wound up with 88 yards.

But you know, I look at the -- at the tally here, you know: Quarterback had 22 yards and a lot of that was on that last drive, a few big ten-yard scrambles. You know, 21-yard net, 16-yard net, 16-yard net.

So when teams hand the ball off to their tailback, we're doing a really good job. What we have to shore up is third down and contesting their throw game a little bit better.

Q. Shane is a very active backup quarterback and as far as being on the headset and helping out, when he goes into the game, who steps up?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Well, when Sam was in the locker room, Cameron was on the headset. It's beautiful. You realize, you know, that these are 18- to 22-year-old young men in moments like this.

You know, Cameron puts a headset on, came back -- said, "Cameron, put the headset on."

He comes over to me, "Coach, what am I supposed it look for?"

I said, "Just act like you're playing the game and give us any pointers that you see out there and just be Shane's sounding board, if you will."

He was great. And then obviously once Sam came back out of the locker room, that was kind of Sam's job to do. So Cameron was great once we told him what to do because he'd never done it before, but he did a great job with it.

Q. I think Tre had nine carries in the first quarter compared to Keaontay getting zero. So what kind of went into the change to give Keaontay the ball more down the stretch?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: Oh, I think it's just a matter of keeping both guys fresh. I think it's a matter of managing what they do well. You know, neither one of them are big guys, you know, and that's a grown man position they play back there, especially on our offense, running inside zone and power. So we've got to be very cognizant of the cumulative effect of all the carries and tackles on their body.

So I thought we did a good job. You know, Tre started the game. Started off well. I think he finished, he averaged 3.2 yards a carry, but made some tough yards for us.

But yeah, it was a management of just workload, I think is probably the best way to put it.

Q. When Shane went in, did you notice him being a little bit anxious? He missed a couple passes early on, maybe over throwing the ball a little bit. Did you have to change the game plan a little bit with Shane in just because the fact that you didn't have a proven backup in case he went down? And one other thing, how relieved are you to get out of this game today 6-1 and where you are through the continue?

HEAD COACH TOM HERMAN: I'm relieved to be 1-0 against Baylor, and excited to be 1-0. I think when wins become reliefs, that's never a good thing. We celebrate wins around here and we always will, because they are really hard and we're not going to get bored with success.

But when Shane went in, I did notice he was a bit anxious as you pointed out and that's to be expected. Here's a guy, he literally has not taken a snap in the football game the entire season. So for him to be anxious was definitely expected.

But I told him two things. One, at half-time, I said, "You've started and won football games for this university. Everybody believes in you. You need to believe in yourself the way that I believe in you, because I do." I really do believe in Shane Buechele and everything that he brings to the table.

I don't think -- in fact, I told him that we weren't going to -- I said, hey, listen, I said, "I believe in you so much that I'm not going to pull the reins back on this thing," and stop throwing the football. One thing we did, we kept some of the read game out of it. Didn't want him...
to get hurt.

But you know, what he did do -- I mean, he did a phenomenal job on some of those third downs flipping protections. They were blitzing him pretty good on third down, and I was really proud of him.

I told him, "We're not going to change because you're in here. If Sam is 1A, you're 1B, and we feel confident that you can execute the game plan."