

# Quotes from today's football press conference

September 3, 2001 · MT Media Relations

**QUOTES FROM MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE HEAD COACH  
ANDY MCCOLLUM AND  
FOUR BLUE RAIDER  
PLAYERS FROM TODAY'S  
PRESS CONFERENCE  
ANDY MCCOLLUM  
McCollum from SBC  
Conference Call on  
Vanderbilt Game**

This was a great game to learn from. We had some mistakes that make a game like that tough to win. We've got to get those corrected. But I was very proud of the effort. We were

down by four at the half and I'm not sure that it was a game that we could have come back and won a year ago. The kids looked around at each other and knew darn well that they could come back and win this football game. We fought through adversity and I was very proud of the leadership that we had. It was a game that was really hyped up around here, but it was also a game that our kids didn't talk about until the week of the game. Our concern was with Middle Tennessee and how good we could be that day. **On Troy State**

We're about to face a team that is very athletic, fast, and physical. They're a team that came in here and whipped us pretty good two years ago. We have a great challenge ahead of us. In a lot of ways they're more athletic than the opponent we just played. Our kids know the challenge that lies ahead of us and we have to have a good week of work to get ready. **On Jykine Bradley (who was named Sun Belt Defensive Player of the Week)**

Jykine's a guy that has come a long way since he lined up against Mississippi State two years ago and had never played DB before. He has grown up a lot from his first game to his second game and all the way up until now. I'm not sure how many tackles he had against Vanderbilt, but he had some good plays and some pass breakups. He had a tackle for loss. I'm very proud of Jykine. He has been a great leader for us in the secondary. He has been able to make plays against the people that we have to play. **McCollum from Weekly Press Conference**

**Announcements from Media Relations Director Mark Owens:** McCollum TV Show set to air for the first time on Comcast Sports Southeast (Ch. 27 on local Comcast Cable) on Tuesday night at 6:30 PM - Game vs. Troy State will air live on CSS with Chip Walters and Greg Pollard providing the commentary - McCollum radio show set to air live from the Bunganut Pig on Thursday night beginning at 7 PM and will be broadcast over the internet on WGNS 1450 AM - Dwone Hicks was named SBC Offensive Player of the Week and Jykine Bradley was named SBC Defensive Player of the Week - Team Offensive MVP is Glen Elarbee and Defensive Player of the Week was Michael Woods - There will be no press conference next Monday since the team will be off. **McCollum on**



## **the Offensive Line**

Coming into the game our offensive line was a question mark and coming out of the game our offensive MVP was Glen Elarbee. He did a great job and graded out well. For a unit that had question marks I thought they played extremely well. **McCollum on Michael Woods**

Michael Woods was our defensive player of the week. He had a really good game and made some big plays. He still has a way to go to be where we want him to be, but he is growing up and getting better every day. **McCollum on Mistakes in the Vandy Game**

Everybody's been talking about mistakes that were made in the game and believe me we had just as many as they did. We had some drops that we don't need, we had a punt return called back due to a penalty that doesn't need to happen. We had a couple of breakdowns in the secondary that doesn't need to happen if we want to continue to win games. **McCollum on the possibility of a letdown against Troy State**

All spring and all summer you all (the media) have pointed toward Vanderbilt, we have not. My football team didn't talk about Vanderbilt until we were ready to play Vanderbilt and I couldn't be prouder of them for that. Vanderbilt was our first opportunity. It was hyped because it was 25 miles down the road. Our first goal was to win the Sun Belt championship and go to a bowl game, not Vandy. Our second goal was to beat a name and Vandy happened to be one of those, so we accomplished that goal. We're looking to play against a team that whipped us pretty good two years ago. They are a faster team than we just played and they'll be a motivated team coming off of a tough loss to Nebraska. I think if you come watch practice this week you'll find a team that's not feeling too good about itself. **McCollum on Troy State**

They may have to worry about getting their kids down to earth, too, because of the way they beat us here two years ago. They have to be feeling pretty good about coming in here and playing against us. They have a great running back that started two years at Auburn. Their defense is very fast. I think they stopped Nebraska twice inside the five, so we know the challenge ahead of us. **McCollum on previous game against Troy State**

We hope that the talent gap between us in that game has gone down or it's going to be ugly again. Games are won and lost on the field. We have to have a great week of practice to get ready for a team that has a lot of speed. The team two years ago, I think, had six players drafted off of it and they have gotten some transfers from other programs. We won't have to talk to our kids too much. All we have to do is turn the film on for about three series and they will know what kind of a challenge we have ahead of us. **McCollum on the fans**

Our fans were the difference in the game. We came out and saw all of the blue in the stands and they were there at 6 PM to cheer us onto the field. I have said that the support is there and if everyone that was at the Vandy game will just bring one friend we can fill our stadium up. Our fans were there with us through thick and thin and I think they gave us an edge in the game. **MIDDLE TENNESSEE PLAYER QUOTES**

### **RB Dwone Hicks**

The campus really needed more school spirit when I got here. Everyone was worried about going to see UT or TSU play. But now the focus seems to be more on MT football. Coming home from the game, you could really see the spirit. A lot of people were beeping their horn and hollering. We just want those people to show up Saturday. The offensive line worked really hard in the summer and during fall camp. They worked harder than anyone else and it showed. I just wanted to run hard and set a tone for the season, and a good game just came out of that. The competition (at running back) pushed me. I got the opportunity and the hard work showed. I try not to let the first person tackle me, which works well for yards after contact. I just want to help the team win and get to a bowl and get a ring on our finger. **LB Michael Woods**

In the new scheme, we can get more linebackers and defensive backs on the field, and we get a good rush from the defensive linemen. **On QB Brock Nutter**

He is a good quarterback who passes well and is very consistent. This will be a big game and we hope to see lots of fans in the stadium. We have to play hard and take another step toward our season goals. **OL Glen Elarbee**

(Our offensive line) Was a question mark until we proved we could do the job last week. We still have a lot to prove. We knew if we could keep the tempo quick [against Vanderbilt] we had a chance to make big plays. We wanted to put body-on-body and be where we needed to be. Our whole group is just really close friends. We've been in the offense for a couple of years and know how each other thinks. It was just our turn to step up and show what we could do. We've come a long way since the beginning of fall camp. At the beginning guys were getting moved around and it took a few days for things to settle down. But once we started practicing together, things just came together and we started playing well. We need to be more physical. Every offensive line has to do that. We have to get better each game. The offensive line last year was great. They had guys with great hands and hips and good feet. The true test is to work hard every week and have better stats and a better record at the end of the year. **DE Tanaka Scott**

"[Troy State] is a physical, quick team. We have to stay focused and play hard and make plays to be successful. We need a great week of practice and need to stay focused. It was awesome to see the stadium full of blue. That's what we want to see this week, too. It really gave us an extra boost to see all the fan support. We made a lot of mistakes in the first half and had some missed assignments. We have to have everyone stay on the same page. We can't have 10 guys on page one and the other guy on page three. At halftime we went in and put our thinking caps on and stepped it up a notch in the second half.

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