

# Quotes from Tuesday's football press conference

## Blue Raiders step back out of conference on Saturday

October 14, 2008 · Athletic Communications

### **Rick Stockstill Opening Statement**

I didn't think we played particularly last week, well especially on offense. It is a common denominator that when you turn the ball over you have a pretty good chance of losing the game. In particular, I thought the two interceptions we threw took points off the board and put points on their board. The



point is we had three turnovers and they scored off all three. We got three and only converted one. To me that was the difference in the game. We did a poor job of protecting the football and made it easier for them than we should have. I thought our players played extremely hard and their effort was good, I can not fault them for that. Defensively, I didn't think we did a very good job on third down. We have to get better on third down and that coupled with the turnovers I think was the difference in the game.

### **Did Dwight Dasher do enough to get back in to some sort of rotation base with Joe**

**Craddock?** I think so. We are going to go through this week and watch them both practice because I believe in competition. Joe played very well the first five games but he was off a little on Saturday. I don't want to make a knee-jerk reaction but I think the way Dwight played, based on the performance in that game, he deserves more playing time. We will go through this week of practice and have a plan for Saturday.

### **Can it be as simple as running the ball when Dasher is in and throwing it when Joe is in? Or is that a bad trap to fall into?**

I would say that is a bad trap. I think we lend ourselves to be pretty predictable with that philosophy. I have a lot of confidence in Dwight throwing the ball. He threw it really well last year when he played and is getting better this year. Joe throws the ball well. He didn't make some very good choices Saturday night. Joe is a decent runner but not a Dwight type runner. I thought as much as anything the other night, Phillip Tanner had as much to do with the improved running game as Dwight. He had some really good tough physical runs. When an offensive lineman sees a running back making plays like that it gives them a little bit of juice and more confidence. I think Phillip's running Saturday night helped our offensive line and obviously Dwight had some nice runs also. I am glad to see our running game get a little bit better. I still don't think it is close to where

it is capable of being.

**Are you concerned that you are not getting enough total yards on offense or is that just the situation?** I think part of it is as fast as the game goes with the new clock you aren't going to get as many at bats as you would in the normal course of a game. I think where we really struggled the last three game is we haven't gotten any big explosive plays and that is how you get 400 yards or more of offense. When you look at Maryland and Kentucky we got some bigger plays and that is how you get 400 or more yards of offense. It is harder when you are just getting four or five yards at a time. It is a concern and we have to start getting more explosive plays.

**Why do you think you have played and matched up so well in those non-conference games?** To me, after the Kentucky game, I think people realized we weren't very good running the ball and they defended the pass more than the run. When they defend the pass more the way they are doing you are taking away the opportunity for big plays. We just haven't been able to establish the run game enough to get the one-on-one match-up in the secondary. Hopefully, after Saturday maybe the Louisville people will start respecting our running game a little bit more which will open the passing game a little more.

**Is it a case of the players getting up more for the bigger games?** I hope they don't because we try to approach every game the same way. To me we were just as excited to play Kentucky as Florida Atlantic. I hope they don't approach it that way because that is not how we play the game of football. We don't put any more emphasis on one game or another. Our focus and preparation is to win each week.

**What challenges do you see in facing Hunter Cantwell this weekend?** He has a high ankle sprain and I don't know if he is real comfortable or able to step and plant like he would like to. I don't think he is completely healthy but he is still a very dangerous quarterback. I don't think he is a guy who can beat you with his feet but he can definitely beat you with his arm. He is a very talented and experienced quarterback who is throwing the ball very well.

**The last two games with Louisville have been exciting. Any reason to think this one will be any different?** I don't think any of us thought last year's game would be the type of offensive show it turned out to be. I have never been part of a game like that. There were so many big plays and then in the fourth quarter we got in some trouble in the red zone and turned the ball over a couple of times which killed our chances of winning. It goes back to turnovers. I know we are ready to play and our guys are excited and we have to get this nasty feeling from last week out of our guts.

**After playing on Thursday's and Tuesday's, how important is it for coaches and players to get into a regular game week routine?** I think it is good. I would think the players that have been here the last two years; it is becoming the norm for them. Our schedule has had a lot of mid-week games since I have been here. You have to adjust and get ready for odd games during the week. I think it has been good. At times it has been helpful getting guys away and prepared mentally. As a coaching staff it doesn't present too much of a problem logistically. I think it was hard when we played Florida Atlantic on Tuesday because it seemed like forever until we played FIU on Saturday. As coaches, we have tunnel vision when July gets here and it makes it much more difficult for us to change our routine than the players.

**Do coaches think of going to the back-up quarterback quicker today than a few years ago**

**because of the pressure college football has provided?** I don't think so. I always thought you coached a quarterback just like he was the running back, linebacker or the wide receiver, but you have a little bit longer rope with the quarterback. You don't think twice about pulling a linebacker if they have a few bad plays. Most teams have a second team quarterback that is very capable and has gained the confidence of the staff. Dwight (Dasher) started five games for us last year so we have confidence in him. I don't think it is because of the pressure but I think it is because they have a backup with a lot of ability. If one guy isn't doing it then give the other guy a chance because he practices just as hard as the first-team guy does.

**Do you feel like the success you have had against Maryland and Louisville gives you confidence going into this weekend?** These guys have gone to Oklahoma and LSU and they've been to Louisville before so we are going to the same venue and playing the same team. They should be confident in that aspect. Our record is not impressive right now but we are getting better and doing some good things. It doesn't show in the win-loss column but we are getting better. They should be confident.

### **LB Danny Carmichael**

**What do you guys have to do to slow Louisville down on Saturday?** Last year we had a lot of missed assignments and gave up three or four big plays for touchdowns. Two of those were in the first plays of the first two drives of the game. I think if we can limit the big plays and stop the run we will be alright.

**Is it an issue for you to play the big games or are you comfortable in those surroundings?** We are very comfortable. The last three years I have been here we have played some big teams. We have played them well in the past and I don't expect anything different this year.

**What is it that makes you guys play so well against the non-conference foes?** We played well. Maryland and Kentucky are in the past and we are ready to go play well this weekend. We go into every game expecting to win and I don't think there is a team on the schedule we can't beat.

**How frustrating is it to have the peaks and valleys this season has provided?** It is frustrating, but we have to move on. Those games are behind us now. We have a 24-hour rule and after 24 hours we have to move on and focus on the next game. We just have to keep chugging. We just have to take one game at a time from this point on.

### **RB Phillip Tanner**

**What do you think about the success of the running game last weekend?** I don't want to say it is a coincidence. We have been working on it all season and it all game together. We thrive off of big plays. In games when we don't have good running games I would say it is partially my fault and partially the linemen. But when we come together as a team we get it done. Dwight Dasher is a great running quarterback and his is more of a threat to the defense. I don't think it was just because of Dasher last week. We all came together to make it work.

**Does the huddle change from one quarterback to the next?** It changes to a certain extent but at running back it doesn't change too much for me. My job is the same with either one in the game but we practice with both during the week so we know their style and how they run everything.

**Do you like these games in big stadiums?** I enjoy the game but the game is the game. It is a win-win situation. Those games are just preparation and we really want to win conference games. Our goal is to win conference championships so those games are just preparation to help us win conference games.

**Do you get more hyped up for those games?** I wouldn't say we get more hyped up for those games. If we are playing Troy for the championship it is just as big if we are playing UT, Texas or Tennessee. I don't think we get more hyped up for those games.

**How much do you think about your long-term goals compared to one game at a time?** It is always on our mind but at the same time you have to focus on the next game. In order to achieve those goals or even have a chance you have to look at the next game on the schedule. I'm not going to say it's not on our minds but we have to get ready for the next game.

**Do you look at your last few games and think we should go into this game pretty confident?** Every athlete looks at it that way. It is college football. Whatever team comes out and plays their best game winning the physical and mental battle can win on any given day.

---

*Printed on July 28, 2014*

*Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/34659>*