

October 13, 2009

Blue Raiders to host Bulldogs on national television

Team holds weekly press conference

Athletic Communications

Head Coach Rick Stockstill

Opening Comments

We are very excited about this game. I am looking forward to getting everything started. We had a good practice yesterday and it is really a special time for us. This is a very good opportunity for us with a talented Mississippi State team coming in here. Their record is not all that good right now, but they have some really good players. They have some very dynamic running backs. We are looking forward to the challenge.

On showcasing the program on national television

We have not been home in a month. It is a chance for us to play in front of our fans. It is fall break for our students this weekend. I hope a lot of them stay and go to the game and then go home afterward. I think it is a great opportunity and hopefully it will be sold out with the first SEC team coming here. We have got a good football team, they have got a good football, the weather will be great, there is a great kickoff team, and there is not a reason this game should not be sold out. It is a great opportunity to show off the city of Murfreesboro, the school and our program on national television two weeks in a row.

On the significance to fans of hosting the program's first SEC opponent

I think the SEC is the best conference in America. They have the number one team and number two team in the country. Year in and year out they are the best or one of the top two conferences in the country. Football is very passionate in the SEC. Their fans travel no matter what their record is. I would expect Mississippi State to bring a nice contingent with them. When you talk SEC you are talking the best conference in America, in my opinion.

On containing Mississippi State running back Anthony Dixon

He is a really good back. They have got three really good backs. I expect a fist fight. They are going to come in here and try to impose their will on us. We have to do a good job tackling and stopping their run. To me that is their identity. I have a feeling they are going to come in here and try to run the ball on us. He is a great back. He has gotten a lot yards playing against who he has played against so far this year. And we have to do a good job of tackling and putting hats on the ball.

On rebounding after last week's loss to Troy

We are a confident team. We did not play well at Troy. Defensively, we played well at times. Offensively we did not. Dwight (Dasher) got a lot of the blame which is natural at the quarterback position. There was no one on offense who played well last week. We have to get better and I have no doubt that we will correct the mistakes we made. We may be asking some guys to do too much right now. So we may cut back on some things and make sure we are not overloading some guys.

I told them yesterday. We are 3-2 and have beaten some good teams. Maryland does not have a very good record, but they beat Clemson. Memphis does not have a very good record, but they beat UTEP who beat Houston who was number 10 in the country and beat Mississippi State. Their records may not show it, but we have beaten some good teams. We are confident and just need to go out and play a solid game. It seems like forever since we have played a game. I do not think confidence will be a problem at all.

On defending the spread option

They run the option and that is the first thing you have to defend. Those of you, who watched the Florida State - Georgia Tech game, know how hard it is to defend the option. That is their number one play. They are getting a bunch of different formations and using the tight ends. They are getting four or five guys wide. They do a lot of the things they are doing at Florida and Utah.

On the Mississippi State defense

I think their back end is really talented. They are really good back there. Their front seven are good players. I do not know if they are better than what we saw at Clemson, but they are a very active bunch who does a lot of stemming and moving around up front. They are probably bigger than any defense we have played up front. I do know they are the fastest defense we have played against up front.

On preparing for Mississippi State

We have two good games to watch in the Auburn and Houston games. We will not get much from the LSU game because they play a traditional set.



Rick Stockstill addressed the media on Tuesday as the Blue Raiders prepare for the Bulldogs on Saturday. ()

On the potential increased alumni at the game as a result of the Hall of Fame weekend

It is a great day and a great opportunity to honor all the athletes from all the different sports. Anytime you can get your alumni and former players from whatever sport back on campus it is always a good thing.

On potential implications for the program's success in the future

I do not think one game determines who you are. Every game is important and, yes, this is important. We are not looking at this game as a game that we have to legitimize ourselves as a program. It is an important game we are going to play. We will do everything we can to try to win, but we are not worried about all that other stuff.

On the need for physical play and promoting it in practice

We will make sure we stay in tune with what we do every week with tackling and doing our drills. You are at the point in the season where you cannot do a lot of physical tackling or you will not have a lot of bodies left when it comes to playing the game. We are going to continue to emphasize what we have been doing when it comes to preparing for the game. I think our defense has done a good job of tackling in the first five games, but we are not going to do anything differently in practice.

On [Malcolm Beyah](#)

He is highly doubtful. I do not see him being able to play for awhile.

On the early start to Saturday's game

We will not do anything different. I am excited about the 11:32 kickoff. I love waking up and going to play the game. We will eat our same pregame meal at 7:32 just like it was at 9 o'clock at night. We are not going to change and make a big deal about the 11:30 kick off. We will practice the same. We are getting to the halfway point of the season and we will start to cut our practices back a little bit from a time standpoint, which we would do anyway.

On the situation with [Patrick Honeycutt](#), [Nick Coleman](#) and [Gorby Loreus](#)

You have heard about the situation with [Patrick Honeycutt](#), [Nick Coleman](#) and [Gorby Loreus](#) from an incident this past weekend. I do not condone anything they did. They are good people. They were not involved with the gun shooting that was reported. It had nothing to do with anyone that was on this football team or anyone else in any other sports. So I do not want people to draw the conclusion that they are bad guys. The gun incident was somewhere else. It was not there. What they did was wrong. They are not allowed to drink until age 21. Gorby was underage. Patrick and Nick are not allowed to furnish alcohol to someone who is not 21. They were wrong. They broke the law and will be disciplined in-house. I do not want people to draw the conclusion that something happened that did not happen. One guy got arrested for drinking under age and the other two got arrested for furnishing alcohol to minors. They are all good men and I wish we had more like them. They made a mistake and we will deal with it internally.

Senior Defensive Tackle [Brandon Perry](#)

On defending against Anthony Dixon

It is a big issue with Mississippi State. They are big on running the football and do it extremely well. Dixon will be a tough guy to stop so we will have to play assignment football.

On opportunity playing an SEC school

It is a big deal because they are an SEC school, but they are not any different than Troy, Clemson, Maryland or anyone else we play.

On playing a home game

It is like going home and seeing your family. We have all our people here. It will be good to be back playing in our house because it has been awhile.

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