Blue Raiders hit the road to face FAU

Quotes from today's press luncheon

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Head Coach Rick Stockstill

Opening Comments:
We are excited about this game. It is another opportunity to play another good football team. Florida Atlantic has won a couple in a row and they are a really good offensive football team scoring a lot of points right now. There defense is pretty solid. They had the one game early in the season where they gave up a lot of points, but they have been playing really solid lately. We are going to have to play well to win this game.

On FAU playing the pro style offense
They have good players. What you do offensively and defensively is really relevant to the type of players you have. Coach Schnellenberger has recruited the right players for his system and we are recruiting the right players for our system. They have good players with good athleticism and a lot of speed. Their quarterback is a four-year starter who can make all the throws. They have a powerful running back who leads the conference in rushing. I don't think it is as much of what type of offense you have as what type of players you have.

On the game having high scoring implications
I think we are going to have to score a lot of points offensively because they are going to score a lot of points offensively. You hope your defense can continue to play well and hold them down, but looking at their offense and the way they have played lately you are going to have to score points. You do not want a shoot out, but you never know.

On the need to create turnovers

When you turn the ball over it is hard to win football games. Earlier in the season they turned the ball over and did not win. Now they are not turning it over as much and they are winning. You have got to be able to create turnovers no matter who you play. When teams are evenly matched the team that protects the ball is usually on the left side of the column.

On Rusty Smith being a potential NFL prospect

It is not for me to say. He is a good player and he has won a bunch of games. I have never coached or played in the NFL. Some teams may like this type of quarterback, but that is not for me to decide. All I know is he has had a lot of success at FAU and won a lot of ball games for them.

On Alfred Morris (FAU running back)

He is a downhill, physical runner with good speed. It is hard to tell on film, but it looks like he has good vision and he sets up his blocks and reads his blocks very well.

On FAU's offensive line

They have a good offensive line. Rusty Smith has not been sacked much lately. He has had some time to sit back there and throw the ball. They are a very experienced offensive line with good speed. They look very good up front and when they drop back in pass protection.

On second-string players getting playing time against WKU and will any see more action this week

There is a bunch that played that probably will not play again unless we get in that type of situation. But guys like Sammy Seamster, Kenneth Gilstrap and Justin Jones should see more time. I thought all of our young guys continued to improve and make some plays. Gilstrap got a fumble and a touchdown, Sammy caused a fumble, and Justin got a sack. Those guys are continuing to get better. The ones that played will continue to play.

On Middle Tennessee's presence in the Miami-Dade area with regards to recruiting implications

I think we have a good name in the state of Florida, Georgia and Tennessee. I think our coaches have done a great job recruiting. There is no one that sells your program better than your current players. I think we have a good name in the state of Florida. Anytime a high school recruit can see you play whether it is on TV or in person is a good thing.

On Middle Tennessee's offense improving against WKU

We hit some big plays. Not being critical of Western Kentucky, Chris McClover was able to get behind their young corner. Dwight made some big throws and our offensive line had one of their best games from a running and passing standpoint. I think we executed better. The previous two weeks the offense got beat up a little bit. I hope those guys have more confidence now and see when they execute we can score points. They should be more confident.

Offensive lineman Mark Fisher

On confidence taking from WKU game

I think it gives us a lot of confidence in running the ball. We did a good job last week running the football so hopefully it will carry over.

On playing in warm weather

I do not think it is going to affect us. We went to North Texas and it was pretty warm. We are in good shape.

On running a diverse offense
As offensive linemen, we gain confidence by running the ball. We gained over 200 yards last week which is a great confidence booster

On the veteran experience of the offensive line and its progression
I think we have made great progress. We do not have a lot of missed assignments. We trust the people to the right and left of us which is very important in the trenches.

Defensive lineman Brandon Perry

On playing a physical team
They are a great team that does not make too many mistakes. We just need to come out and play physical up front and if we can do that we will be okay.

On personal success
There was a lot of stuff holding me back before this year and that was mainly my weight. I am in the best shape of my life right now and I think it shows in my play. I see a lot of things differently now and I want to move forward.

On the goals of the defense
I think every team we have played this year has had an outstanding running back. We just have to get our mind right to stop the run first and make them throw the football. It will be challenge on Saturday.

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