# Quotes from today's football press conference

## Raiders host Ragin' Cajuns Saturday

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**COACH RICK STOCKSTILL:** The FAU win last week was a good win for us. I thought we improved in a lot of areas, but we still have some areas we've got to clean up. I was proud of our team, and how hard they played and competed.

**COACH RICK STOCKSTILL ON LOUISIANA:** They are a really good football team. They're 6-2, and 4-1 in the conference, and had won six in a row until last week. Their quarterback (Gautier) has thrown 12 touchdown passes and only had two interceptions. They have a big offensive line, and are pretty balanced in their running and throwing. They have a dynamic tight end, and their receivers are probably as good as any we have faced this year.

Defensively, they will bring more pressure than FAU did. They are very multiple in their coverages and their front, and they are athletic. Their front guys can run, their linebackers are athletic; their secondary is a very experienced group and they are very sound in their kicking game. It will be a great football game, and we are looking forward to it.

**COACH RICK STOCKSTILL ON OFFENSIVE SUCCESS:** Two things stand out to me. One is our offensive line. Those guys are all playing at a high level, they've been very good in pass protection, allowing only five sacks this year, and one of them was against FAU on a three-step drop. That was more of a coverage sack on the quarterback. There was another one against WKU when Logan (Kilgore) should have thrown the ball away but took a sack. Really, we have given up only three sacks all year, and that is pretty incredible considering, how much we throw the ball. We are leading

the conference in rushing, and that's a direct reflection on the offensive line.

The other thing is turnovers. We had three turnovers against FAU, and you just can't do that. When we don't turn the ball over, we can be pretty effective offensively. When we do turn it over, we are not. That stopped a couple of drivers that we had against FAU last week.

Our quarterback is playing very well, and give a lot of credit to William Pratcher and Kyle Griswould, and Reggie Whatley, too. That goes back to our offensive line. It doesn't matter who is back there, we are still being productive.

**COACH RICK STOCKSTILL ON LIMITING BIG PLAYS ON DEFENSE:** Usually big plays are the result of a missed tackle, or a missed assignment. If you play your responsibility, and do what you are supposed to do, you should be in position to make a play.

I thought we tackled well against FAU. We had some really good, physical, violent tackles. I think we had one missed tackle for the whole game, which is pretty incredible. So we are playing better. We gave up five explosive plays at FAU, which is about the most you want to give up, but that is a pretty solid number right there. We were better on third down against FAU than we have been in the past. To me, if you are good on third down, and don't give up big plays, you have a chance to be successful on defense.

**COACH RICK STOCKSTILL ON SBC RACE:** We know we are not out of it, and they know we are not out of it. It doesn't do us any good to talk about games down the road. We have to focus on Louisiana. We know that if we are fortunate enough to win this game, we are still in the hunt, and that is all we are trying to do, play it one game at a time.

**PLAYER QUOTES**

***SAFETY ERIC RUSSELL***

**On success of defense:** We played really well in forcing six turnovers. I've never been part of a defense to do something like that. So it was big for us. We preach turnovers every week and when you get more turnovers you have a better chance of winning the game.

**On stopping Louisiana's offense:** We have to keep doing what we've been doing. They've got a really good quarterback. He's thrown a lot of touchdowns. He's a little bit of a gunslinger like the Troy quarterback. So we really just have to keep doing what we've been doing and we'll be all right.

**On forcing turnovers:** I think it could lead to more wins. We came in with eight and got six in one game so hopefully we can keep it up. You can win a lot of games with that many turnovers.

**On conference race:** We take it one game at a time. We know they're at the top of the league so if we beat them it would bring them back towards us. But we really just look at it one game at a time.

**On team's leader:** I think all the seniors try to keep the team together. We do have a lot of young guys, but I don't think it's just one guy who's the leader.

**On who makes the play on defense:** Our defense is designed so that anyone can make the play. It's not just one guy making the interception or forcing a fumble. It just depends on what happens

and where the ball goes.

***OL BRANDON MCLEROY***

**On success of offense:** I believe it's because everyone's bought into the system. Everyone has been all about the team, and trying to win every game.

**On the key to Saturday's game:** We have to play our best game and do a better job of finishing drives. Last week we did score 38 points, but we should've scored more than that. We need to finish, go fast and limit turnovers.

**On playing more offensive linemen:** The coaches have done a great job of recruiting guys who can play. We've got new guys who can play mixed in with our older starters like Mike (Williams) and Colin (Boss). So we've got a good rotation where we can keep people fresh and keep the ball moving.

**On offensive line playing fast:** When you go so fast that the defense can't get into their stances, you know the offense is running right. And we were able to do that the first three drives last week. If we can keep that up the rest of the season I think we'll be all right.

**On getting back in the conference race:** We don't really concentrate on that too much. We just have to worry about ourselves. We have to play fast on offense and score points and the defense has to get off the field on third down and we'll be fine.

**On the line playing well:** I think this is the best line we've had since I've been here mainly because of our depth. We've never been able to go two-deep before because of injuries and a lack of bodies. This year we've been able to red-shirt younger guys, we've had new guys come in and play well. So it's been good from all aspects.

***DL JIMMY STATEN***

**On facing Louisiana's offense:** We have to worry about us each week. We know the things we need to do to step up on defense and offense. So we just need to get out there and worry about us.

**On decisive conference win:** Everyone's jacked up and ready to win. We suffered some close losses earlier in the season but if we come together, play hard and control what we can control we'll be all right.

**On facing an up-tempo offense:** I think we'll be ready for their offense because our offense does the same things to us at practice. So I think we'll be ready for them.

**On youth on defense:** We've got some young players but they've made great strides in getting prepared to do what they're supposed to do. Coach has called on them and they've performed.

**On Louisiana quarterback:** He throws the ball well and he's also mobile. But I think if our defense plays the way we're capable of then we have a great chance of picking up the win.