

Quotes from today's football press conference

Raiders prepare for Vols

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COACH RICK STOCKSTILL:

We are excited about playing Tennessee this weekend. It will be a great opportunity, as well as, a great challenge for us. Our players are looking forward to going over there to play. Hopefully, there will be 100,000 people in the stadium. They have played a gauntlet of four really tough teams this past month in Georgia, LSU, Alabama, and South Carolina.

Their defense is the strength of their team. They have done a nice job defensively. They hung in there in the first half with all of those teams, and kind of got run away with a little bit in the second half. Offensively, they have struggled. They have had a couple of guys injured with their quarterback and their receiver, so they have been breaking in a new quarterback the last two weeks. But they are still a very dangerous offense. It will be a great challenge for our defense.



(On UT's problems running the ball): Looking at their games, I think that is kind of a two-fold deal. One is the four teams that they have played. That has a lot to do with it. But, also, I think they have struggled a little bit throwing the ball since they lost (Tyler) Bray. Sims has played a little bit, and now Justin Worley was the guy last week. When you are not as effective throwing the ball, it hurts your running game as well. They have good enough people to run the ball.

(On what Tennessee's game plan might be Saturday): I think they are going to come out and try to run the ball on us, try to out-physical us. Just run the ball mixed with some play-action passes,

and try to help their quarterback, keep him out of long yardage situations. They may come in and try to throw the ball all over the yard, but I think they will try to establish the run and play-action pass.

(On missed assignments on defense leading to big plays against MT): We had 51 running plays against Lafayette that they only gained 98 yards on. They had nine other running plays on which they gained 228 yards. We had nine or ten breakdowns in there, but we didn't have as many as the week before (against FAU). So those younger guys are getting better, they are getting more experience. Do I expect us to play an error-free game? Probably not, but I hope that we will continue to improve, because those guys are working extremely hard in practice, they are very conscientious and its important to them, so I hope that the mistakes will be eliminated.

(Importance of starting well) I think is important for our confidence to start well, to get off on a positive note. We've got to be able to move the ball, make some things happen, get it in the end zone early.

PLAYER QUOTES

QB LOGAN KILGORE

On the Vols being a big in-state opponent: The caliber of opponent and the environment we'll play in heightens the game a little bit, but I think it's just another game. We felt the same thing when we went to Memphis last year. I think the environment will be live but we'll be ready to go.

On starting well offensively: We had a good plan against Florida Atlantic and I think we had a good plan against Louisiana. But we just didn't execute the plan last week. Give them credit, they're 7-2 for a reason. They're a good team, but now we're moving on to another challenge and we're excited about that.

On secondary changes: I think personnel-wise they are deep everywhere, but more than that you want to study scheme and coverages and different tendencies. But as far as personnel, I won't really pay attention to a lot of that.

On Tennessee's competition: The only thing that makes it difficult is the offenses. Alabama and Georgia and all them are under center and running the pro-style offense. So it's a different scheme. They've played Cincinnati, who runs the spread, but the main thing we have to do is watch the things that we can prepare for and we'll have a good idea of what they're going to do.

On playing at Neyland Stadium: We don't really huddle up or communicate verbally on the field other than line calls, so I don't see it being a huge problem. Most of our stuff is signaled so other than a change of atmosphere I don't think it will affect what we are doing. Coach said the other day if you can't get up for this game then something's wrong with you. So we'll definitely look to get motivated early.

DE OMAR MCLENDON

On the Vols being a big time opponent: I played against a few of their guys in high school, but I think it'll be bigger for the people from Tennessee than it will be for me. But I'm excited just the same to play in front of 100,000 people.

On stopping the big plays: I think it's mental. In practice we were getting the plays right. I think

with our youth on defense it might be nerves getting to us. But I think the more the young players play and the more experience they get, the better they'll be.

On the Vols quarterback situation: With a younger guy they're going to run the ball and protect him a little bit more. With (Matt) Sims I believe they'll still run the ball. They've seen the tape and know how we've played against the run so I believe they'll just try to pound it.

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