

Raiders return to road against FIU

Kickoff set for 5 PM on Saturday

October 9, 2012 · @MTAthletics

COACH RICK STOCKSTILL:

We have a big conference game with FIU this weekend on the road. They have been decimated by injuries this year, especially on the offensive side of the ball. FIU lost their quarterback and a couple of running backs the last three or four weeks, so they are a lot better football team than what their record indicates.



They have been relatively healthy on defense, and I

thought that was the strength of their team, anyway. They are fast, athletic, and have great team speed on that side of the ball. What they do defensively causes teams a lot of problems, and they haven't given up a lot of points. They have played ranked Louisville to a one-score game. They turned the ball over last week against Arkansas State, and ASU got a couple of scores out of that. To me, this is by far the best defense that we will have faced this year.

FIU gets their offensive players back this week, and they will have their whole arsenal of weapons available, and I think that will energize their whole team. We'll get their best effort, their backs are up against the wall, but they are going to get our best effort, also.

They have a good kicking game with dangerous return guys, so we have to be cognizant of that as well.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO WIN ON THE ROAD THIS WEEKEND? It's important, but we have been on the road twice this year at Memphis and Georgia Tech, and we won both games. We are a mature group and we can handle being on the road and playing in hostile environments.

It is going to be a lot hotter down there this time than when we went down there in 2010. It was later in the year then, and cooler. You have to prepare your body for it, and you can't wait until Thursday or Friday to start doing it.

We are 1-1 in the conference, and this is a critical game for us. They are 0-2 in the conference and playing at home, so it is a critical game for them as well.

ON STRENGTH OF FIU'S DEFENSE: Their front four can play for anybody. They have a 6-9, 270-pound defensive end that has played for three years now. They are also fast and athletic. They can run down wide receiver reverses from the backside. They run down stretch plays from the backside, but that is their whole team. They are just so fast. Their corners are going to come up and challenge us with man coverage, and see if we can win a one-on-one matchup.

COMPARING THIS TEAM TO LAST YEAR: I think this team is better than our team last year. We have great leadership on this team; we understand the focus, the mental approach that you have to have. I changed some things up that we do on the road. Last year, we'd have a walk-thru and a meeting when we got to our destination. This year, we do the walk-thru before we leave and also have a short meeting before we leave, then another meeting when we get there. I think it has helped bring a greater focus to the team prior to getting on the plane.

QB LOGAN KILGORE: We are 1-1 in the Sun Belt right now, and it's rare for a team to go thru the league undefeated anymore, so I think we are in a good spot right now. It's a very important game, and getting to 2-1 would be huge.

On FIU's team speed: You can see it on film. All 11 of them can run. We are going to have to do a really good job of sticking on our blocks, and securing the ball in the open field because we know somebody is going to be right behind us. Ball security is going to be very important.

Their defense is more like our defense than ULM's was, the schemes are very similar. They are going to get after us, and it's going to be a great challenge.

On being under center this year: Last year, I was back in the shotgun, but I enjoy being under center. It adds a new dimension to our offense, and the more we are able to switch up between gun and under-center, it makes us more difficult to defend. It adds more to what the defense has to be ready for. I think the offense has a different feel to it and we keep adding more and more to the package.

Printed on July 29, 2014

Original URL: <http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/63268>