

THE BURNETTE BLOG: "It Only Takes One"

Raiders can become bowl eligible with win

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It's hard to believe the 2012 season is nearing a close. After tonight's game against Western Kentucky, the Blue Raiders will only have three games left before they close the book on the regular season. The magic number this team has been searching for is just one win away. Coach Stockstill said it best during the weekly press conference when he said he likes the attitude and the focus of this football team. At this point I have to agree with him.



This past Saturday we saw Buster Faulkner's offense in full swing as the Blue Raiders basically played catch on North Texas's defense all afternoon and ran the ball efficiently enough to earn a huge win.

Western Kentucky will present more of a challenge for the Blue Raiders than the Mean Green. WKU has already taken an SEC opponent in Kentucky, to overtime this season, and found a way to pull the major upset. The Blue Raiders have a major upset under their belt as well after carving up Georgia Tech, giving this already heated rivalry even more steam. Fans can expect a hostile environment tonight given the rivalry as well as the fact it will be nationally televised for the country to see.

Offensively, the Blue Raiders need to pick up right where they left off last Saturday. The arm and precision passes must continue for quarterback Logan Kilgore. Kilgore did a nice job of not only finding the open receiver but also putting the ball in the right place for the receiver to be able to gain yards after the catch. The offensive line will need to minimize the penalties in the run game to prevent from stalling long drives. Overall, the offensive line played extremely well last week minus a late first half string of penalties and miscommunication that seemed to be corrected at halftime. The running back by committee look will be in full effect, as Western Kentucky will never know which back to expect to enter the game.

Defensively, the play by the defensive line will ultimately decide the outcome of this game. They must force their way into the backfield putting pressure on the quarterback and stopping the run game. Making Western Kentucky as one-dimensional as possible is the key to success tonight. The linebackers and secondary must be ready for them to go to the air once the run game has been

stuffed. When that time comes they must understand their coverage responsibilities and put themselves in the right position to make big plays. The reason the Blue Raiders took it to halftime last week pushing for a shutout was because they limited the big play in the first half and keeping the offense guessing on what they should call next. The same will be expected tonight in a hostile environment. Keep the momentum on your sideline from the first play and it will take the crowd out of the game from the beginning.

It has been a season to remember for this 2012 squad. There have been many highs and as always there have been some lows. The Blue Raiders have a chance to grab that magic number tonight and with three games left have a chance to make a run at the conference title. This team must play as a unit on the road in this kind of atmosphere. It's called the "100 Miles of Hate" for a reason. This is bragging rights for the next calendar year. Remember, it only takes one and tonight would be a good time to get it. Go Blue Raiders!

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