



Cincinnati Football Head Coach Scott Satterfield
Game 9 (West Virginia) Postgame Press Conference Transcript

Opening Statement

"That's a tough one, right there. Oh man. A tough one to go back and talk to your team about because they played so well, played so hard for most of the game. You look at the stats and it will make you sick. There's a lot of things about it, but obviously, can't turn the ball over. We understand that you can't just give them points, and ultimately, we gave them 17, and obviously the difference in the game. But I was proud of our guys. We had to continue to fight. We got back in there at the end, but just didn't want to finish it. Defensively, I thought our guys played outstanding, held them to a field goal and one of the turnovers, and stopped the rushing attack. They [West Virginia] are one of the better rushing teams out there and we were able to hold the quarterback in check. They had two deep balls, those on third downs, and that's probably the negative, but they played great. We did not play good in the kickoff and punt game. I thought they got some yards in the return game that was not good. Offensively, we moved the ball and did some really good things with some individual great efforts. But again, turnovers are the difference in the game. It's just a difficult one to swallow when you know you played as hard as you did and come away with the loss."

On the momentum shift after the fumble and pick six

"They're both big. The first one, we're up seven, we're driving, we're in the red zone, and we're getting ready to go 14 and that's talking about momentum. That's a huge momentum, even though it's still early in the game. That's a huge momentum for us towards trying to make a play. I think it's obviously a learning moment for him [Brendan Sorsby]. He knows his mistake there. He's a competitor and a fighter. He's trying to make a play, but there's certain times you just have to eat it. I mean, even on the next one he gets the first down, and he fumbled trying to get the next first down. It felt like, 'Okay, you get that drive going down now you're right back on it'. So really, those back-to-back drives right there were huge in the game. Our guys came in at halftime and understood where we were at. We talked about taking it one play at a time in the second half and they did. They played great. We just had come a little bit short there at the end. Then we get the ball, and the ball slips out of the back of his hands. He's trying to throw it away and the ball goes just a little bit backwards. They pick it up and we had another unfortunate play, where I thought we had a chance to go get the momentum right back as well."

On struggling with passing

"A couple times I thought we had some guys open today but the defense just didn't connect on it. I thought they did a good job of dropping people in the coverage today, dropping to save the corners we're getting back. You just have to take what they give you. You can't just throw it

deep, just to throw it deep. We had a pretty efficient passing game today, at least I thought. Hit some big plays, but a lot of plays were underneath. There's just a fine line there. Do you try to push the ball down the field, or do you just take what they give you? I think we've been more resulting on taking what they give us. We had some good drives today. We had 15 play drive, 14 play drives, 12 play drives, and then the one play drive to [Evan] Pryor. That was a big play trying to free him up down the sideline. So, it really ultimately comes back to taking what to give us."

On Brendan Sorsby's multiple turnovers

"I think the first one, he was just trying to make a play. Then the second one, the ball just slipped out of his hand. He had the glove on the left hand, so his right hand was fine. He just went to throw it out and it just kind of slipped out of his hand."

On the impact the turnovers had on Sorsby's rhythm

"Yeah, they probably did a little bit. As a quarterback, you turn them all over. You want to make right by it. You want to come back out and make a play, and sometimes you do press a little bit more when you come back out, and we try to settle them down, try to get some easy throws where you can just get some completions and get back into a rhythm. I thought the second half there, in the third quarter, we got back a little bit of rhythm running the football and then making some plays, the prior play was a huge play. God gave us a lot of momentum on the sideline as a team, offense and defense. So, games like this, you just try to grab that momentum back at some point and try to get over the hump. We got close, but we just didn't get over the hump again. It was the turnover there in the fourth quarter that ultimately cost us"

On his strategy on managing the clock and timeouts

"We're trying to save our timeouts because you had to have two, so we did a good job of getting down the field. It's a minute and 30 or something like that, and we're down there in the red. So, we're trying to take some pops. We had to call the timeout. We had legal procedure on the one play, so we had to call a timeout to save time, that was 53 seconds right there to save time with 10 second runoff. We're trying to take a couple pops, in the endzone but it wasn't there. You have to score twice, so had it been a lot closer to the goal line, you may go for it but since it was a little bit further out, let's get to three points, and let's try to go get this on the side kick. We felt good about it. We had two timeouts; I think it was 36 or 37 seconds. If we get the onside kick, you're going get it around midfield, plenty of time to go score touchdown. So, I felt like that last drive we managed to find and gave us an opportunity to change."

On postseason potential

"This is not easy. But we don't look at that. We're going to look at this game, one at a time like we always do. We've got Iowa State next week, so we talked about locking in on just them, they're coming back to work tomorrow, and being consistent in the things that we've been doing. They've been consistently working hard every single day and doing what you have to do that day. You can't look at all three games together. We just have to go play Iowa State next week. We're going to go back to this game like we always do. We're going to look and see the things that we have to do better, go back and try to go win these games. I feel like we've got a

good enough team to win all three of these games, but we have to take it one game at a time. We have to play mistake free football and do the things that it takes to win football games.”

On Mason Fletcher’s block on the punt return

“We had issues on covering. I think a couple times our runners got caught up and inside. One time, the big return they had on their sideline, our runner from the field got caught up inside. He was able to get on the outside. Our runner on this side was struggling getting off one of their holds up guys on the outside, on the front team. We just did a poor job with the guys in the middle that are coming to set the net up. We call it a net there and I think that was what we had a poor job with. They had the one kickoff return, it got out close to midfield. Our defense did a good job getting back off the field, and ultimately, we lost the field position battle, which obviously didn't help but our defense played outstanding.”

On limiting Joe Royer in the passing game.

“I do not know if necessarily they were trying to take him away. They were doing a lot with their pressures. They were mixing it up a lot, bringing pressures from the field and boundary, and then trying to play a bunch of different coverages. Most of them were zone coverages, where you have a linebacker underneath on (Joe) Royer and then maybe a safety on top. So, in that regard, yes. But I think we had a couple of balls that we hit right over him, for Royer. There was another time we had an over route called and we gave up a pressure on the right side. He was open on that particular play, which would have been a big play, and Sorsby had to throw it away, so just didn't get it timed up with the protection and the route.”

On his positive takeaways

“Now, there's a lot of positives. We had 24 first downs. They had nine. I mean, we had the ball for 35 minutes, they had it 25 minutes. We were 7-for-16, they were 3-for-11. I mean, there's a lot of positives I thought in this game. The defense held them to 250 yards. There's some really, really good stuff here. Ultimately, the score did not indicate this. I think it really boils down to a couple of plays that went for 14 points. When we're not able to line back up and play defense. Usually, when you turn the ball over, you get them down somehow on defense and come back and play. Obviously, those are freak kinds of plays that happen. You think about us, we have not scored a defense or special team touchdown since I've been here. So how many games is that 21? And they had two today. It's really a freak play if two freak plays play out. There are kind of odd plays, and I think the defense played good enough to go win this game. Other than the turnovers, the offense moved the football. We have to take care of football. Bottom line, I think that's one of the, obviously, the policy of football, college football or NFL football, turnover margin is one of the most important stats that you can win to be able to win the game, particularly if they take two of those for touchdowns. And that's what happened today.”

On the explosive plays from today

“Two great throws down the sideline. You're sitting there watching those balls were right on the money. Both our corners were right on the hip, with the receiver running down the slot sideline. And, I mean, he dropped it right on them. Particularly the second one, that was a

beautiful throw that you get down on that sideline, both of them on third downs, we try to bring some pressure on both of those playing back behind it. Obviously, if you play man, it's one-on-one, you have to try to win your one-on-one match up. Great execution by them, and we didn't sell what was on top we were underneath. But it was just a great throw that he dropped in there. Obviously, we like for a corner to stay on top in those two scenarios. But I did think it was great execution on their part."

On utilizing the running backs

"Corey Kiner's a really good running back. And I feel like we have to give him his touches. He had the career-high touches tonight, 25 carries. But Evan (Pryor) is one of our most explosive players on our team. So, coming into this game plan, we thought we try to find some ways to try to get him the ball. And I thought we did that. Hit him on reverse, hit him on a pass, a couple passes out of the backfield. Had another pass out of the backfield that we thought we may could have, go back and watch that film. But you're right. I mean, Corey has to get his carries, but we also got it whenever Corey gets his break, alright, put him (Evan Pryor) in, but today was the first time we put both of them on the field at the same time we did that probably three or four reps. So, as we go throughout the rest of this season, we're trying to find ways to get the ball and be able to put them in space. He's obviously a big play guy. Probably the only guys in the country, as far as having the most plays over 60 yards. I mean, he's had a ton of them. We have to continue utilizing catching the ball and running the ball."