



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Head Coach Scott Satterfield

Opening Statement

“Good afternoon. First of all, my thoughts and prayers go down to the people in Florida with this storm that is getting ready to hit them. I feel like in the last couple of weeks it's been crazy with the weather. We had a tropical storm that affected the Carolinas a couple weeks ago and there's a lot of devastation there. I am hoping for the best this week for all those folks in Florida. I also am hoping for the best for our game too. We don't really know the situation, but as of right now, the game is on. We are going down on Friday and playing on Saturday, so unless something changes, that's what we're planning to do. We are getting ready to play Central Florida this week in practice. Central Florida is an outstanding football team with a lot of talent, one of the best offenses in the country, certainly one of the best rushing offenses in the country. They have a lot of playmakers, and their quarterback is an outstanding player. They run him and do play action with him; he is a big guy and a tough guy to tackle. Their running back, RJ [Harvey], is an outstanding player as well. He is short, low to ground, very powerful and fast. Defensively, they have a new defensive coordinator this year and they are doing multiple things. I don't believe they have had the kind of pressure they want to have this year, but last week they started heating guys up a little bit more. We anticipate seeing some more pressure this week and they certainly have some great athletes out there. We are going on the road again for a second time in a row for us and going into another hostile environment. It is a good atmosphere, and their students come out. This will be a great challenge for us, and we're looking forward to it.”

On the process and uncertainty this week with the incoming hurricane

“Our administration and our people are in contact with the Big 12 office, as well as Central Florida. As of right now everything is on for the game on Saturday, and we are going to go down there on Friday. It is a little bit of a wait and see approach, to see what happens as the storm comes in tomorrow, see how it affects everybody and then go from there. The weather for Saturday looks good but obviously what happens between now and then is going to determine what we end up doing. As of right now, everything is on, and we can't control what happens anyway. We are just doing everything we can to get ready to go play a game on Saturday.”

On logistics of a trip that has uncertainty

“We have talked to our hotel about the uncertainty and potentially needing another night in the hotel if necessary. We are making sure everything is in place for us to go down Friday and stay in the hotel and have our airline ready to go. If something does change, we are prepared,

and I think everyone is on high notice that something could be tweaked whether it be a time or day. We are in contact with everyone, and it is a wait and see situation to see what happens. We are hopeful that everything will be the same and we can play our game on Saturday.”

On facing a UCF team that is coming off of back-to-back losses

“I know when you lose a couple of games in a row, you're going to want to come out and play your best. It is kind of like that dog backed in the corner mentality and they are going to fight, so we know we're going to get their best shot. This has also been a great rivalry between the two programs, so you know you're going to get that intensity. It doesn't change our preparation. We have to go in with the same preparation and get ready to play. We have to have a great mindset as we head down, and that's where our focus starts. Last week, we had our bye week, and we talked about that and going out and having our very best week of preparation to go down and play a great game.”

On other programs having guys drop out after their fourth game

“We are not having that happen in our program and that is just the world we're living in for college football. After someone plays their fourth game, they may decide that this may not be it for them. We have seen that across the country and that is just college football nowadays.”

On if he feels comfortable with the team's trajectory

“We're always trying to get better. I certainly think we're headed in the right direction for sure. Offensively, we have been able to move the ball and put some points on the board, and I think that's been good. Defensively, we're still continuing to work. We're certainly not where we need to be for several reasons, which we talked about. But we're headed in the right direction. We're not where we want to be. We want to be undefeated right now, and we missed an opportunity, I think in those two games to change that win record. But I think for us, we still have everything that we want ahead of us. As you think about, we're at the halfway point, and we still have a lot of our goals, most of our goals, intact. It's a huge game for us to go down on the road and try to get a Big 12 win. I think that's something that we have to do, and this is a great opportunity for that.”

On load management for his injured running back room

“All the way back to 1998 when I was at App State. We played Northwestern State in the playoffs one year, and I remember looking on the bench, every one of our running backs had a towel over their head, except one guy, he was the last one to play. Now, we did not win that game. We didn't play well either, but that was probably the last time I can remember which was a long time ago. I don't really look at it like that. I look at it like we get all our guys at every position ready to play, and if a guy does go down, then the next guy up. We've had that happen at several positions this year, not to the extent where you lose that many guys at one position, but we have had that happen, and we've had to have guys step up, and guys have stepped up and made plays. And that's what it's all about to me. Our program, we want to get to a point

where if the starter goes down, the next guy comes in, and we don't really fall off too much. We're still right there. We're there, we're competing, we're making plays. But that comes back to your training. That's how we prepare, that's how we practice. We're getting better at that, at that regard but, I don't look at it as, like, load management, that's those types of things. I look at it like, who's our best player? Let's play them until they can't play anymore. And I think that's what we want our team to compete. We want to put our best guys out to be able to give us a chance to win."

On being able to contain the rush and the ability of RJ Harvey

"We have to do a better job of being where we're supposed to be, fitting the defense and tackling. We had too many missed assignments last game. We had some missed tackles. I think he's an outstanding back, the Texas Tech running back. He's going to be playing on Sundays. A guy who's very impressive in person, he's impressive on film, but to watch him in person, very impressive. 230 pounds, very patient, but also, had great quickness to make him miss. And this guy's the same, unfortunately, we have another one this week, who I think is an outstanding back that's going to be playing on Sundays. He's shorter, he's more compact, but he's got great speed, toughness, durability. We talk about our values. The guy last week, how many carries did he have last week? I mean, 28 or 30 carries. A ton of carries last week. You have to ride your big dog. If Corey Kiner's ready to go, we're going to ride him. I think that's what we have to do. But to your point, your question is we have to tackle better. We have to. We have to get more hats to the ball. I think that's critical. It's so hard to tackle these guys one-on-one when you play these great backs. We have another one next week too, in Arizona State, he's a great back. In this league, that's what we're going to play a lot, a lot of good running backs, but it's getting more hats to the ball. It's being where you're supposed to be. It's a combination of all those things in order to play better."

On if this Saturday's game will display a lot of rushing like last year's matchup.

"I have no idea. When you go out there and play the game and once you start playing, you start figuring some stuff out, right? You're like, hey, we're doing a great job at doing this, whether it be running the football or throwing the football, and you're going to keep attacking that. Or we're doing a great job at slowing the run down. Okay, well what are they going to have to do? Once you start playing the game, you start figuring out what's happening, what's working, what's not working, what adjustments you're going to have to make. And just so happened last year that both teams were running the football, and there's a great game, there's a back-and-forth game. I think when we came down, we missed a two-point conversion there at the end to tie it. So, there have been some great battles over the years, and so I would expect it to be the same. It's going to be a tight game. You look at the Big 12, I feel like that's the way it is every week in these games. And even college football, for that matter, it's some crazy stuff that happens in college football, but it comes back to your preparation. It comes back to getting ready to play and then going out and performing on the game day."

On what challenges KJ [Jefferson] will bring to the game.

“Coach Malzhan has been doing this for years. He does a great job with what they do offensively to put the defense in conflict. That's what they are going to do. They formation you, they will motion, and they are going to try to get you out of position and alignment. When they do this, you have to tackle a guy with one guy, and that's tough because RJ [Harvey] will make the one guy miss, and then where's the next guy? If they get you out of position, there's nobody else, and that's where the big plays come in. Now, not only are you defending 10 guys, but with their quarterback, you're defending 11. I think that's the whole premise of being able to run your quarterback, is that now we have to have a guy assigned for the quarterback and one guy assigned for the running back. I believe that's why they have been so good at what they do. When you load up a box, that's when the play action comes. So, you have to do a great job of tackling and try to make them one dimensional. You have to try to slow the running game down. I know everybody that plays them tries to do that, and they have a hard time doing it. We certainly have our work cut out for us, but it comes back to being where we're supposed to be, assignment and then getting a lot of hats to the ball.”

On how Antwan Peek Jr. carries himself

“Yeah, I think he's had an excellent year for us. There's no question about it. He's our leading tackler on special teams, and probably our MVP in the units right now. He's also played great on defense. He's a very physical player, he has good size, but he'll pull his trigger. He's coming downhill to hit and play physical. We love the way he plays. He's a quiet leader, he does not say a whole lot out there, but he leads by example. I think he's got a tremendous amount of respect from his teammates. All those things we just said makes him an outstanding young person as well as a player.”

On what the biggest focus is on covering UCF's running backs

“You think about when Peny [Boone] comes in, he's another big guy, 230 pounds, and it just goes back to what I mentioned earlier about the challenge of formation recognition. We need to figure out what formation they are in and then what motions and adjustments they are going to be making. We need to have communication with our defense and so much of it is being where you're supposed to be and if I'm not aligned in my gap, then that's going to be a problem. So, trying to get aligned up, being in our gap, and then playing very physical football, that's the key. We have to get a lot of hats to the ball. Again, I mentioned it just hard to tackle him as a single guy. You have to get two hats, three hats to the ball and that becomes just chasing the football and playing hard.”

On Brendan [Sorsby] being able to pass to multiple receivers

“Going back to that last drive, I don't know how many plays he ran in the last drive, but I felt like it was a different defense every time. There's a lot of different defenses out there. They threw everything at us to try to slow us down, and Brendan [Sorsby] was doing a great job of recognizing what they were in and finding the open guy and it wasn't just the one guy. We're trying to find multiple guys. We were taking what the defense gives us, and we gave ourselves a chance. We got down and we ran out of time for a couple different reasons, and unfortunately,

we didn't knock down the field goal to give ourselves a chance to go into overtime. That's the one thing we have to continue to be able to do and take what the defense gives us and not try to force the ball. If we hit the underneath when they're all sinking, that's great. That's what we have to do, and I think Brendan [Sorsby] has to continue to do that. I think the guys around him within the offense are good enough to get yards and first downs and touchdowns, and we've seen that throughout the season. We just have to be able to continue to do that.”

On being mentally prepared to play on Saturday

“I think the big thing last week was getting healthy, but then also being able to relax on Saturday. A lot of our guys just relaxed and watched college football. It was good for them to see the craziness of college football and to see the fact that you have to get yourself mentally ready to play. I believe that's more important than anything is the mental side and getting ready to play. If you don't do that, then you're going to get beat and it doesn't matter who it is. Vanderbilt lost at Georgia State a few weeks ago, and then beat Alabama this week. You have to get yourself ready to play each and every week, no matter who you're playing. More than ever nowadays in college football.”

On the Manny Covey late substitution

“In that scenario, unless you can't stand up, you need to stay on the field. The next play we are either going to throw an incomplection, or if we catch and get a first down, then you have to stay in there again. If it's an incomplection, now you can come off the field. It's an unfortunate rule and I understand why they do it because you can fake an injury and then get your offense lined up and stop the clock. I understand why they do that, but it is unfortunate in that scenario you almost have to not be able to move in order to do it. Now, hindsight, looking back at it, he probably should have just laid down. We could've taken the 10 second runoff because Manny [Covey] took six or seven seconds to get off the field. Now the referees are going to go hold it and the defense gets four seconds before they can run a guy on. I'd rather take the 10 second runoff instead of that. So, in hindsight just go down in that scenario. We had two 10 second runoffs in that last drive and it ultimately cost us the time that we would have had in order to try to go to score.”

On injury updates

“It's a long list. It was a great time to have a bye week for us. We were beat up, we had over 25 guys on the injury list after that game against Texas Tech. Fortunately for us, the majority of those guys are getting back and practiced on Sunday. I think Cam [Roetherford] was probably the one that was the most injured. I think he would be the biggest question mark on whether he plays this week. I would anticipate the rest of our guys will play. I'm looking at my list, but I think the rest of them are playing. We're going to get Jonathan [Thompson] back this week, which is awesome. He's been a great player for us, defensively and on special teams. He's had an outstanding year and to get him back is going to be huge. I think that Cam [Roetherford] is probably the one with the biggest question mark, but I feel like everybody else is going to be ready to go.”

Redshirt sophomore quarterback Brendan Sorsby

On if the success of Joe Royer and Xzavier Henderson has allowed Jamoi Mayes and Tony Johnson to become more open

“I think even whenever teams aren't just doubling Xzavier [Henderson] or Joe [Royer] or even if they are, I think Jamoi [Mayes] and Tony [Johnson] have been really good at getting open and finding ways. Even Sterling [Berkhalter] has done a great job whenever he's in, finding ways to get the ball and finding ways to create space and separation. Obviously Xzavier and Joe have been doing amazing things. But like you just said, Jamoi, Tony and Sterling are also finding ways to get open and get the ball.”

On NFL quarterback he watches

“Patrick, Mahomes, Josh Allen and Joe Burrow, just those three guys that I really try to study their game. And obviously, I'm a Cowboys fan, so I like to watch Dak [Prescott] too, he can spin it around a little bit. So really, just watching those guys and trying to take little bits and pieces of each of their games.”

On his first game back in his home state of Texas

“It was awesome. While playing in Indiana, I didn't get to go back down to Texas. So, once I came over here knowing that I would be going back down to Texas, it was definitely a big opportunity for me. Just to get to go back down there and see some family and friends. So, it was good to see all of them there and play a game there.”

On UCF's defense

“They have a really good defense. Obviously, they probably haven't gotten the amount of pressures that they want or the amount of sacks that they want, but they are still very talented and know that they can definitely affect the game. So, we just have to take care of our business and do what we do, and I think we'll be all right, but their defense looks really good on tape.”