



Game 1 vs. Towson Postgame Press Conference Transcript

Cincinnati Football Head Coach Scott Satterfield

Opening Statement

"First of all, congrats to our guys in the locker room on getting a win. That is an awesome start a season. It's not something we ever take for granted, to be able to get out here and get a win. We had a great start to the game, got out offensively and was hitting on all cylinders. It's hard to maintain that throughout the game but I still think the overall offense did some good things. I'm disappointed on the turnover that we had on the long run there, on the third down. I do think Brendan [Sorsby] played a really good game. I think he could have played a lot better. I think there are a couple plays we would like to have back. That would have helped get some more points up on the board. But overall, I was pleased with the way he played. He ran the offense very effectively, threw the ball accurately, threw it away when he needed to, at times, and also with his legs, generated some nice yards, including a couple touchdowns. We played a lot of guys. Man, we had 34 guys make their UC debut today. So that's a lot. I think we travel 75 guys so for half of them, it was the first time they have ever played here. The new defense, there were sometimes out there where we gave up a couple plays with the slant that went for a long, long touchdown, and then the quarterback scramble in the back of the end zone. We threw it up and a guy came down and caught it. Two big plays defensively that we gave up as well. And then the other two big plays in my mind were the two overzealous plays that we had on the quarterback. You have to be careful. We all know that. So, you take away those three or four plays there and it could have been a different game. I thought our guys ran and hit hard. It was very physical from the defensive perspective. We have to clean up the turnover stuff. I mean, there's no question. We create a turnover, we pick it up, and then we give it right back to them. Those are opportunities that are lost. I'm proud of [Evan] Pryor. He came in and had over 100 yards today, obviously popped a big, long one for a touchdown, but he ran fast and hard which was good to see. Xzavier [Henderson] had another big game for us. Joe Royer obviously had a good game, and he takes a little bit off Xzavier. I think that's going to be a good combination, as we look at it throughout the season. I'm proud of Sterling [Berkhalter] to be able to catch that nice deep one down there for a touchdown. Overall, proud of our guys but we still have a lot of work to do as we head into week two."

On how far along Satterfield thinks about the state of the team.

"Obviously, we're not anywhere near where we need to be. I think on the positive side, we played a ton of guys on defense, and I mean a ton. If we go back and count, at least, probably

eight or nine linebackers and about 12 DBs [defensive backs]. This is early so we're rotating guys. I know we did up front as well, so that's a positive. There's a lot of young guys that are out there making some plays. There were times when we're out of our gaps, and obviously, I think that's to be expected. Sometimes when you have a new defense for the first time in a game and going out making these corrections. We'll be able to make those corrections this week. We're going to need to as we play Pitt next week. They're an ACC team that has a lot of talent, and we'll have to be much better."

On how big of a difference will it be when adding Dontay Corleone to the defensive line.

"It's going to make a huge difference whenever he's able to go because, he demands so much attention up front when you're thinking about. Centering probably two guards that are going to have to know where he's at that's going to free up linebackers to run. He's going to get penetration. He's going to be in the backfield more. It's going to give you one more added All-American in the rotation up front that are certainly held, but also just the psyche for everybody. Being able to have him up front, he's so well respected on our team, and to be able to have him out there playing, I think will make a huge difference. There's no question about it."

On Brendan's [Sorsby] ability to throw today.

"I mean, 383 and 275, we'll take that every week if we can. That would be good. I think it's just early on, and we popped a few long throws, and it seemed to be what was available at the time. We ran a few plays, and we didn't get many yards rushing the ball there early. So, we continued to push the ball down the field, and we were able to make some plays down the field, which, I think, in return, opened up the running game later on in the game. Our guys were able to pop some good plays, and it was good to see. Three guys over 50 yards. That was nice. But Evan [Pryor] popping that one play, right out of halftime was big. To be able to go back and get it was explosive. That's one of the things that we talked about all offseason was trying to get some more explosive in the run game. We didn't have as many touchdowns last year. So that was good to have that."

On Jared Bartlett's performance

"Jared's [Bartlett] coming in from West Virginia and was more of an outside linebacker in the boundary. So, he gets in here, we put him more in the middle of the defense, so he's right over the ball. It gives him a lot more access to make plays and where he does a great job is just downhill, filling in the A gaps and then right off the tackles. I thought he played a really good game today. He caused havoc. We've been seeing that all camp, he provides some size in there, but also some good strength and speed. I think he'll continue to do that. As we go throughout the season, he will be able to continue to put pressure on offenses and be able to get in the backfield. I think that's where he's really good, but also is good to see out in the space being able to make some plays. So, I thought Jared had a great game."

On how well the offense performed

"Obviously it was good. It's one of the things that we talked about all offseason, how to get more explosive plays, how to push the ball down the field, and in the first half, we were

able to do that. I feel like in the second half, not as much. Just the flow was a little bit different, obviously, in the second half, but early on in the game. It was exciting to watch a lot of big plays coming from a lot of different people. Our quarterback, being able to hit the ball down the field was good today. I still think we left some plays out there. We're going to get better with that. We'll be able to have some more explosives, hopefully as we go throughout this season. A.T [Aaron Turner] had a nice broken a tackle, there early in the game. So that's what I like, because it wasn't just one guy. I know several guys that are making big plays and pushing the ball down the field."

On the struggles of the special teams units

"Yeah, we have to get better. I mean, we missed the field goal today, we muffed a punt and lost it. We got to get a lot better with it. I did think they did not kick it deep on us. We took advantage in the kickoff return game. Getting some great field position every time they did kick it off. Mason [Fletcher] punted the ball great. Some positives in the special teams. But I do think, anytime you turn the ball over, that's a no-no for sure in the special teams, and you got to knock down the field goals as you get tighter games, closer games, those points are crucial."

On Jiquan Sanks' debut

"Yeah, I just go back to recruiting. Obviously, we really liked him a lot when we recruited him. Just his personality and also the way he played High School football. He kind of turned heads when he got here and as we put him in and started playing we're like, 'man, he just keeps showing up, keeps making plays.' We're rotating about three or four guys at his position, and as we go through camp, he just kept being the more solid player in the run and pass. He was more downhill, making the tackles, but also was able to recognize pass and get back in the passing game. So, it's outstanding work from a true freshman, right. Where his position is, that's a very difficult position. And I really believe, like those freshmen that played today, we had several that played, they'll see some big jumps in how much better they'll get from week one to week two to week three, just because they've never played. That experience they're going to be able to get, he'll grow so much off of that and it's great to see him go out there and produce like he did. And I think he's got to get a bright future head up for sure."

On the offensive line's performance

"I think they did solid. They had a couple players I think we're pretty good. I mean, their number 40 [Dion Crews-Harris] is a good player. We were looking at tape from last year. He caused some problems a little bit today. But I do think they protected well. I mean, we got out of the pocket a few times, just because they were dropping eight, and [Brendan] Sorsby did a good job outside the pocket on those unscheduled plays. But I think overall, they did solid. I mean, anytime you're going to get 650 yards, the O-line's probably going to do something pretty good."

On fumbling woes

"Well, I mean, the punt we had him up to too tight. That was on us, and it gets punted over his head. The wind was going that way, and you're trying to go back, trying to make a play."

Sometimes you got to let that go. Mess of decisions got to let it go. Vic[tor Dawson]'s running down the sideline after breaking a tackle. He's got the ball on his inside arm. What's going to happen when you start slowing down at the end, people are going to come punch it out, but you got to have it in your outside arm. These are fundamental mistakes. And the third turnover was [Darian] Varner picking the ball up. He's a defensive lineman. I told him, 'You got to carry it with two hands.' He's probably never carried a ball in his life. So hopefully, that doesn't happen again, that he picks it up, he'll just fall down. And I think we got to get those things corrected. And then we're overzealous on a couple of those, we're trying to rush the quarterback, get after the quarterback. Well, if he's throwing a ball, you got to pull off, and that's sometimes difficult, but those are things we got to coach through because they'll cost us in big games because you think about the drive right before the half. I mean, they're done. It was third down, and they threw a screen pass at a tight end. We got them tackled. They're going to have to punt. And now we do that. Now they end up getting a field goal. Those are the things that hurt you. But we got to coach through that and get those guys to be smarter."

On Sorsby joining a new offense with minimal starts.

"When it's a new offense, he hears all these numbers and letters and words that are coming in. You have to rely on that. Then you got to look at the defense and you got to figure out where to figure out where to go with the ball. It's a lot that's going on, particularly with a guy, you know, he's been here for six months, and so, yeah, it's very pleasing to see. I do think, yeah, he's got a lot of ball ahead of him, you know, I think the sky's the limit. He's got arm talent, he's got some poise, he's got some legs. I mean, he's got great size so, yeah, he's got a lot of things that are going for him. The biggest thing is just always taking what the defense gives, you know, I feel like today, you know, there's most of the past plays we called, there's probably a guy that we can get the ball to, and maybe sometimes we're trying to force it somewhere else. But, I mean, that's coming from inexperience and that's coming from a guy who's still learning to offense man, but, but there's a lot of good stuff, and, you know, we try to lean on that and hopefully grow from where we're at."

On adjustments made at halftime to the offensive run game

"There were a couple things that we did, you know, I think adjusting where we ran the football, I think early in the game, we were running back to the field. In the second half, ran more to the boundary. Felt like we had a little bit better, more advantageous to run it into the boundary. And it worked. It paid off. I mean, the first time we hit, it was a Pryor run, and that was the first time we went over there on the outside zone and hit for 61 yards. So, you know, and then I think also in the fourth quarter, we probably relied more on the run, but you know, the game, we're like, listen, let's get this running game going. So now you're getting more carries than, probably what we did in the first half. I felt like they were giving us a pass, and we're taking it."

On what this game did for Joe Royer's confidence going forward

"I think Roy is having a lot of fun. I mean, he's, he's a fun guy to be around. He's extremely talented, you know, size, speed, got great hands, runs like a wide receiver at that size, that's hard to find that, you know, I think he can continue to get better again, because he hadn't played a lot of ball either. He's really a relatively inexperienced player, although he looks pretty good out there, you know. I think he's going to be a mismatch problem for some guys throughout the season. I think he'll continue to get better as well. And you know, we're going to have plays designed for him. I mean, we have to. He's one of our better players on our football team, but I think he's having a lot of fun. The teammates like him. They respect him. He's great to have in our locker room."

Redshirt Sophomore Quarterback Brendan Sorsby

On strong first quarter performance

"It felt great. Any deep shots that you can score fast on is really fun and exciting and if you can hook up on those it is very important. Explosive plays win games. The receivers and tight ends did a great job today. The run game helped us with the deep shots as they ran for 275 yards. The offensive line did an outstanding job, and it was a good all-around day."

On connection with Joe [Royer] and Xzavier [Henderson]

"We built this relationship and bond through spring ball and fall camp, and all those reps add up. When we get on the field, it feels like we are just practicing out there. It was great to get out there and play a live game and start hooking up with those guys again because that's what we have been doing all offseason."

On first game and not getting sacked today

"It is awesome to have five guys up front and being able to rotate a couple of other guys in there that held their own today. Whenever we have time to sit back there and work through some things, it's huge and really nice to have."