



CINCINNATI BEARCATS

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Cincinnati Football Game 6 (UCF) Postgame Press Conference Transcript

Head Coach Scott Satterfield

Opening Statement

"First of all, I'm proud of our guys. Our number one goal this week was to be 1-0, and we accomplished that goal. It was kind of a crazy and bizarre game. We thought coming in that their defense was very solid and had a lot of speed, probably the fastest defense we had played. We did not execute how we like on offense. I think you guys know how we've been offensively the last four weeks, and today was not it, so disappointed in how we came out, had a couple drops early, had some penalties, just kind of sloppy. It just wasn't clicking like we've accustomed to the last several weeks, but proud of our defense, the way they play, and kept keeping Central Florida out of the end zone. If it wasn't a couple of fluke plays, if I don't get in the end zone, I've never seen that play, the fourth down that bounces off us and back to them, and they get a first down, and then they get bailed out and get a call there, and end up scoring a touchdown. So what we have shown is that we can win in a lot of different ways. The offense down at Kansas lit up the scoreboard in the yardage and then today we didn't, but the defense came through. Special teams has been very solid throughout the whole season. I thought today was another great output with Max [Fletcher], I think four balls inside the 20-yard line, including the one there at the end on the two. Stephen [Rusnak] knocking down field goals, guys covering kicks, I think they started on the 10-yard line one time on a kickoff. So, I'm just really proud of the way those guys continue to play at a high level. The bottom line is we're sitting here at 5-1, and we just finished this game and won our third conference game in a row, and we got a lot of things we can get fixed. That's a good thing to happen. We're excited about this opportunity we have coming next week."

Satt on offensive play:

"We had two early drops, a hitch, and then a sideline ball that we normally catch. That's just because we're a rhythm offense. I think today we had the most three and outs we've had this season. I don't know how many, but let's say four or five. And that's just not what we're accustomed to. And so, get the first down, and then all of a sudden, now we're rolling, and our guys are getting great rhythm, and we just never had that. And then they had the ball a lot, so it's hard for us to get back and get into rhythm. I felt like it was a little bit like last week too, because they had the ball right then in the half, and they got it coming out and the long drive. Then we go three and out. I mean, they had a 17 and a 19-play drive and it's incredible. So that was just a problem for the offense, we never got that rhythm."

On Cincinnati's rhythm offense against UCF's defense:

"You have to make a couple plays to get it going and we just didn't get it going. I give credit to them, too. I think they got a really good defense, a solid defense that has done, I mean looking at their stats coming into this game, and then watching the film, they're very quick. They have some long edge guys, some big guys in the middle, their linebacker, Lewis [Carter] is a solid player. They got good speed in the secondary. So, give them some credit as well."

On the nine-minute drive that ended with a punt

“I don’t think I’ve seen that before. It’s hard to keep track of all the stats and how things went, but that one drive that went 19 plays ended up scoring on that one that was wild. And then, I felt like today we had a lot of third downs to defend, and fourth downs, again. It was like 18 3rd downs and then six 4th downs. I mean, that’s a lot. And, at some point I felt like we got a couple PI calls on those four downs, and then the fluke play that bounced off us, and they caught it on the fourth down. So I thought overall the defense played really good.”

On defensive depth

“It’s incredibly important, you guys see it. We saw the defensive line all the time throughout the game. Those linebackers as well. There’s about six linebackers that are rotating and subbing. The safeties have about a five-man rotation at safety as well. Today at corner, I think we had a three-man rotation. If you guys notice, a lot of times when they sub, we’re sending dudes in because obviously the referee will hold the ball, and you have to keep them rotating like that. Otherwise, you just can’t do it 90 minutes or 90 plays in 40 minutes worth of possession. But we’re built for it. I think we have this. We have the depth to be able to not have much fall off when the next guys are coming in.”

On not being complacent

“Our offense is not going to be complacent after this one. I promise you that. We did not play good, the guys know it. It wasn’t one person, it was everybody. We’ll rip everybody come tomorrow. It’s not good enough. As we move forward into this conference, we got some tough games, we know that. including next week, going on the road to Oklahoma State, so we have to get better to where we don’t have the letdown like we had today offensively. We have a lot of good players. We have a really good offensive line, good quarterback. We’re good everywhere. We got to keep the pedal down and just keep being aggressive. Guys have to expect to make those plays.”

On stopping the UCF offense

“I think sometimes if you get too aggressive defensively, somebody’s going to get behind you and that there’s seven points. We defended a lot of snaps today and only gave up 11 points. I think for us, it’s really and truly just trying to keep it in front and hope they make a mistake somewhere along the way and we get off the field. That happened today several times. That’s what it’s all about. Now, obviously, I think we’d love to create a couple more turnovers in there. We did win that today, we got a fumble, had a couple balls tip that we probably could have had an opportunity to get our hands on. It was probably the best we’ve done with that, so far this year. I think I can remember at least four right now we had our hands on it, close to picking it off. I just think once we break the seal on that, we’ll start getting some. We have not yet, still waiting on it. We have another opportunity next week to try to do that.”

On the passing of close App State friend, former UCF offensive line coach Shawn Clark

“Number one, it was a shock. Whenever I got the news a few weeks back, and then I was getting updates every single day, from some of our buddies. Actually, a couple guys went down to Orlando when he was in the hospital. I’m getting updates every single day about how he’s doing. It sounded like he was doing a little bit better, and all those type things. Then you get that one dreaded phone call that you don’t want to get. Just extremely sad, for Jonelle, his family, his two kids. Shawn was a teammate of mine, coached with him, a great friend, and that bond, that you create as teammates, it never loses you. We were tight, and he just moved down to Orlando, he was loving it. It’s just sad, it just tells you how precious life is and how we have to live life to the fullest each and every day and the people that you are around, love on them. That’s really what we’ve been kind of talking about the last three or four weeks.”

On improvement in special teams from previous years

"It's been a big positive for us. There's no question about that, but the margins are so small here in the Big 12, and you have to find ways to gain an advantage. We were not, the last couple of years, gaining any advantage in the special teams. So far this year, we punted the ball really, really well. (Stephen Rusnak) has knocked field goals down. Our guys have covered and are taking pride in covering. Then we popped some returns, like last week, we had two big returns. So those and the winning those field position battles, obviously, it helps you to win. That's probably, one of the biggest swings I would say, from last couple years to this year, is that what you envisioned when Coach (Luke) Paschall became available. He's got a great reputation. He's really fits in well with our staff, very smart coach. It's awesome to have a guy who just really focuses on special teams. Tim Conner has been with me as well, and Tim works great with Luke as well. We have a little team of specialty guys. They're just with them guys all the time and scheming up things that we can do to help give us an advantage. They're fun to work with, and it's fun to watch those kids go out and play and take pride in the special teams. None of these kids were recruited to come play special teams other than the kickers, right? So all the other guys are on those teams, you have to inspire them to go out and play hard on the teams. They have done a great job."

Quarterback Brendan Sorsby

On if he could see Jeff Caldwell's big game coming

"Oh yeah, especially after the long touchdown and then the second touchdown. Though even as a whole we had a decent offense all day. Still put up points on the board and we just have to correct the mistakes."

On the importance of offense and defense stepping up each game

"I mean, if it wasn't for our defense who knows how the game goes. But as an offense we need to help them out. We can't have three drives of no scoring and expect our defense to do everything. It's the big twelve we can't just hope to get lucky we need to deliver. But props to our defense. They played really well today for us."

Wide Receiver Jeff Caldwell

On the significance of his first touchdown

"It was really important. I felt like our energy coming out was kind of dead, and being able to bring a spark to the offense and getting the ball rolling was really important to me."

Caldwell on how he trains for harder catches

"As a receiver, you have to keep your hand eye coordination to a tee. Jug machines after practice, things like that. I would say it also comes down to trust, trusting that you're gonna make that play, trusting that when the play is called, you're gonna make that play."

On how the offense fared today

"With each game that we keep winning, each game keeps getting better and better. I don't think the offense had the best day that we were expecting, but we came out with a win. It's hard to win in the Big 12. I think we're going to go on tomorrow, watch film, get better, and get ready for Oklahoma State."

Linebacker Jack Dingle

On the resiliency to only give up 11 points out of 90 plays

It shows a lot of improvement throughout the week. We knew what they were going to do. Especially the front six, stopping the runs are the key emphasis, and fighting out through the week, improving. And we know what we got to get done, and knew what they were going to do, and we ended up stopping them.

On UCF quarterback Cam Fancher

He saw me get juiced out. But no, we knew one, all three, could run. We didn't know who we were getting throughout the week, but we knew they were switching. We knew they could run, and you just put an emphasis of working on tackling with leverage all week.

On the defense's mentality

"Go out there and execute and play out the play, one play at a time. Keeping one play at a time, stop their run game. That was the emphasis all week. We take care of our own, get our offense the ball back. That's a huge thing for us."

Punter Max Fletcher

Fletcher on the mental process of making shorter punts & his 5 appearances today

"For those ones, it's trying to tee it up and go a little bit shorter, almost like golf, like a little chip shot in. I just have to see what the wind's doing. I make sure Manny [Covey] is down the ball, I'm proud of those guys. I'm trying to help this team win. I'm confident in my abilities, and if I need to go out there five times and help the team win, then I'm happy to do that."

On if he's surprised by the special teams performance

"I'm not surprised. Coach Tim [Conner] and Coach Luke [Paschall] have done a wonderful job. Coach [Paschall] is probably one of the best coaches I've been around. His ability and his confidence in me helps me go out there. Last week was a big example, and confidence is the biggest thing. I'm happy to go out there and do my job."

On the success of kicker Stephen Rusnak

"The way he handles himself, his calmness to go out there like any other kick, I'm not surprised. Every day in practice, he's professional, extra treatment, extra film, whatever it is, he acts like a true professional."

On the difference between the punt game this year versus last

"I think everyone being on the same page helps. Coach [Paschall] getting a new scheme is the biggest thing. He's done a wonderful job. Guys like Christian [Harrison] and Jake [Golday] on the punt team do a wonderful job and help me out. I think that's really good."