Postgame Quotes
Cincinnati vs. Utah
Oct. 31, 2026 | Nippert Stadium

Head Coach Scott Satterfield

Opening statement

"We knew Utah was a good football team coming in, and they certainly played like it there in the first half. We didn't help ourselves at all. We know we're able to move the football a little bit, you get down, and then we shot ourselves in the foot with a couple penalties that knocked us out. We didn't get any points there, missed a field goal. We knew going into it. If you get an opportunity when you get down close to the goal line, you got to punch it in and get touchdowns. Their red zone defense has been very, very good. First half, they were tackling our perimeter. We did a poor job tackling on the perimeter, allowing them to get some chunk plays and chunk yards. And when you do that, you open up the middle a little bit, and all of a sudden they're powerful enough and fast enough to get yards up the middle. We didn't get off the field on third down in the first half, and it just got away. I think challenge for our guys at halftime to come back out to not to look at the scoreboard, but to play to our standard. I thought we did a great job in the second half. The fight is really easy to hang your head and feel sorry for yourself in the second half, and to come out there and just you know let them have it. But I thought our guys came out and showed some great fight with the way they came back. Defensively was a lot better in the second half. We got two turnovers. Held them on fourth down twice. I mean, there's four possessions. I thought our defense did an excellent job. I know people say whatever, but I mean, the last drive right there that means something to our guys and our kids to be able to hold them out of the end zone there on fourth down. I know the game was pretty much over at that point in time, but that means a lot to our players and our guys. So, you know, hey, this is a good football team. We didn't play well, if you don't play well against a top 10 team like Utah is, I mean, this is what happens."

On looking ahead to next week's game at Houston

"I know they're a good football team. We've seen them on film. I've watched it on TV as well, and I know Coach Fritz. They do a great job. Their quarterback's outstanding, and they're coming off a bye week this week, and they can run, they can throw. Their defense is an aggressive style defense, and another top 15 team in the country coming in that we have to go play next week. I know it's a good well-coached team, and we got to watch the film and put together what we feel like will give us the best chance to go win and we got to go execute."

On if he felt a shift in his team's physicality after last week's game

"No, I don't think so. I thought we had a good week. I thought our guys were locked in and focused in this week. I thought we had a really good week of preparation defensively. I mean, and how do you gauge that. Sometimes you say, "Well, man, I feel really good about it." We don't play well. Sometimes, oh my gosh, I don't know, and we play well. It's hard to put a finger on it, but I thought we looked at the practice this week defensive in particular, and man, guys were where they're supposed to be. We didn't have too many mental busts. I think as a coach, sometimes you feel great about that, and then you still have to go out and tackle. You still have to go out and play physically, and this goes for both sides of the ball. And sometimes it just doesn't work out that way."

On allowing early third down conversions

"I mean, they're talented. They have a talented quarterback. I thought several times he played great coverage. He didn't have anywhere to throw it, he goes to scramble and gets a first down. We had guys there and just kind of missed those tackles. I mean, at that point, it's our guy versus their guy in the open field, which is a hard thing to do. And he won several of those to get those first downs, and it just kept their drives alive. I think they were six-for-six on third downs in the first half, and when they're staying on the field and keeping the drives alive, it was difficult for us to get off the field at that point in time."

Quarterback JC French

On staying positive during the game

"For me, I just try to uplift everybody else. When you do that, it helps yourself get out of that funk a little bit. I think our guys do a great job, especially on the O Line; walking around talking to everybody else, keeping our heads up and keep going."

On how the offense moved the ball against Utah

"I thought we moved the ball pretty well tonight overall. Obviously, we hurt ourselves a lot. I missed a few that I wish I had back. There are positives that come out of this. You have to shine light on that, and not dwell on it too much. It is disappointing to lose, but credit to them. They are a really good football team and we have to find ways to keep going and bounce back next week."

On if he expected the team to come back despite the early deficit

"Absolutely. We come in every game expecting to win and it is frustrating when we don't. We are all really frustrated right now with how we played, but I think we can compete with anybody in this conference and country. That is just something we have to hold ourselves to, keep moving forward and bounce back next game."

Linebacker Jonathan Thompson

On keeping the team motivated and moving forward after a loss

“Just by staying positive, learning from the negatives and just building. Encouraging the guys who stepped up this game that don’t play as much. It’s big for us to give them confidence throughout our depth in the team. We just got to be better.”

On the defense having a more successful second half

“In the first half, I feel like it wasn’t missed tackles on some of their big runs and touchdowns, but it was wide open hole where the running back would run 30 yards down the field. I think it was just us doing our job better, fitting the scheme better. I wouldn’t say we weren’t ready to start the game off, but we were definitely more ready coming out the second half.”

On the team’s mindset after last week’s win and what they can take away from Saturday’s loss

“I would say we had better practices and were more locked in in the days following Texas Tech. I think today we had some minor mistakes we don’t usually make as a defense. We just got to fit the ball better. We got to tackle better. We got to play our jobs better because we had some missed tackles. The things we don’t usually do as a defense, we have to learn from that. Watch film and just build.”