



POST GAME QUOTES

UCF VS. VANDERBILT

NOV. 8, 2025 / ADDITON FINANCIAL ARENA / ORLANDO, FLA.

UCF HEAD COACH JOHNNY DAWKINS

Opening Statement:

"I want to give Vanderbilt a lot of credit for how they played, especially in the first half. They are a terrific team and they're going to have a terrific year. There are areas we have to clean up on. Our defense has got to be better. We gave up 10 threes in the first half which is not what we anticipated."

On halftime conversations:

"We emphasized to the team what they had done well, they were playing with confidence but they needed to work on defending the three point line, they got that under control in the second half. I thought our guys showed a lot of grit, a lot of fight despite being down twenty-plus in the second half."

On the second half:

"They showed a lot of intensity in the second half of the game. Them having 10 threes in the first half was not part of the game plan at all. We have to understand what to hang your hat on to be successful, which is defending and rebounding. We didn't understand that until the second half, we got back to doing the things we wanted to do defense-wise."

On Vanderbilt's transition game:

"They do a really good job, they are very active holding the ball defensively and pretty much all positions. You have to be careful when you have the ball because they will turn you over and shoot quick threes, even get all the way up to the basket; they make it very challenging. They'll have you scrambling defensively, especially when they have four to five guys as their secret weapon on the court."

On finding the ways to win:

"We are two games into the regular season but I emphasize to my players to play like every game is a championship, that's just the way I coach. We do need to keep learning from our games though, we are still working on rotations, testing out what combination of players work well together. "

UCF GUARD RILEY KUGEL

On his experience against Vanderbilt:

"They've always been a good team and very disciplined. So coming in I expected them to play solid defense and offense. So we just have to do better on our defensive end."

On what he learned about the team:

"We've got to work on our defensive end. Going into practice everyone just has to do their jobs"





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On how they need to improve defensively:

“The objective was to get them to stop getting the threes up but they were able to anyway. They got off to an early start so that gave them momentum.”

UCF GUARD CHRIS JOHNSON

On how Vanderbilt kept the ball away:

“They took off in the first half and played a solid game essentially..”

On becoming a key competitor:

“I trusted my work and trusted my teammates.”

On returning after missing playing time:

“I feel like I showed something tonight and I’m just grateful for the opportunity..”

