



POST GAME QUOTES

UCF VS. OAKLAND

NOV. 17, 2025 / ADDITON FINANCIAL ARENA / ORLANDO, FLA.

UCF HEAD COACH JOHNNY DAWKINS

Opening Statement:

Just very proud of our guys. We beat a really good basketball team, a team that's been challenged already in the pre-season. They've already played Purdue, Houston, and Michigan. We knew going into this game, it was gonna be tough. We were gonna have to compete for 40 minutes. I'm just really proud of our guys for making a place they had to make down a stretch of the basketball game, considering we had a 15 point lead, and then they kept fighting like we knew they would, and made it pretty much a tie ball game and our guys made the plays they had to make at the end of that to win, and I'm happy for them.

On positives that come from a win like this:

Absolutely. That's what we expect in conference. That's why we're playing the teams we're playing. There's now a team that's really on our schedule that we didn't feel would give us a challenge in some kind of way, whether it's a smaller team, small ball, whether it's big teams, whether it's an orthodox defenses, like this team plays right here. Look at our schedule, we have games across the board, but I think they all can help us, and tonight was a huge help for us.

On message to the team after a big run from Oakland:

Well, we have to make sure it's gonna be done on a defensive end, period. You're gonna have to get stops. When people are making runs, the only way you can stop them is to defend them and make them miss, and I thought we did it in timely moments at the very end of the game, and that's when it's gonna count the most, our guys were at their best, and the guys stepped up, made big free throws, guys stepped up, made big stops, and that's what you have to do, and I'm really proud of them for that effort.

On team confidence after wins :

Well, it's gonna help us grow. Having our guys be in these situations this early, we expect every conference game to be similar. I think it's great preparation for that, and playing against different systems, different styles, it's also going to help us, because different teams that we're playing league. They'll have different styles. So I want our guys to face different challenges, and I want us to understand how we can be successful, and I thought they did a good job of that today.





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UCF FORWARD JAMICHAEL STILLWELL

On getting a double-double:

I was just aggressive. These games were personal to me. Oakland knocked us—Milwaukee—out of the tournament last year, so I came in with an aggressive mindset.

On playing a scrappy team:

It comes down to late-game situations. We executed down the stretch and got key stops. They had two or three possessions where they were only down one because we turned the ball over, but we got stops on the other end.

On being familiar with Oakland:

Teams like Oakland are good because of their coach. He's a Hall of Fame coach. They run the same system every year with different players who all fit it. They're well-coached, they don't quit, they're scrappy, they shoot threes, and the style is a little different to play against.

UCF GUARD RILEY KUGEL

On coaches message after the 15-3 Oakland run:

We just had to fight. They started hitting shots late—No. 10 hit four or five threes—so that got them back in it. We just had to buy in, lock in, and finish the game.

On closing the game out:

Like you said, we weren't having it. Kudos to them—I just learned their coach has been there 40-plus years, so they're obviously well-coached. They ran great sets late, but we had to buy in and gut it out.

On importance of relying on defense when shots aren't falling:

It's huge, especially in this era. If your shots aren't falling, you've got to defend. Our guys did a good job talking and getting extra stops when we needed them. We were up 12 or 14—we just have to find a better way to close games and extend the margin.

