

Coach's Corner *straight from the coach's mouth*

ACHIM HUNT Sports Editor

Welcome to the Coach's Corner. Each week you'll read the words of Carolina head football coach Brad Scott talking about the upcoming games. You can also read Coach's Corner after each ball game to get Scott's take on The Gamecocks each week.

Every quote in Coach's Corner is from Brad Scott unless otherwise noted.

This week's Coach's Corner focuses on Coach Scott's view of this week's opponent, Central Florida.

The Golden Knights are entering just their second year of Division I football, and are coming off a heartbreaking overtime loss to SEC foe Ole Miss. The Rebels of Ole Miss won the game 24-23 after Central Florida quarterback Daunte Culpepper was tripped up on the one foot line to keep the Knights from pulling the stunning upset.

"Central Florida you know is a dangerous football team," Scott said. "I think they proved that last Saturday night (a 24-23 loss to Ole Miss). They had an N.C. State-type effort, as far as going for two points in the overtime, and they came up just a little bit short. They were very close to winning that game."

"You read their guest column and you read that their quarterback Daunte Culpepper tried to run the ball in on their two point play, and just fell short by about a foot."

"Certainly UCF showed in [the Ole Miss] game that they are a football team with a lot of capable and talented returning players. We saw that last year."

Scott is very worried about his team's ability to stop Culpepper, who he thinks is second only to Tennessee's Peyton Manning as the best quarterback his team will face this season.

"Of course they return one of the most talented quarterbacks that we will face

this year. We all saw how good Peyton Manning looked on Saturday night [against Texas Tech], but I am not sure that there is another quarterback on our schedule that probably is better than the Culpepper youngster from Central Florida."

"Daunte is a big, strong quarterback. He has got a great arm. But he is such a strong guy and works the pocket so well, he is tough to sack. This is his third year as a starting quarterback in a pro-style offense, and has some great coaching down there."

"I've heard their coaches comment in the preseason about how they feel their receivers and their quarterback are some of the best in the country."

Scott knows for sure that the Central Florida offense, led by Culpepper, is going to be tough to stop, but he also knows the Carolina offense is going to have a challenge moving the ball on the ground against the Golden Knights.

"Defensively they must have done a good job, because Ole Miss ran for about 70 yards in that ball game. It appears they got their defense playing really well for them, as they did last year."

One other thing that worries Scott is the confidence the Golden Knights must have gained by playing Ole Miss so close last week.

"Certainly I think the Ole Miss game gives them a lot of confidence coming in to play us. The fact that they already have a game under their belts is a big advantage for Central Florida. I thought when they came in to play us last year they were an extremely confident football team. I know [Central Florida head coach] Gene [McDowell], and he is a great motivator, and I'm sure that he had his guys in the frame of mind that our game was a great opportunity for his team, and I think they will be even more confident as they come in to play us this year."

The players are not the only confident ones from Central Florida. The fans of the Golden Knights voted this past summer that of all the games the Knights would play as an underdog, the most likely one they would upset would be the Gamecocks.

But for all their confidence, Scott said his troops are ready to go out and hit somebody else besides themselves in practice.

"Our football team has also prepared very hard, and we're excited about getting to play. We're eager to get our season kicked off. We have a tremendous amount of respect for Central Florida, and I just hope that we can do the things that we're supposed to do on that field Saturday night, and play to our potential. If we can do that, then this should be one heck of a football game."

Finally, Scott talked about why Central Florida has gotten so good so fast. And he compares them to an East Car-

olina-type team, and we all know what the Pirates have done to the Gamecocks the past couple of years.

"I think Central Florida benefits from several things. One is being from the state of Florida, where there's a lot of talented athletes. Orlando is a great hub for high school football in the state. They have a lot of good players on that team. Kids that used to leave the state to go to other Division I schools are now attracted to staying at Central Florida."

"You know somebody could have done a better job of picking an opener. Because when you look at Central Florida, I think you see an upstart team. You see another East Carolina or Southern Mississippi-type football team here."

So, it looks like Scott and his troops are getting ready for what they think will be a tough season opener against Central Florida.



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