

FIU interim head coach Ron Cooper quotes

Opening Statement:

"It was a heck of a ball game. I told the team that I've never been more proud of a team. They were eight minutes into the first quarter and they were down 21-0. They fought back and didn't flinch at all. They made plays and the offense moved the ball. We lost as a team but I'm proud of how they bounced back. We converted every fourth down."

On team's resiliency:

"I think it is how we approached it as a staff and how they handled it with the team. We made the adjustments. I thought our offense did a great job and controlled the clock. We knew that when we got down to the fourth quarter it would come down to who had the ball last. We just needed to get past the 50. We knew this team had an explosive offense. We were four for four on fourth down."

On talking to offense and defense during the game:

"Yeah I spoke to them every time and kept the energy going with a lot of energy with the guys on the bench. They feed off of what they do and they are very understanding. Defensively, the guys listened and came up with some stops. There are some things that they fixed and I feel bad as to how it turned out for them. We have a chance every week."

FIU QB Alex McGough quotes:

"I'm very upset with myself. The defense made a stop when we needed them to. I am really disappointed with myself."

On the interception late:

"It was a zone coverage. He made a heck of a play. He stepped in on the inside receiver and jumped back out and then made a great play. He made a great play. They are on scholarship too."

The mindset when down 21 points early:

"Our theme for our team is just don't flinch. Up or down, just play ball. Nobody got distracted. We messed up those early drives, but we stayed in there and played ball."

On Middle:

"They are a great team. They are coached well. We knew we had to score points tonight. We just kept going and thought about scoring tonight because they are so good."

FIU WR Thomas Owens, on being down early:

"Coach always says to 'don't flinch,' and there was a lot more game to play. So that's what we had to do. We just have to finish."

Middle Tennessee Head Coach Rick Stockstill quotes

On the game ending:

"The game played out like I thought it would. I thought it was going to be a four quarter game. It is extremely tough to win on the road, it's extremely tough to win conference games on the road, so I thought we handled the elements really well."

On becoming bowl-eligible:

"The mission hasn't changed, we're still one game at a time. The goal was to get to a bowl and you can't get to a bowl unless you're bowl-eligible. So we've done the first step and we've put ourselves in good position here."