

# University of Pittsburgh Football Media Conference

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## Coach Pat Narduzzi

### Press Conference

PAT NARDUZZI: Good weekend. Came out as planned. Again, everything I kind of said after the game, I kind of feel like I saw the same thing on videotape. Just saw it in slow motion as opposed to fast motion.

Great team win. Obviously offense did a great job holding on to the ball and sustaining drives. I think 41 minutes time of possession. Defense only had 36 plays. It was a little scrimmage for them, I guess. Should be fresh for this week, practice, and for game days.

Just good stuff. Then obviously we get into Cincinnati week, which we turned our focus last night after team meeting, and really good Cincinnati team.

I think they've got the No. 5 offense in the country, coming in here. Scored a lot of points, explosive at the tailback spot and at wide receiver. Emory Jones is a quarterback transfer, Florida to Arizona State. So much for one-time transfers. I guess he was a grad transfer I'm guessing, and Cincinnati is his third school.

But great player, athletic. I don't know if he's Malik Cunningham, but really athletic.

Again, we know Scott Satterfield who we've faced a couple times already, and really, really good coach that will be another challenge. They do a good job scheming you on both sides of the ball, and defensively they're a 3-4, so kind of some carryover from this past week, which is good.

They've got this nose tackle, Dontay Corleone, I believe, nicknamed "The Godfather." It starts with him and that defensive end, Briggs, are two really good players for them.

Questions?

**Q. After having a chance to watch the tape, do you have any further analysis on Phil's play?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know what, I really liked Phil's play a lot, and so did our staff. He played clean.



Again, I'm just a not-very-smart defensive coach, but when I sit in, I continually learn from Coach Cignetti when I'm sitting in there listening, like hmm, makes a good point.

But I know some people will complain about an incomplete pass. Everybody wants him to complete every pass, but when you watch the tape and you watch the end zone tape and you watch everything -- again, you talk about an educated quarterback guy for me, you watch and you hear Coach Cignetti coach and what a good coach he is and just talk the details.

Penetration inside for quarterbacks is an issue. When you see some of these bad balls, if you go back and look and rewind it, I know you'll be doing that right after this, go back and rewind, watch tape, a lot of his throws are when there's pressure and there's someone in the "A" game. You don't mind edge pressure when a quarterback can step up in the pocket, but when he can't step up in the pocket -- overall I thought he had a hell of a game.

We're happy with where he is, and we're only going to keep getting better, not only at quarterback but at every position.

**Q. Did that pressure come up from "A" game from a team like Wofford something that you have to clean up?**

PAT NARDUZZI: No question about it. It will get cleaned up. They did just a couple things that maybe we didn't prepare for, whatever, but we'll definitely be a lot better prepared for that.

**Q. You brought up Scott Satterfield. Based on what you've seen so far from Cincinnati, anything stylistically match up between what he does now and what he did at Louisville?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, very similar. Very similar in year one of it, though, I would say. Big outside zone team, but I'm not sure they like outside zone against us, but it is their favorite run play.

They do a good job. They're going to go back and look at games from the last three years. They did it at Louisville, and they kind of copycat some stuff that you can just



notice, you're like, oh, that's a play that we saw against Miami back in this day and kind of go back and look and go, they did a good job copycatting.

We'll do a great job self-scouting and going back to every team that we played that has an athletic quarterback and kind of look and see, hey, what did they think they could get on us, where is our weakness, what are they trying to attack. So they do a good job like that.

There will be new stuff they see that they kind of take from other teams.

**Q. Do you see them use any wide-shoot looks that you've seen from some teams that go after you guys?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, they did that last year. I don't know if you remember, we covered it up pretty good. See, you're on it.

They did that last year to us a little bit. That's just one of those copycat plays that they took from Miami when Mallory went up the middle. Usually can get us once but usually you aren't going to get us twice, so we do a good job of self...

**Q. Coach, you always say that your biggest opportunity for improvement is from week one to week two, so what are some of the highlights of what you're keying on to make those improvements?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know, there's a lot of things. I mean, I'll start with the real obvious is making sure that our gunners when they go down on punt team, Caleb Junko had a great day, but we ruined his day by squandering an opportunity to have him downed inside the 5-yard line at least.

But just going back and getting better at that. That'll get cleaned up immediately. Got cleaned up last night, and hopefully they get it.

But sometimes you have a good sky punt guy that goes down and does his job, and sometimes it's new guys. We had a couple new guys in there that -- like Tre Tipton used to be the best guy at that. You new Tre was going to go down, and he did it really, really good.

We've just got to get back to that. That's just one major thing that turned into a major play in my opinion, and we lost 25 yards of net punt.

But there's so many things on offensive line, on the defensive line, that we'll just clean up. Way too many to get into.

**Q. Is Jones doing designed runs or is he just --**

PAT NARDUZZI: Well, it depends if they're copycatting or not, but he likes to scramble. If he doesn't like it, he's taking off and he can run.

They've got some quarterback draws, and quarterback draw is a new thing probably that they got in the off-season. They weren't a big quarterback draw with Malik, but seems to be a lot of quarterback draws with having routes out there, RPO stuff.

So they've got some new stuff in there. We've seen plenty of draws through the years, so we'll be okay there.

But not a ton of quarterback power and all that stuff, but we could see -- they copycatted a little outside zone, quarterback outside zone that Georgia Tech ran against us last year, and they came up and did it and didn't have a whole lot of success.

They'll have a play off of a play.

**Q. Their offense only returns one starter, their defense only returns three starters from last season. A lot of these guys starting for them now came in through the portal. How hard is it to scout teams like that when it's an entirely new roster of kids from all over the country?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, they have three transfers on defense and then they've got eight on offense, so eight of their 11 starters are transfers, which is amazing. They're good players.

They came from Miami, from Florida. Dee Wiggins is from Miami; we've played against him before. They've got a lot of talent. Kiner, their tailback, who's a Cincinnati kid, transferred in from LSU, really good football player. Had an explosive up the middle. Nobody touched him.

Really good players, but you've got at least a game tape on them. It would be a lot harder if we opened up with them and didn't know -- you're going back watching their old school or old high school tape, but kind of like an opener with a lot of those guys. You're not sure how fast they are. You haven't played against them before.

Never easy when you don't get to play against guys and you don't know who they are and what they do.

**Q. What did A.J. Woods do to earn the top kick returner spot on the depth chart this week?**

PAT NARDUZZI: He should have fair caught that one in the end zone, so I don't know what he did to earn it or lose it, one or the other. But we'll have a conversation with A.J.

He's just been consistent. He can run. You've seen him take interceptions back for touchdowns in championship games. Just a guy that we trust back there.

But that can be -- we've got probably four or five guys. I would say probably our number one guy was Bub Means to put back there, but we didn't really want to put Bub back there, just a receiver leading there. He maybe was the starter going into it, and then we just thought, what do we want to do here.

You may see changes there, too. Who knows.

**Q. You've got four guys listed as starters at defensive tackle. What can guys do to separate themselves?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Well, if you watched long enough, and through the years, we do a good job -- those guys are all -- I could give you a bunch of "ors" right there. I don't know if there's "ors" on it or not, but it could be Jules or Devin or Bentley. There's a lot of "ors" there. We've got five or five guys in there that are "ors" and that doesn't mean we don't know who it's going to be. That means it could be either-or, just like Marquis and A.J. and Marlon. Those guys -- Marquis, those guys are all starting corners.

The "ors" mean they're all starters. We're all good with all of them, but I've got to put something on there so they don't look like a backup, I guess.

**Q. You mentioned you would do some nitpicking yesterday on the video. What kind of things did you nitpick or talk about?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I can't tell you. I mean, I don't know. We'll see.

**Q. How did your offensive line play?**

PAT NARDUZZI: They played solid. We rushed for whatever we rushed for. What did we rush for, 200 something yards? 217? Gave up one sack, which the linebacker came off the edge, and Gavin -- we've just got to do a better job coaching. I would put it more on coaching than on Gavin, but Gavin -- the guy he was blocking on the edge, sort of a gap protection, went inside. He could have let it go and then picked up the backer.

We kept the quarterback pretty clean all day.

**Q. You were at Cincinnati for a few years, obviously**

**with Coach Dantonio, when you go back to those days, what was the biggest point of emphasis that you took from Cincinnati to help you along your coaching career?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Cincinnati is a great place. Cincinnati kind of like a Pittsburgh. I don't know what I took from there, it's been so long ago and I'm so old.

But when you look at it, Cincinnati is a tough team. That's what I take from it. Cincinnati is tough. They're physical. They've got good football players. They'll be hungry coming in here. That's what I take.

I just know that the DNA is very similar to a Pittsburgh kid. It'll be a hell of a game with them coming in here.

Lessons, I coached back in the old Wannstedt era, and Dave was 2-0, and they had some great players and made plays, and we didn't make plays back in the day.

**Q. How would you describe the River City rivalry?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I don't know. It's an old rivalry. I don't know. It's a rivalry, I guess, I don't know. Or at least used to be when we were in the same conference. We're not in the same conference, so I don't know where that is.

I haven't really thought about that. I was worried about their personnel more than a trophy. The trophy really doesn't matter or will matter to me, but we'll see. I don't know if it'll be here or not. I don't know if our kids know what it is. It's been a while since we played them, and just focusing on executing and playing well.

**Q. How did Javon and PJ do, and how different will the challenge be this week against this offense?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know, it's like the competition just keeps getting better every week, I think, and Cincinnati has got talented receivers. If you had to look at one of their strengths, it's going to be the receiving corps. They're all new guys. They all can run. They're all SEC or ACC guys that they transferred in, whether it's a Louisville or Miami or Florida.

Their work will be cut out for them. But PJ I thought played -- they all played well. PJ played well, into the boundary. I think Javon played well, as well.

Then when you look at Donovan McMillan played well. Those are the three guys that stood out.

Steph Hall, wish he could have made a tackle on that last play, which he didn't get to that. But that's the game, and



that's where you learn.

**Q. How would you grade your safeties when a team like Wofford doesn't take as many deep shots, when it kind of limits -- you said they only had 36 plays. How do you grade them when you only have such a --**

PAT NARDUZZI: Grade them on 36 plays. That's all we can. I can't grade them on 76 plays.

But you can grade them -- it's not deep shots, but you saw them run some out routes, and our guys are there making the tackle. If they're running a 10-yard out, we expect that safety to go make the tackle. If he's running a 10-yard out and turning up the field and getting 10 more, then we've got safety issues. So that's how you grade it.

So we're going to grade -- every pass doesn't matter if they threw it or the safeties were targeted or not. Like we know these guys like to run big boxes on our safeties, so we're going to get tested this week. They like to run a slot receiver on fade routes, getting themselves a lot of space. So they'll see those this week. That's something through the years that they've liked. I would assume they're going to continue to try to take some shots, whether it be out of 12 personnel or 11 personnel. Those are things you're going to see.

**Q. You spent a couple of years with Coach Manalac in Cincinnati. Did you see a future linebackers coach and defensive coordinator, see him rising through the coach ranks when you had him back then?**

PAT NARDUZZI: No, I was hoping he'd rise through the depth chart and earn a scholarship like he did. He's a competitor. He's tough. He's physical. He's smart. He's a Cincinnati grad.

I told some of the O-linemen yesterday as I talked in the team meeting, I said, you've got to get after Coach Manalac and find out if we can trust him this week or not, just jokingly.

You don't know what these guys are going to do, but he was going to be a success no matter what he did. I didn't know he wanted to get into coaching back then. I don't think he did, either. He was just a football player that got around some good coaches and said, I want to do that, too.

**Q. (Indiscernible) can you just talk more about what Corleone brings to their defense and what makes him such a talented player?**

PAT NARDUZZI: He lines over the center in a zero

technique and he just causes havoc in the backfield. He's explosive. He's -- he's only about 6'2", maybe 6'2½". He just causes havoc in the backfield. It starts with him. You've got to control the line of scrimmage, and it's really a key to victory every week is really just to control the line of scrimmage on both sides of the football, and that'll be a lot of focus on what he's done in there.

**Q. Does it say something about the maturity of your group, the way that they played on Saturday?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, it does. It's something that we went into the game with. I threw it right up on these screens, just all our 1-AA scores in the first couple years. It was an overtime to Youngstown State, a 17-14 win at Delaware. I don't have them all memorized, but then I kind of put a blank space and looked at the last three years of what we've done, and last year wasn't a great one in my opinion.

But just the mature teams took care of business, and the immature teams kind of thought, well, this will be easy. That to me, I think I mentioned that in the press conference afterwards, just the maturity that they took, the buy-in to what we're -- they're not going, okay, Coach, yeah, these guys are good, okay.

Let me go back to tell you, I watch a lot of 1-AA football play other teams, and Wofford is a well-coached team on both sides of the ball. They are sound. They're not like, what are they doing. They weren't giving you anything.

They played deep coverage. They weren't going to let -- even though Bub ran through the coverage one time and we got a crossing route open, and again, you've got to hit it, but they're sound. They've got two guys on the thing maybe they couldn't run, but they're still going to make you put it right there. The guys weren't wide open.

Wofford was very, very sound, and I give them a lot of credit for taking care of business. They looked well-coached on tape. You're not going, what is that; that's the most unsound -- you didn't say that when you watched the tape.

**Q. Does that alleviate any concerns you might have -- you've got an actual rivalry game next week, about your boys looking ahead at all?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, I would say they were locked into game 1, and hopefully they'll be locked into game 2, and again, my job, again, to make sure they don't overlook anybody, but I don't know how you'd overlook a team that was in the playoff just a couple years ago and is really a good football team, and they've got talent. They've got

speed.

Again, state of Ohio, they get a lot of Ohio kids. They're a good football team.

**Q. At the end of the game or toward the end of the game, they had the deep ball that went up against Ryland. What are some coaching notes you have tore him? He probably got thrown to the ground a play. How do you coach a moment like that?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Stay on your feet. Stay on your feet, and then a safety is supposed to be a safety, right. He's supposed to help that guy out.

It's just one of those plays that could happen to anybody. You aren't a corner unless you've gotten beat deep before. To me it's like one of those check-the-box, okay, Ryland, anytime you step on that field and we go one-on-ones and we do deep ball drill every single day out there, every single one of those counts, and you can be good on 12 of the 12. That 13th one is going to get you.

I haven't seen him do anything like that on the field, but just when he gets in the one-on-ones tomorrow morning, it's going to be like, okay, here we go.

This is my time to learn from that, and I'm going to stay on my feet. I don't care if they throw you or grab you and throw you down to the ground. If they don't call it, then we've got to stay up and we've got to make a play.

**Q. If that had been in a another game situation, would you have had that conversation with the official?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know what, I'm done having conversations. I thought M.J.'s was a good call, as well, and let's get off the officials.

**Q. I just thought of that question.**

PAT NARDUZZI: They did a nice job, but it was not easy. It's not an easy job at all. I thought they did a great job.

**Q. You're up big late and you had Christian throw the ball, was that just, hey, look, we might need this guy at some point this season, this is a chance to get him not just turn around and hand the ball off and end the game?**

PAT NARDUZZI: No question about it. You're looking to get reps and get your guys playing football. You just can't sit back there and hand it off and go, hey, Christian, you didn't do a good job. We wanted to get him an opportunity -- he's got to learn from it, no different than anybody else

learning from what they do. You can't learn as a quarterback to go in there and just -- we want to see him operate the offense, and that's going to help later on when and if that situation happens, we're going to have a lot of faith in him, but we've got to coach him up, and he needs to improve, as well. That's what games are for.

**Q. Could Carter start?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I don't know. This week in practice -- we've got three starters. A lot of it'll be based on practice. Again, Daniels was really based on just I would say camp and just -- he grinded it out and was there every day. Didn't miss a day at all. That was probably an offensive decision.

**Q. Coach Powell is always looking for somebody to emerge, and you said the same thing. Is it hard, though, when you -- for somebody to emerge, doesn't somebody have to get more opportunities than somebody else? Some guys get better -- like Rodney is a guy I would think the more he gets the ball, maybe the more effective he might be.**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, there's no question. Again, we'll see that when -- again, you earn your reps. You get out there. If you get 10 carries, you get 10 carries. What did you do with those carries? Did you make the right read? Did you hit it? Did you get hit? Did you fall down? Did you make somebody miss? Making somebody miss and being your own blocker is critical as a running back.

**Q. Coach, Montravius Lloyd came out of high school as a receiver and as a running back, and against Wofford he ran the ball five times and caught a pass for seven yards. Do you like what you see out of him at both positions?**

PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, I don't think he had a great day running the ball, but he got his five carries in. Again, he'll learn. If we need him later on in the year, I think he's explosive, he's got hands out of the backfield. He showed that just by catching the ball.

But he's fearless. He's only going to get better. You get those game reps, and you look at it, and he'll get that all cleaned up I think. He'll be much better when he does get that next opportunity.

We'll see where that goes. He's got four games, and we can use one of those games there, and we'll find out how that depth in that running back room goes and use him when we need to. You'd like to redshirt him, but who knows.

**Q. Which one of the young guys stood out on Saturday?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know what, there just -- Kenny Johnson had plays -- they just played so deep that we couldn't get what we wanted there. But I guess we'll find out later on. We'll find out more this week and next week, I guess.

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