

Florida Blue Florida Classic: Bethune-Cookman Wildcats vs Florida A&M Rattlers

Saturday, November 18, 2023

Orlando, Florida, USA

Camping World Stadium

Bethune-Cookman Wildcats Raymond Woodie Jr.

Press Conference

Florida A&M 24, Bethune 7

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: Well, FAM was a better team tonight. We had our chances to escalate scores. We gave the ball away, and we didn't stop the run like we should stop the run. I just think that we did not capitalize on the things that we was given, and it all comes back to technique, fundamentals alignment and assignments. We've just got to do a better job of that.

Q. The coaches came in at the beginning of the season after national signing day and assembled this team after obviously some challenges at the beginning. How would you evaluate the team with working with what you had to work with at the beginning of the season?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: I'm proud of the guys, what they've been through, and having an opportunity to coach those guys was a blessing because they started out one way and then ended up on a strong note as far as character and work ethic and being football players. I would say we're real excited about the guys that we inherited and then obviously going to get more guys to add to this football team that we're trying to rebuild.

Q. For you to have been a former player at BCU and now as a coach in this game, what was that experience like going from player to coach?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: It was great. A lot of times people put a whole lot in games like this, which it's a big deal, but we just treated this game, because it's my first game, as the most important game because it was the next game on our schedule.

But when you're in the state of Florida, FAMU and BCU, that's a big-time rival game, and it was awesome being my



first one as a coach.

Q. How would you assess your first year as head coach at BCU?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: Well, we build student-athletes. I said it before. I believe we finished third in the country in penalties, and we want to build a disciplined team first. I think with that being said, it shows that we're trying to do it the right way, and once you have a disciplined team, the wins are going to come.

Q. This will be the first time that you'll be able to go out and recruit and have a whole full recruiting cycle, and you also have a brand new practice facility on campus. How will that enhance your ability to attract athletes to Bethune-Cookman?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: Well, I'm really excited. Now teams as far as universities, colleges, they can't use that against us, and alongside of that, being able to get a locker room so we can practice on our campus. But it's going to be huge having the opportunity to finally go out and recruit the guys that's going to fit our scheme. We're real excited as a coaching staff to be able to go out and hit the ground running.

Q. Just talk a little bit about building BCU back up, going back home, so to speak, and getting this program where you want to?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: Yeah, so we're going to do it the right way, and I really feel like that's the only way, and we want to build this program with student-athletes, and if they do it right in the classroom, it's going to transfer on the field. The disciplined way, I feel like that's the right way, and then obviously going out and recruiting the ones that want to be here at BCU. When I was here, the guys that wanted to be here was here, and we played tough, hard-nosed football, and those are the guys we're looking for. We're looking for the right guys, and like I say, we're going to build it the right way.

Q. Start of the fourth quarter you're only down 10. Was it the game plan to continue with the run and mix



in the pass, or were you trying to be a little more urgent and push it down?

RAYMOND WOODIE JR.: Well, I mean, obviously execution is the key. When you have one missed block, one missed catch, one bad throw, we should have been more sound in execution, and that's on us as coaches. I just think we had our chances, but we didn't seize the moment when we had opportunities to and against a team like FAM -- any team, especially a team like them, every situation they give you, you have to seize the moment in the right situation to you can get points on the board and get the momentum.

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