

Florida State University Football Media Conference

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Tallahassee, Florida, USA

Coach Mike Norvell

Press Conference



Florida State 44, Boston College 14

MIKE NORVELL: First off, what a night. What an incredible, incredible atmosphere. That is what college football is about. Our fans, I mean, that was special. Just the whole buzz around this weekend, it's been an incredible weekend.

We have challenged our guys. We need to you come out and play a game where we show we could dominate a game. We challenged them in practice. I mentioned to the media throughout the course of the week, really like the approach of how our guys came to practice. Thought it was our best week of practice that we've had.

Sitting there getting off to a good start at the beginning of the season, there has not been any letup. Guys are pushing harder, challenging themselves. They want to continue to grow and get better. To go out there tonight and start the way we started, all three phases showed up big, offense, defense, special teams. To start the game with a kickoff return for a touchdown, we have been pushing so hard in our return game to have these game-changing plays.

For it to show up tonight was huge. Really set the stage. Defense was remarkable throughout the course of the night. They have some very talented playmakers on that team and our guys embraced the challenge. Like I said, they prepared throughout the week for this opportunity.

You know, just so proud of the way that our guys came out and played. It still wasn't perfect. Still a lot of things we have to clean up, continue to improve. But if we can keep that mindset throughout the course of the week and push to improve in all aspects, man, I'm excited about where this team can go.

But tonight was a great night. I appreciate, just want to thank all the fans, everybody that was here. That was special.

Q. I know Trey Benson has been working at kickoff

return since he got here, but what went into the decision to give him a start? What have you seen out of him going back to last game?

MIKE NORVELL: Trey is an explosive player. We lost a couple backs there early in camp, so we are trying to maximize all those guys' opportunities. Trey so explosive and got a lot of confidence in Sam McCall. He's going to be remarkable. But wanted to get Trey off to a fast start tonight.

He definitely took advantage of the opportunity, and you just see his confidence growing with each week. This young man is coming off a very substantial and serious injury, and you just see him getting better with each carry, with each game.

He's so very hard to tackle. But I wanted to see if we could help spark him and if he could help spark us in the return game. There are ten other guys that absolutely did a great job in helping that, but, boy, when he got in the open field he knew what to do with it.

I was fired up for him.

Q. Coach, is this the most pleased you've ever been with a football team you coached after four games?

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, I'm proud of this team. That's what I care about. For us, you know, are we approaching each day to go out there and maximize what we have in front of us. I challenge this team. I challenge them in everything they do to go be their best to build them up for what they can do.

That was my message in the post game. Just, you can. You can do this. You can go and put together a performance. If you prepare throughout the course of the week as good as you can, you can go put that on display.

Just seeing the growth, seeing the confidence, you know, the way these guys care about playing with each other, that's what makes this place special. That's what makes this team special. We are at the beginning. We are a third of the way through the season. All these things have to



continue to grow.

I can point back a year ago third of the way through the season, and then there was a drastic change. Ultimately we are in position that if we will do the things necessary, you're going to continue to see those positive steps.

So, yeah, I am very pleased with this team for all they've done up to this point, but especially this week. Because we came off a couple emotional games. We came off being on the road. You saw it. We are down a lot of the players tonight. A lot of guys that didn't play.

And you just continue to push that mindset. You get your opportunity, go make it. Go make it the best it can be. So I'm proud about that. Where we go, the choice is ours. The schedule is going to continue to elevate. Each opportunity is more of a focus, more of a spotlight.

I just want these guys to be what I know they're capable of. Like I said, the choice for that investment, that's what we have to make. I believe these young men will but, yes, I'm extremely proud of where they are and what they've done up to this point of the season.

Q. I know we saw Jordan do a decent amount Wednesday. When were you sure he was going to be able to play? What can you say about his performance, his first career 300 yard game?

MIKE NORVELL: On Wednesday I was pretty certain that he was going to play. I was so proud of him for the way that -- we had good reports this weekend. Wasn't able to go on Tuesday, but he just was pouring everything he had, getting treatment, absolutely wanted to play in this game.

That's the competitive spirit that he has, seeing that grow within just the maturity that he had. But we got done with Wednesday and I felt very confident that he was going to come out and play well.

He definitely did that. Just even in some of the situations where things broke down a little bit, just his poise that he was able to show was really, really good. You know, like I said, I think Jordan is putting himself in a position to do some really special things, and if he keeps doing the things that in the way he's investing, it's going to be fun to watch.

Q. You mentioned being short several guys tonight. What was it like seeing guys step up, Darius Washington on the offensive line and Patrick Payton on the defensive line?

MIKE NORVELL: No, I mean, it's huge. That's what makes a team. You know, we talked a little bit about it last

week, but the competition that we have in those rooms, look at receiver again tonight. Darion in the first half made some exceptional plays. Kentron showing up big with another touchdown.

It's exciting to see different guys that show up with the opportunity that they get. Darius, you know, he's the ultimate utility knife. He can do it all. But I thought he did a really good job. He's played all five positions already this year. It was big to see him show up.

Patrick Payton, some of those young D-lineman, Daniel Lyons got in there tonight and really made some plays just watching from the sideline. But you seen guys take the things they're being coached and just building their confidence with opportunity.

Pat I think has a great future in front of him. It's good to see him play well in the absence of a Jared Verse and guys that are really good football players.

Q. You mentioned last week about Jordan Travis in passing that he's one of the best players in the country, and he went down in the second quarter and you still won. Is he one of the best quarterbacks in the country, and how well is he playing right now? How well is he seeing the picture that a quarterback is supposed to see when you're running this offense?

MIKE NORVELL: He absolutely is one of the best quarterbacks in the country. I've been around a lot of good quarterbacks. We have got a special one here. He's got to continue to work, continue to do the things necessary.. but his ownership and management of the game -- what I love is we all know the athletic ability he has. He put that on display tonight.

But what he's doing with his arm and just the rhythm, the timing, where he's locating the football, his patience, just to sit there in the pocket and deliver -- I mean, that ball it Kentron was awesome; right before the half, two minute drive. That's who Jordan is.

We get to watch it at practice every day, and you see that carry over into the game and just his joy, communication, things that he's seeing. We're going to continue to push hard. Jordan has just continued to respond to everything that's come his way and has been a tremendous leader for this team.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

MIKE NORVELL: No, he is. I mean, he had a good week this week. We felt very confident in what he showed. It's been a hard stretch at the beginning for him, but this week

it looked like what we are used to.

It was good to see him go out, get the interception. Had a couple interceptions. Creating takeaways was something that was big. I think we were 100% ball security offensively, which was something we have been striving for. Like I said, I thought it was a complete game, and it was good to get some of those guys like Duke, getting him back out there and playing at a high level.

Q. The guys all celebrate for each other all the time. Seemed like the celebration when Greedy had his celebration, everybody was over there going crazy. Talk about that moment for him, and also how guys did against Zay Flowers in their passing game?

MIKE NORVELL: It's a talented passing game that they bring in. I mean, quarterback, receivers, it's -- they can have some challenging matchup problems. But I thought our guys really rose to the occasion. We want our defensive backs to be aggressive. We wanted them to not sit back and react to things. Let's go be the aggressor in it.

I thought Coach Fuller did a great job with his game plan. We were aggressive, trying to create some pressure, put some strain on the defensive backs.

When you see the pressure hitting home and guys making plays off it, like Greedy on the interception, it's exciting. Greedy works really hard. Guys love him. He's got just a wonderful spirit about him.

So it's fun seeing guys, you all come together, offense, defense, special teams. That's what makes this team.

Q. You talked about it a little there. We've seen what this defense can do in spurts. Majority of that LSU game and spurts against Louisville. Felt like pretty much a four quarter performance from them tonight.

MIKE NORVELL: Yeah, and we needed that. When you sit there and see that performance with multiple guys down and not available, I mean, that is very encouraging. With opportunity we get to go out there and make a statement, to go out there and put on display the identity of what we want to be and what we're working towards. I thought our defense definitely rose up today and played at a high level.

Q. Mike, you mentioned the crowd, the energy before the game, start of the game, and just the way you guys started the game. I guess thinking of all this and where you are now at 4-0, where you were at the start of last season, just how far has this program come in just a short period of time considering all that?

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, we've taken steps. You know, we talked about it at the beginning. It was all about building the foundation. I believe in what we do. I believe in how we do it. I believe in the young men I get to coach and the coaches I get to work with.

When you see that belief collectively come together, you see the response, I mean, that crowd tonight, that's was remarkable. I mean, the energy just around campus this week, all things pointing to today.

That's what makes being a Florida State Seminole special. We got to experience that tonight, and it's what this program deserves. It's what we're strive to go represent and how we play. We know what our objective is when we're on the field. Not only matters what with you do, but how we do it.

I believe our guys are playing with great heart, with great discipline. We still got to improve in some areas, but you see that spirit in the way they're competing. We're going to continue to get better.

Q. I don't know on game days if you get much of a chance to watch other games but Wake Forest and Clemson, that offensive show today and Wake Forest next week. Just any impressions about the challenges they get to present?

MIKE NORVELL: I got to watch some during our down time. We know the teams. ACC, I mean, the quarterbacks in this league, obviously Wake coming in next week, it's as good of an offensive team that's out there, just the way that they utilize personnel and the talent and ability that they have.

It's going to be a heck of a matchup here this next week. A heck of a challenge this next week. I know our guys will prepare the right way. We have to continue to get better. But it's going to be -- ever week it's going to continue to elevate as the season progresses.

But I believe in my team.

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