

CFP Semifinal at the Capital One Orange Bowl: Georgia vs Michigan

Monday, December 27, 2021

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Hard Rock Stadium

Georgia Bulldogs

Nakobe Dean

Press Conference

Q. Can you let me know what the last 15, 16 hours has been for you guys as you come here and it's kind of a different bowl experience? I saw you guys wearing masks around the hotel. Are you able to enjoy anything around Miami?

NAKOBE DEAN: Yeah, so last 15, 16 hours has been basically we had practice yesterday. We had practice and we basically just traveled here, traveled, had basically a bowl activity. We ate on a boat, and we came back and we had a little free time.

Yeah, we've got masks on. We're trying to stay away. We're trying to stay safe from this new variant out here, so for the most part, we're just staying around each other in the player lounge and just chilling on our free time.

Q. Did you notice any pickup in the intensity, energy, focus, whatever you want to call it, following the Alabama game compared to the way you were rolling during the regular season? Did you guys kind of need that hard reset and snap back to reality?

NAKOBE DEAN: You know, I did. I did, because kind of like when we started back practicing, it was kind of like a camp style of practice when we first started back, so it was kind of a new reset of energy and focus. But I won't say that was a falloff even before we had played.

I feel like we've just got to continue to work, continue to do what we do.

Q. How much do you think you guys have to prove after the performance against Alabama, that you're as good as people thought you were during the regular season? And what attributed to the blown coverages in the secondary that we didn't see during the regular season?



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NAKOBE DEAN: I feel like we've just got to work. We've just got to trust Coach's game plan and we've got to execute. We've got to execute at a high level.

As far as contributing to the blown coverages, it was just we didn't have elite focus and elite execution. We've got to execute our job, do our job every day, so it's like for the blown coverages and everything, it's like we just didn't have elite focus and elite execution at play.

Q. What do you think has been the most effective thing you've done in the last couple weeks to get reset from the last game?

NAKOBE DEAN: Basically taking the opportunity that we got. I know for me it's been telling the guys the type of opportunity that we've got. In the position that we're in, there's a lot of teams out there who are not in this position that we're in and got the opportunity that we have to do what we do. Basically that's kind of been the refocus and the mindset that we've got a huge opportunity to do something that's never been done before in a long time.

Q. Coach Lanning got asked about it so I want to ask you about Coach Schumann. What is it like or what is he like as a leader of this defense and the inside backer room and how have you seen him grow as a coach?

NAKOBE DEAN: Yeah, he's grown right along with me as a coach. I feel like he works as hard as -- if not harder as we work on the field. He demands the best out of us. That was one of the reasons I came, because I knew he was going to push me to be great, not just be good, be average, be mediocre. He was going to push me to be great day in and day out. That's one of the big reasons that I really respect him, and I'm grateful for him for that.

Q. Is there any kind of danger in trying to fix what went wrong in the last game when the next opponent plays a different style and has different strengths and weaknesses the way Michigan and Alabama kind of contrast with each other?

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NAKOBÉ DEAN: Well, you know, we do what we always did. We went to the doctor, seen what hurt us, what we didn't do, how we didn't execute. We worked on that. But at the same time we're on another opponent, so we're on another opponent, so it's a new game plan. Similar goal, to win, but new game plan, so we've just got to trust the plan and execute at a high level.

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