

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

Tuesday, December 28, 2021

Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Hard Rock Stadium

Georgia Bulldogs Kearis Jackson

Press Conference

Q. I wanted to ask you, George Pickens has only played a couple games and not his usual amount of snaps and that kind of thing, and I know he's back in town. What's your expectations for kind of what he can give you guys in this playoff?

KEARIS JACKSON: Everyone has seen George play and knows he's capable of doing. He's been a great addition to this team, him being able to come back from that injury has been tremendous for not only for himself, but for the team, as well, and just him being out there brings a different atmosphere to the game.

Q. Seems like you've been beat up all year with one thing or another. How are you feeling now? Did the break between SEC Championship Game and now allow you to heal and get back to your old self, and if you could just give me an idea of your thoughts as you guys get ready to get in the playoffs where you've been aiming to be all year long.

KEARIS JACKSON: Yeah, I wouldn't say I was beat up all year. I know during the summer I had that knee surgery, but from there on out, I haven't missed games due to injuries or anything like that, but I am feeling good, feeling good about myself, getting my speed back up to date, and just being able to do whatever I can to help my team out, and just being able to play in the playoff game has been something that everyone on this team had always dreamed of doing. We always came up short the past few years we've been here, but now we're actually living the dream that we always wanted to do, and just being able to not getting too big of ourselves, not getting too big of the moment, but just understand what we are here for and what we are fighting for and just being able to know that this opportunity doesn't come past too often, so while we're at it, we've got to take advantage of it.



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Q. Since the Alabama game, how has Stetson been in practice, both as a leader and his play, and how has he looked since that loss?

KEARIS JACKSON: Yeah, I mean, we just centered around him and let him know he's not in this alone even though he was receiving a lot of bad talk about him. And he don't look at that type of stuff. We don't, either. At the same time we've just got to know we're here for each other. Since that loss not only him but the whole team has took a step forward to try to get better. You win some, you lose some but you live to fight another day. Yeah, we lost that game but now we have an opportunity on a bigger stage to go do what we want to do and go win the next game.

Q. Did you guys feel humbled by the Alabama game? How did that change this team? And is that a good thing moving forward to have an experience like that?

KEARIS JACKSON: Yeah, definitely was a great thing, just the experience of loss. You know, like, we was on a 12-run streak, winning 12 games in a row, making history at Georgia, winning the most games in a season like that, and I guess we've got to move forward. That game was our opening, just being able to take a loss on the big stage, SEC Championship Game, which you always look forward to playing in, but you can't win every game. But it was, like I said, eye opening, just being able to go out there and play a great team like Bama. You've got to go in there with your A game, and we just didn't play good that day.

Q. What have you seen out of Coach Monken's fingerprint on this offense? What has been his biggest influence do you think?

KEARIS JACKSON: Coach Monken's biggest influence, just being able to score points, take pressure off the defense and just being able to be explosive, be tough, be physical, and just -- but the whole game starts up front. He preaches that, like protection beats coverage and protection beats being able to run the football, as well. That's what he pretty much preaches every time.

Q. When did you know what kind of athletic teammate you had in Brock Bowers? When did it first dawn on

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you, hey, this dude is different? When did that become apparent to you?

KEARIS JACKSON: I'm not sure he had an earlier role or not, whether it was in the spring or fall camp, but whenever it was I pretty much knew he had the talent to be one of the top tight ends in the country. Just him, seeing how fast he was, going up and getting the ball, he's very shifty with the ball in his hand, I pretty much knew that he was going to be dangerous, especially when he gets the rock in his hand. When I seen him the first time, I was like, yeah, he's going to be one of the top tight ends in the country.

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