

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Florida Gators

Caleb Banks

Press Conference



Louisville, I didn't have much film, but when I transferred he believed in me and I really appreciate that. He put me in the best spot to be productive, and I'm here now at SEC Media Days. So he's a great guy.

THE MODERATOR: Can you tell us what kind of offseason you've had heading into this season here.

CALEB BANKS: It's been a great offseason. I'm just getting better with my teammates and just developing my game in all types of ways. It's been great.

Q. What's the coaching message for this year?

CALEB BANKS: Spot the ball.

Q. I know DJ was limited this summer, but just what have you seen from him and his progress and development? And just how is he looking right now after mostly sitting out this spring and summer?

CALEB BANKS: DJ, he's a great player. DJ, he's developing every day as well, getting his body together. He's doing everything he can to help us and the team be productive.

Q. I don't know if you're keeping tabs on and Chris McLellan what he did last year at Mizzou after transferring -- you played alongside him in 2023. What's he like off the field and what's your relationship with him still to this day? And what can Mizzou fans expect from him?

CALEB BANKS: Chris is a great player. He has a high motor. I wouldn't say -- we talk, we're not the closest -- but he was cool when he was here. We get along very well. But you guys should be expecting a really high-motor player and a great player.

Q. Just describe playing for Coach Napier and what you tell folks about him, and any sort of growth or development you've seen out of Coach in your time at Florida?

CALEB BANKS: Coach, he's a great coach. He's one of the greatest coaches I've ever been with. When I was at

Q. You opted to come back for this season. I'm just curious if you could share a little bit more about your reason behind that and if there's anything you saw from DJ Lagway that inspired your decision to return?

CALEB BANKS: It wasn't just DJ Lagway, it was the whole entire team. I wanted to come back and play with my guys and be the first male in my family to graduate, first generation to graduate. I felt it was very important. And to come back get a national championship and of course have a higher draft stock for the NFL in the future.

Q. Talk about your decision coming back. But part of that, what kind of gives you optimism about this year's squad, this year's Florida Gators that it's going to be better than last year?

CALEB BANKS: We work hard every day. I watch those guys work every single day. I watch how hard they work, how much work they put in day in and day out, the extra time they put in.

It's the little things as well. I feel like it's going to be a really great year for us.

Q. Was there a time last year that whether -- before he got put in as a starter but that you knew that DJ was going to be everything he was billed to be?

CALEB BANKS: I used to watch his film in high school. He's a dude. Just the little things that he do, like to critique his game, I think he's a great player. Once he went in, we didn't have no type of doubt that he would be able to take over and be able to help us win that game.

I watch him in practice. I've been in the back a long time, practicing with him. I watch how -- he's a good guy, a good player.

Q. You talked about improving your draft stock. What



do you think you have to work on the most?

CALEB BANKS: My run game. I think my run game will be the biggest thing for me this year. My pass rush.

Honestly, everything. My pad level, I think I can improve in everything. There's always room for improvement. Just got to keep going.

Q. Obviously the team ended on a high note, on that winning streak. How do you kind of carry that momentum from last season into a new year? And how do you also avoid the slower start that you all had in 2024?

CALEB BANKS: Honestly, I think it's a mindset thing. I think if we have the right mindset going into the season this year and we have a great fall camp, we'll be able to go out and be successful this year.

Q. You talked about your appreciation for Billy, Coach Napier. What's it like as a player to hear and see the headlines or the speculation about your coach's job status? Obviously he's got to deal with it, but what's it like internally among the team?

CALEB BANKS: You know, we all believe in Coach Napier. We know he's a great guy, a great coach. And we believe in everything he's done for us. He puts us in a great position every single day with everything that we do. We love him.

Q. Florida's a program that has its share of rivalry games -- LSU, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida State. Do you have a particularly favorite game to play, a game you look forward to on the schedule?

CALEB BANKS: I'm looking forward to every single game, honestly. I don't have any one picked out. I'm ready to play ball.

Q. What do you remember from the Texas A&M game last year? And then how much are you looking forward to going on the road this time to Kyle Field?

CALEB BANKS: That was a great game. We had our times -- they shot at us we shot at them. I feel this upcoming season, if we just be more disciplined with certain things as a defense, we can have a great year and a great game against them.

Q. What do you remember from last year's game against Georgia? And what is the team's mindset going into this year as, before Lagway went down it looked like you were all going to take it to them?

CALEB BANKS: That was a great game. Georgia was a good game. We almost had them. I feel like we almost had them.

Honestly, like, we've just got to get them next time. Nothing else to say about that. We'll see them soon. Just gotta play our best game we can play.

Q. A lot's been made about how difficult it is to go into the Swamp as an opposing team. What's it like playing in front of that crowd as part of the Gators?

CALEB BANKS: It's crazy. It's probably the craziest environment I've ever played in. I love our fans. I love the Florida Gators. I feel like the Swamp is just the best place to play at night and in the daytime. They bring it anytime. It's amazing.

Q. What role did the LSU game play in your late resurgence last year? What did that win mean for you guys moving forward?

CALEB BANKS: It was a really big win for us. We wanted to be able to prove to everybody we can beat a top team. They kind of thought we couldn't. We had to prove to ourselves and everybody else that we can do it. Simple as that.

Q. What's it feel like when you're winning and the third quarter is over and they play the song, how does that feel?

CALEB BANKS: It's amazing. Every time I look up in the sky, I just thank God we're in the position we're in. If we're losing or winning, I'm just here in a beautiful place around amazing people. It's amazing.

Q. Do you sing along with it or not?

CALEB BANKS: I do all the time, all the time.

Q. Tell us about Jack Pyburn. What kind of guy is LSU getting in him? He looks like a superhero or something.

CALEB BANKS: Jack he's a dude. He's one of my closest friends. That's why he's at Florida. You're getting a motivated player. He loves to work. He works all the time. That's all he do, that's all he believes in. Getting a good guy.

Q. I know you go against him every day. The offensive line returns, I believe, it's four out of five starters. What's make the group so challenging not



only in practice, but in games, from your perspective?

CALEB BANKS: They play together so well. Even in practice, I speak for practice because in the game, we're kind of locked in. But in practice, they're connected, they're one. They have a saying "Five equals one." They're one. They play together. They understand each other. They know each other like the back of their hand. That's a great group of guys right there.

Q. A lot of great Gators have come through there. They might still be hanging around the program. Any there any that have helped you or you have gotten to know?

CALEB BANKS: B Spikes, he's one of the coolest (indiscernible) I've run into. He loves the Florida Gators. He reminds me every day why I'm here and what I'm doing it for. Good guy.

Q. T.J. Searcy, former teammate that had transferred out. What kind of teammate was he? What's he like as a player?

CALEB BANKS: T.J.'s a great guy. Like I said about Jack, he loves to work. He goes out every day, attacks every day. He loves the game. You guys are getting a great guy.

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