

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Florida Gators

DJ Lagway

Press Conference



Q. Where are you looking to grow personally, whether a mechanical or mental perspective? And what can we expect your pre-snap and post-snap responsibilities to be?

DJ LAGWAY: I'm definitely looking to improve on more coverage recognition and knowing where the defense is going to be and truly knowing their responsibilities and also knowing my teammates' responsibilities better.

Q. Last year, LSU came into the Swamp. You basically helped lead them with one good leg. What do you remember about that game? What's your biggest takeaway from that?

DJ LAGWAY: For sure, I remember that whole week it was a lot of ups and downs mentally, just figuring out what's the plan going to be, if I'm going to even be able to be out there.

But once we hit Thursday, it's time to lock in -- we've got to go get this W, doesn't really matter. Playing against a great LSU team, they were good last year. And I'm excited to go to Death Valley this year, and it's going to be fun.

Q. What were the most challenging things about getting on the field in the SEC as early in your career as you did? And what were some things maybe didn't shock you all that much about playing in the league?

DJ LAGWAY: I would say the most challenging thing was really just time management, going from being in high school and then going to SEC, big-time college football, it's a big difference. Especially where I'm from a little town, Willis, Texas, it's a big difference.

Once I got adjusted to that and adjusted to knowing the offense and knowing where my people were at, that's why I'm excited for this year because I know where my people are at. Now I can know where the defense is at and get better at that.

Q. What do you remember about that Texas A&M game? It was very early in your career last year. How much are you looking forward to this year kind of coming back home and playing in Kyle Field?

DJ LAGWAY: For sure, I'm definitely excited to go back play at Kyle Field. I've been in, like, a lot of games at Kyle Field. For me to be able to play in one that's going to be surreal, having all my family, my teammates, my classmates, my coaches, teachers all of them being at the game, it's going to be fun.

Q. As a freshman, most players don't come in thinking they have to kind of put the world on their shoulders. But when you were kind of thrust in there, that's exactly what happened.

DJ LAGWAY: For sure.

Q. I'm sure you heard some of the speculation about Coach Napier and his job status and hot-seat talk. How much did that actually impact you, and was that part of your day-to-day thinking when you were out there playing?

DJ LAGWAY: Yeah, when I'm out there playing, I'm just thinking about playing ball. I'm worried about trying to figure out, my freshman year, trying to figure out where my guys were going.

Every time I step on the field, that's when life just kind of stopped for me. It's, like, playing ball and just being just in the moment.

My biggest thing last year, I always wanted to get into some kind of flow state. Flow state is where you're just moving, it's just natural, everything happens naturally. That's where I wanted to be at every game.

Q. Jack Pyburn transferred into LSU. What kind of player is LSU getting out of him?

DJ LAGWAY: Jack Pyburn is a guy. It's going to be bittersweet playing against him. LSU is definitely getting a



heck of a player and heck of a leader.

Q. We were talking with Caleb earlier. He mentioned just how thrilling it is to get to play in front of the fans in the Swamp. A lot made of the different home-field advantages around the conference. What is it like to play in front of those fans?

DJ LAGWAY: Words can't even explain it, playing in the Swamp. The fans bring it each and every Saturday. I'm just thankful to be a part of it, and be able to be in the Swamp, and they're rooting for us and chewing us and giving us that true advantage.

Q. When we talked to Caleb, I asked him about what his thoughts were coming out of that Georgia game last year. Obviously you went down with an injury in that game. But beforehand you had a lead on them. How much confidence does that give you going into this year's match-up, one? And, two, what was that like having to sit there in the sideline and kind of watch how that game ended up unfolding?

DJ LAGWAY: For sure, it gives me a lot of confidence that, you know, it doesn't matter who really is out there. It's all about us. It's all about how we prepare and how we go out there and treat the week.

Watching that game, after I got hurt, it was the hardest thing. I hated that. I just wanted to be out there with my guys. That's all I want to do is just play football.

Seeing that, it was hard. But definitely giving me the confidence for next year to go out there and play.

Q. DJ, you got a chance to play against the Aggies last year at home. What stands out to you about A&M's defense?

DJ LAGWAY: What stands out to me about A&M's defense is just their interior pressure. They have a lot of good defensive linemen. And they had a lot of good corners, too. They had really good safety.

Really, all-around defense was really good. They have a good linebacker, Taurean York, I played against him in high school. He got the better of me, but I'm excited to play against him again this year. A great all-around great defense.

Q. Having guys like Jake and Caleb come back, having that continuity with upperclassmen, does that raise internal expectations for you, knowing the team you all have ready for this year?

DJ LAGWAY: I'd say not expectations. We're not really worried about that. We're just worried about one day at a time and just loving on each other, getting better.

That's really what it's about. And the brotherhood that we've built and the camaraderie that we have is just amazing. I'm excited just to showcase it to the world.

Q. How will Jadan Baugh play a role in the offense this season?

DJ LAGWAY: Jadan Baugh is a huge part of the offense. I'm excited for him. He's been working his tail off this offseason. He's definitely going to help us a lot this year.

Q. Aside from something like leadership, what do you think your best attribute is as a quarterback? And do you have anybody that you model yourself after at all?

DJ LAGWAY: My best attribute as a quarterback is really just -- I'd say just my, as people would say, I guess my aura, confidence, and just the way I portray myself on game day.

My teammates always joke around about, like, they say that I'm a totally different person on game day. It kind of oozes out of me. And it's just great to be able to be that for my guys.

Q. When you look around the conference at some of the other quarterbacks that are playing right now, how would you evaluate the level of play at the quarterback position in the SEC right now?

DJ LAGWAY: There's a lot of good quarterbacks in the SEC right now. It's just great to see, to be able to compete against some of them and to watch them further their careers and stuff like that down the road. I'm excited for them. Always praying for them.

Q. How do you manage the pressure of being the starting quarterback at the University of Florida, especially after the way you played last season entering this one as the starter?

DJ LAGWAY: For sure, I always say that pressure is a privilege. Once you have privilege, that means people are counting on you to do big things. I'm always excited when people say pressure. That's why I just love the game day atmosphere because it feels like all eyes are on you and you've got to put on a show. That's what I'm excited for.

Q. Along those lines, how do you internalize that pressure? Not to harp on it, but there's a lot of pressure on you specifically last season save your



coach's job. How do you handle that?

DJ LAGWAY: The way I handle pressure and all that stuff, I kind of prepare during the week like crazy. And preparation leads to confidence. So once I get to Saturday, I already know that I put all the work in and did what I needed to do.

And kudos to the coaching staff. They prepare us like crazy, Coach O'Hara and Coach Napier, they put together a plan for the quarterbacks and the team in general. When we get out there, we already know what's going to happen, dang near. So it's great.

Q. You've been very outward about your faith your entire time in your recruiting, entire time at Florida. How do you think that helps you as a leader, especially through the ups and downs of a typical football season?

DJ LAGWAY: I definitely say faith is a huge part of my life. Having God as the foundation has been wonderful, because, as you said, there's a lot of ups and downs on the football field, even in life, but having that foundation to keep me strong is beneficial.

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