

TaxSlayer Gator Bowl: Clemson vs Kentucky

Thursday, December 28, 2023

Jacksonville, Florida, USA

TIAA Bank Field

Greg McGarity

Eray Saban

Ellis Burns

Keith Powers

Logistics Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everybody. This is the Gator Bowl logistics press conference.

Let me welcome you and introduce our panel. To my left, Greg McGarity, TaxSlayer Gator Bowl; Eray Saban from ASM Global, Chief Ellis Burns from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office; and Chief Keith Powers from JFRD.

We'll take opening remarks, then we'll take some questions.

GREG McGARITY: Since this is a logistics meeting, I want to really thank especially the people at this table today for the time and effort they put into making all this happen.

I also want to thank the media for getting the word out on everything associated with the game tomorrow, from parking to traffic. We're very fortunate to have a lot of pros here today that help make it happen. We're just so fortunate to be surrounded by a lot of great people.

I'm going to let them speak and turn it over to them so they can talk about details regarding tomorrow.

ERAY SABAN: Apologies for my Australian accent (smiling).

I echo what Greg McGarity said as well. On behalf of ASM Global, we are excited to welcome back the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl back to EverBank Stadium tomorrow, both teams in Kentucky and Clemson.

I'll go through a little bit of a timeline, but of course there's always additional information that's readily available on taxslayergatorbowl.com, everbankstadium.com, and



jaxevents.com.

To kick things off, stadium parking lots will open at 7:00 tomorrow. And I won't steal Chief Ellis' thunder as it relates to mobile parking, but that is a major change for this year. Hanging parking passes are a thing of the past now. We're transitioning to mobile parking.

With that, please just make sure that the public are really aware in terms of making sure you've downloaded your mobile parking pass, you've got your screen brightness up and ready to scan once you get to your lots.

For those that haven't purchased parking yet, there is minimal parking available yet, so please purchase tonight. On the day of the event, we'll make sure there is some minimal amounts available for you to purchase accordingly.

With that, a reminder that it is fully cashless as well. So there will be no cash that will be taken at any of the lots at any stage.

If you don't have a parking plan already or parking pass, we also have the game day shuttle readily available as well. For those that are catching Uber or Lyft, we have the pickup and drop-off location at the VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena in Lot Z just adjacent to the building there.

For those more strategic and looking to park overnight tonight, we do a full audit of our lots tonight. Anybody that is parking overnight tonight, those vehicles would be towed at owner's experience.

9:00, that's when the stadium box office will open along with will call. So if you've got any ticketing questions, queries, got to collect any tickets, that's between Gates 2 and 3 at the north end of the stadium.

Shortly after that at 10:00 our stadium gates will open. With that, similar to mobile parking passes, we've got the mobile ticketing as well. Please make sure you've downloaded your passes, having them ready to scan with your brightness up as well.

Metal detection will be enforced upon entry along with the



clear bag policy. With that, please make sure that bags are smaller by 12x6x12 and clear. For those looking to bring a bag that is not clear in nature, please make sure it is smaller than 4x6, like the palm of one's hand.

Please also visit the game day website, taxslayergatorbowl.com, for a full list of prohibited items not permitted to come into the stadium.

Once you're in the stadium, there's several private parties taking place as well that some maybe familiar with. Once you're in the stadium, please make sure, for those attending those parties, that you have the proper tickets, credentials and anything else that goes hand-in-hand with that. These are separate from your game day tickets as well.

If you're not attending any of the private parties, a friendly reminder that EverBank Stadium is a cashless building as well. For those looking to spend some money at the concessions or merchandise, please make sure that you have your credit card in hand accordingly.

Excitingly, kickoff is at 12:00 for this one on ESPN, nationally broadcasted as well. Should wrap-up around 3:30, 4:00, followed by the trophy presentation postgame, then looking forward to getting everybody out of the building safely and securely as well.

With that, that pretty much sums us up from an ASM Global perspective. If at any stage throughout any of the event, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of the game day staff members across the building for any questions you may have.

Again, on behalf of ASM Global, the city of Jacksonville, we're excited to have the Gator Bowl back here and welcoming Kentucky and Clemson back to EverBank Stadium.

CHIEF ELLIS BURNS: Good morning. I'm Ellis Burns, chief of special events division for the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. Excited to partner with the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl Committee, Clemson University, University of Kentucky and the city of Jacksonville for this event.

We have a lot going on downtown this week and weekend for the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl game between the Kentucky Wildcats and Clemson Tigers, the Gator Bowl Charities 5K and One Mile Fun Run, the Jaguars and Panthers game on New Year's Eve, followed up by the fireworks display downtown at midnight on New Year's Eve.

We are committed to public safety for our community as well as everyone visiting our great city. On TaxSlayer

Gator Bowl game day, parking lot gates will open at 7 a.m. We're asking all those attending the game to arrive early to help avoid congestion.

There will be a Gator Bowl Charities 5K and One Mile Fun Run downtown Saturday morning beginning at 8:00. What this means for you is we'll be using a hold-and-release traffic pattern along the race route.

Guests who are staying at the Hyatt should use Market Street and avoid Nunan Street during the race time. Additionally, we recommend that Berkman Plaza residents use Liberty Street for arriving and departing during race time.

New Year's Eve day there will be a 1:00 Jaguars game. Parking lots open at 9:00, stadium gates at 11:00. We're asking everyone going to the game to get there early.

Last but not least, there will be a large fireworks show on the Saint Johns River New Year's Eve at midnight. Please be mindful of traffic when crossing the street and please know that we are here to help.

To our visitors, welcome. We hope you enjoy our great city.

I'll turn it to my friend Chief Keith Powers of JFRD.

CHIEF KEITH POWERS: What an exciting time this is. I know I've talked about this before, but as a child, my dad used to bring me to these games. It had an impact on me as a child. It's why I love college football today. This is a great game, Greg, that you and your team have put together. I can't wait to watch it. It's going to be exciting.

JFRD works in partnership with all the folks you see up here and their individual organizations to keep everybody safe. Part of what we're going to be doing is like at the pep rally today, we'll have staff down there if you need 'em, if somebody gets sick or needs help, reach out.

As far as the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl goes, we hope everybody has a great time at this event. We will have about 40 personnel inside the bowl during the event. If you have a need, reach out to any of the security you see or JFRD personnel.

There will be bike teams outside of the stadium patrolling that can help you if you have any need. In addition, if anybody needs a wheelchair or anything like that, we will have those, as well.

Inside the stadium, we'll have the main med room and the north med room on the main concourse.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

The last thing I'm going to say, this is very important to us up here, we want everybody that's coming to this game to have a great time, but remember, have a plan. We don't need anybody drinking and driving and getting hurt. Have a plan before you start drinking so you can safely enjoy this great game.

THE MODERATOR: With that we'll open up to some questions.

Q. Mr. Saban, there was a lot of misinformation that got out about the condition of the field in the Florida-Georgia game. I hope the accurate story eventually got told. I wanted to ask you, when was the last time the field was sodded, and what will be your comment about the condition of the field right now?

ERAY SABAN: Simply put, the field is ready to go. We did do a little bit of work on it post the last game with the Jags purely because of the end zones that were colored to make sure it presents in a professional manner. With the Gator Bowl on Friday, the Jags game on Sunday, it really ready to go.

Q. Chief Burns, this is a game, Florida-Georgia, a couple of fan bases here year in and year out. Gator Bowl you always have a couple of different fan bases. Do you find that challenging in any way as far as folks knowing where to go, the traffic patterns? Do you have extra officers out there?

CHIEF ELLIS BURNS: We still got full staffing as we would for a Jags game. We obviously stress out a lot of people here in town or visitors, please be patient. Pull up and stop and ask for directions, make sure we help with them, finding where they need to go. We'll have message boards up that will help also.

Now, with mobile parking, it helps tell you exactly where to go. That should help with the ingress for the stadium downtown.

Q. Greg, it's been a few weeks, but best you can, can you take us through waking up on bowl selection day, how you got to this matchup, FSU not making the CFP?

GREG MCGARITY: I think it shook so many things up because everyone was assuming FSU would be playing up. When that didn't happen, every bowl had to hit the reset button.

So while we knew since Ole Miss moved up, that meant that Kentucky was going to be here as the SEC team. By

process of elimination, that eliminated obviously Louisville from playing here.

It took the ACC I think a while to kind of regroup. While the pick wasn't really announced to us until about 3:45, Clemson really wasn't on our radar. Since all these things happened, they got on our radar.

We were ecstatic to be able to have them in our game. This was I think Coach Swinney's first game as a head football coach at Clemson to participate in. We're just glad to have Clemson here.

Certainly it was a stressful day, not much for us, but I think for every other bowl that was affiliated because I think Clemson pretty much knew they were going to San Diego. As a matter of fact I think they had staff en route, getting ready to go to San Diego. Those plans changed.

Certainly once the dust settled, we had two really good teams excited to be here. Needless to say, a few curve balls on that Sunday.

Q. Mr. Saban, we have gotten towards the end of a football season with the mobile parking passes. Mobile ticketing has been in the past. How would you characterize how quickly everybody picked up the mobile parking thing? Do you think the process was smoothed out as the season went on?

ERAY SABAN: It's a great question. What I'd say, it was successful. It's not from a lack of nobody playing their part, whether it was the media or the Jags or the Gator Bowl, ASM Global. Obviously our partners to the left with JSO. Everybody came together and worked really hard on a solid operational plan.

Was it perfect at the start? Absolutely not. We persevered with it as well. What we focused on is really ironing out any kinks. It's been really successful.

Again, this weekend is another learning for us that we really emphasized purely because it is not the same crowd as the Jags game. Obviously making sure we have that communication piece out there, educating the public along with our patrons coming to our game puts us in a really good stead.

Always learning with it for the future.

Q. For the chiefs, any concerns or questions about tailgating? In the past it's been discouraged in the parking lots.

CHIEF ELLIS BURNS: I don't really have anything. As



long as everyone is safe doing it, I'll defer to ASM for the parking lots and tailgating. We encourage everyone to get here early.

ERAY SABAN: For those who do tailgate at any stage, we have additional security constantly monitoring out there through CCTV or safe management on-site. It's similar with the mobile parking question, it's all done hand-in-hand with everybody to make sure it's a continued safe environment for the public.

CHIEF ELLIS BURNS: We have extra staffing on the outside for security that can help address that. No, we encourage tailgating, people come out and have a good time.

THE MODERATOR: That will conclude the logistics portion of this morning's press conferences.

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