

# Atlantic Coast Conference Football Kickoff

Wednesday, July 24, 2024  
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

## Miami Hurricanes Francisco Mauigoa

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Francisco.

**Q. As one of Miami's top defensive performers, how do you see your role in mentoring the younger players on the team?**

FRANCISCO MAUIGOA: I think part of it comes with the culture of the team. I think Coach Cristobal has held the standard high, expectations for us to meet. I think everybody buys into it.

For man-to-man, I think being around great leaders, being around great people that have the same mindset as you is really important. That's been a big factor of who I am today, just being around the people that helped me reach the goal that I want to.

**Q. You're from California. You played at Washington State. Why did you transfer to Miami? How has it been?**

FRANCISCO MAUIGOA: I'm from American Samoa. I was in California for one year. I was at Washington State for my freshman and sophomore year. I made the transition to come here to Miami.

Part of it was just the coaches. I think these guys have welcomed me very good, with open hands. Having my brother with me has been a big factor into it.

I think being able to be with family is very important. Family is very important to me, a priority. I want to make a family tradition with just being with my brother, being around great people like Coach and these guys that help uplift your spirit. Be your best player, not only your best player, but the best person you can be.

**Q. You played quarterback in high school. How does that experience in high school help you on the defensive side of the ball in college?**

FRANCISCO MAUIGOA: Grew up playing quarterback. It's been fun. I love playing quarterback. I love having the ball in my hands. I think just seeing the game different from a quarterback perspective has changed the game for me, just being able to feel what a quarterback will feel. I think that was very important for me as a linebacker because you know when a quarterback gets hit one time, two times, they kind of feel that.

For me, when I was a quarterback, I felt the same way. Just seeing the game at that perspective has been really important to transition my game at a high level.

**Q. Does that mean you're sympathetic when a quarterback gets hit?**

FRANCISCO MAUIGOA: At this point as a defensive player, not any more (smiling). Kind of got used to it.

**Q. Your eyes lit up when you started talking about family. You've been going through a lot of changes. We as media don't get a chance to know what you go through in the locker room. Talk about your core pillars as a young man and how they align with Coach Cristobal and the rest of the players in the locker room.**

FRANCISCO MAUIGOA: I mean, for me, being raised as a kid, I was taught to serve. I think this program has very similar aspects. I think coming in, I kind of just felt welcomed, immediately attached to it because the culture is pretty much the same.

The coaches are very easy to talk to. You build the relationship that will go a long way. I think having relationships with your coaches and teammates is very important because that's how you earn trust. Being able to trust your teammates and coaches, that will translate to the field and how you perform so...

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