

# Atlantic Coast Conference Football Kickoff

Thursday, July 25, 2024

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

## North Carolina Tar Heels Kaimon Rucker

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions for Kaimon.

**Q. You got a new defensive coordinator with Geoff Collins. What have you seen so far this off-season that's kind of let you know that this year will be different, a different defense from the Carolina of the past?**

KAIMON RUCKER: For starters, man, I feel like day one when he hit the room, he set a standard for us. I feel in the past, haven't really set a standard for the defense.

Doesn't matter what conference you're in, what opponents you're facing the next week, everybody has their own little thing.

The thing is with us, we didn't never established a standard, we ain't never established a bar that we need to jump over, go over. I feel like the bar he set on day one is we want to be the best defense in college football.

From that day forward, that has been the mantra of our defense the entire time. Doesn't matter if it's winter workouts, summer workouts, conditioning, fall camp. That's something we need to hang our hat on.

That is something we need to firmly believe in if we want to be the defense we need be, the best one in college football. We need to be the defense everybody talks about, not because of how many rushing or passing yards we gave up, or how we performed in the past five years.

We need to be talk about because of what we can do, the talent we have in our defense, the hard work and determination we with the guys on our side. If we can do that, we can genuinely be the best defense in college football.

**Q. To have a head coach like Mack Brown who has had so much experience, what does that mean to you to have his knowledge and wisdom on a daily basis?**

KAIMON RUCKER: I mean, first off, man, I'm getting coached by a Hall of Famer, first off. You know what I'm saying? Won a national championship. I mean, you can't just get that anywhere. There's not a lot of places that can say that. For me to say that is truly an honor and a privilege.

For him stepping into his fifth year of coaching, my fifth year of playing, for the 2020 class to be his first recruiting class coming back, that is also another honor and a privilege. I'm glad to be part of the journey just as he's on his journey, as well.

Just to be really a part of the knowledge and the wisdom that he shares with our team each and every day, team meetings, practice, outside of everything. It's just like I said, I can't say nothing because it's an honor and privilege.

This is a guy that not only has given me a shot when a lot of Power Five programs didn't offer me out of high school, he took a shot on me. Nobody else did but him. He trusted me early on. Before I even had trust in myself, he trusted me.

Just to learn from him, to grow up with him really, just to learn from him each and every day, the X's and O's of football, also life in general. Like he said it's not a four-year decision, it's a 40-year decision.

For him to set me up in life, allowing me to be the person that I am on the field, off the field, get involved with the community, utilizing NIL not only for my own purposes, helping out in the community, serving others, obviously everybody else that benefits from that as well, teaching us life lessons every single day.

For Coach Brown to still be here, still pushing it, still going hard as if he was back in his first year of coaching, man, is truly an honor and a privilege.

Coach Brown, I appreciate you for trusting me, allowing me to stay this long, and me being a part of the journey with you. I love you and appreciate you for that.



**Q. (No microphone.)**

KAIMON RUCKER: Since we're on the topic of NIL (smiling).

It was about a couple of months ago, a month ago, I went back to my hometown. This is a bunch of fifth graders at my elementary school, fifth graders that are going into the sixth grade. Anybody who has children going into the fifth grade, particularly boys, they go through a lot of bodily anatomically changes.

So I utilized my NIL. I purchased book bags, different hygienics such as deodorant, little bags of cologne. I kind of branched out with my Ruck the Butcher merch, as well. If you all feel generous as well, ruckthebutcher.com.

All jokes aside, I want to help them out with their hygienics as well. This is a very big change in their lives. I feel like there's important changes in people's lives, that's transitioning from school, transitioning to another level of K through 12, transitioning into college, and from college to the reeled world.

I utilized my NIL to help them in their first stage of their life going from essentially being a boy to a young adult, going into that level in their lives where they start holding accountability and responsibility, and of course taking care of their body along the way.

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