

University of Florida Football Media Conference

Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Gainesville, Florida, USA

Ventrell Miller

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: I think everybody really just knows we emphasize it's a big week coming up, knowing that we're 0-2 in the SEC conference. I think the guys are just motivated to go out and get that first win. We've been working extremely hard at practice to come and do that.

Q. You know in the past this team has given y'all trouble, even though you might have been the better team on paper. How important is it to get this win?

VENTRELL MILLER: It's definitely important. Like I said, the goal is to win from here on out.

It's been a different energy at practice. More people flying around. We emphasizing people to communicate more so we're on the same page.

Like I said, it's SEC Conference game, so everybody's pumped up about going out there for that one.

Q. This foot injury you have, what was your initial reaction given last season's disappointment? What did you do to get back so quickly?

VENTRELL MILLER: So I would say definitely when I first felt it, I was looking back at my last injury, thinking it was going to be a bigger deal than what it was. I was hard on myself.

But my training staff did a great job of just keeping me calm, telling me it was going to be all right, like I say, getting my rehab in and stuff like that. They did a great job with that.

Q. Did you surprise yourself with this one, that you were able to play through it the way you have?

VENTRELL MILLER: Yeah, most definitely. I was a little anxious when I went out there at Tennessee. I seen what I

could do still.

I'm going to keep putting the pads on, coming out every game week, give it my all for my teammates.

Q. Ventrell, we asked you about this, about the journey. It continues. Is it amazing? You committed in June of 2016.

VENTRELL MILLER: Yeah. Definitely a crazy journey. I think it definitely made me into the person I am today. Three different coaching staffs...

Just being able to adapt with change. Keeping the right character I fell like has took me a great way. Building my character. Patience, dealing with injuries. I feel like I wouldn't want it no other way, if you get what I'm saying.

Q. You had a nice season in '19. 2020 you led the team in tackles. You seem like you're getting better each year. How do you keep growing?

VENTRELL MILLER: I feel like there's always room for improvement, keeping that mindset, getting better with the little things. Like, the little things are easy to do, but even easier not to do it. I know Inky Johnson came in and said that.

I feel like keying in on those little things, like I say, keeping the mind there is always room for improvement, getting better each and every day. Not taking it for granted. I've been hurt. Just come out and try to get better each and every day.

Q. What about this fundraising effort?

VENTRELL MILLER: Like I say, just with NIL I thought that I could help out some of the communities that need help. I think I have the platform for that. Jumping out there.

I'm a little new to it so I was a little anxious at first. Just diving out into it. Just trying to bring, like, help to the community. That's my big goal for doing that.

Q. How hard was Lakeland?

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VENTRELL MILLER: Lakeland didn't get hit too hard, I would say. A lot of rain and wind and stuff. For my foundation, we're just promoting it to the down south, people who got hit the most. That's who we are donating all the funds to, those people.

Q. When did you start your foundation?

VENTRELL MILLER: My foundation is kind of new. Just like two, three days ago. This is our first program we're setting up for.

Q. Who was in your ear and said to start something?

VENTRELL MILLER: My brother has been on me about that. He's really been on me about doing the whole thing about my foundation, thinking it was a good idea just to support people with the money I do get to help out.

Q. Do you have friends and family from down south that got affected?

VENTRELL MILLER: Oh, yeah, most definitely. Players on the team that got impacted hard, families got impacted hard. I just seen that and I felt like it was a need to give back to some of those people.

Q. What did you think when you saw some of the devastation on TV?

VENTRELL MILLER: Just seeing it, those people got impacted hard. Flooded, houses lost, all different kinds of things those people are going through. I felt some type of way for them. I felt like it was my job to try to come do something to help.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: Yeah, basically not again. That's what I'm thinking in my head.

I say, I just think I showed the resiliency to keep coming out. Like I say, my team pushes me to go hard every day. I think that's the people I do it for.

Q. Talking about your Tennessee week, was there ever a doubt in your mind you weren't going to play?

VENTRELL MILLER: I felt like deep down, I always wanting to play. Like I say, dealing with the injury before, I didn't really know what was going on. Like I say, it was close to a game day decision for me. Probably that Friday I made a decision I was going to play, so yeah.

Q. Where have you improved the most physically and then mentally?

VENTRELL MILLER: I know it's something we emphasize is just being a four-deep player, knowing what you're doing, the other guys are doing, executing everything, knowing what the offense is doing. I think that has been my biggest thing thus far.

Q. In terms of physically? You've cut down to 225. What is the most you played with here? You look faster.

VENTRELL MILLER: I think the heaviest I been is 230. I'm still around that range, so yeah.

Q. Where have you improved physically, strength-wise, explosion-wise over the years?

VENTRELL MILLER: Most definitely. I had some spectacular strength staff just being here. Coach Savage, Coach Hoke now. They've done an extremely job preparing me, getting me ready, every year faster.

I know they emphasize speed when Coach Hoke first came in. They definitely got me on speed.

Q. What is it like seeing guys you've kind of mentored around helped along the way playing for...

VENTRELL MILLER: I think it just brings more fuel to the fire. I hated to see him go. Rival team, I think it just brings more fuel. Just to show up and dominate, so...

Q. Hopper, is he surprising you?

VENTRELL MILLER: That's my boy. Like I say, even though he's at Missouri, I still have a good relationship with him. Talked to him this week actually. Told him to donate to my foundation (smiling). He told me he was. I got to wait to see if he did.

Yeah, that's my boy. That's my boy. Like I say, just seeing him how he's developed, just happy for him and want him to keep going.

Q. The defense plays different when you're out there. Do you kind of sense that? How much do you sense the importance of you to the defense?

VENTRELL MILLER: My teammates really don't let me forget how big of an impact I am out there whenever they see me. Where you at? We need you out there.

I think my teammates do a great job of letting me know that



I'm a key factor when I'm out there.

Q. What percentage were you against Tennessee?

VENTRELL MILLER: Like I say, I couldn't even tell you. It was like a numbing shot so you don't really feel it when you're out there. I would say without the numbing, I would say 60, 70. I'd say 70.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: Yeah, that's the goal. Fly around every play. I'm just trying to get him out of bounds, I say.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: Nothing crazy. Nothing crazy.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: Yes, yes. Heck yeah (smiling).

Q. You are a traffic cop for the whole team in there. How do you keep your own self straight yet you're responsible for getting everybody else where they got to be as well?

VENTRELL MILLER: I think that just goes back to what I was talking about, being a four-deep player, taking pride in getting everybody lined up.

I say, it's not an easy thing to do. Taking pride, doing extra studying to get that done, just knowing the scheme in and out I say helps me.

Q. Are you a four-deep player?

VENTRELL MILLER: I would say. Like I say, having that mindset, there's always improvement. I'm working towards it, yet.

Q. (No microphone.)

VENTRELL MILLER: Coach Bateman has done a great job. Coach PT. Even Amari Burney, he knows the system in and out. Even he helps me sometimes.

Thank you, guys.

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