

# University of Florida Football Media Conference

Monday, November 7, 2022  
Gainesville, Florida, USA

## Antwaun Powell-Ryland Jr. Press Conference



**Q. (Indiscernible) talk of the town now. Did you expect this?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: No, not really. I mean, coming in, I know I had to play my role. So it was kind of -- it came with it.

**Q. Were there nerves, butterflies coming in? Take us through there.**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Not really, because I've been playing all season. So I mean, being a starter, just going out there first.

**Q. You guys have rallied a few times in SEC games but not finished. How big was it to close one of those?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: It was big because that just shows how much we got -- that just shows what we can do. And I know we'll be able to do that for four quarters.

**Q. The strip sack, what you saw there and how you were able to do it.**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: So, it was -- I felt it was a mismatch with me and the guard. So I slammed in, made a move on him and get a sack.

**Q. How did that feel to make that kind of play in that kind of moment?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: It felt real good. Very good.

**Q. What is it going to take, do you think, for you guys to play a full game of defense the way you did the second half against the Aggies?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I just feel like we just need to come in from the jump, pumped up, riled up, because at halftime we had to get right with each other. We had to get each other -- we had to get together, talk to

each other, make sure we was good, like let's go. We knew coming in we could win. We could beat these guys.

**Q. What's this senior class meant to you?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: The senior class means a lot. Every last one of them. They touched me every way. Coming in, it was no problem. They all welcomed me in. Ventrell, (indiscernible), all those guys, wonderful guys.

**Q. There's been maybe one or two, you mentioned those two, have they been the main mentors, who have you looked up to among those guys?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Ventrell Miller for sure, he's the heart of the team, for sure. I tried to pick up from whatever I can get from him to try to help him out, make his job easier.

**Q. What stands out to you about him? Just watching a couple of those plays out on the flat the other day, just his relentlessness, but what's --**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Everything he does he works hard at it. He's going to tell you that he's working hard. He's going to show up.

**Q. You mentioned going into halftime understanding what you guys needed to do. And Billy said the same thing, that you guys took that upon yourselves. Do you feel as though the defense maybe kind of turned a corner there in terms of communication with one another?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I feel like in the second half we kind of -- we were more together more. We started talking more. We was pumping each other up every play, every series and all that.

**Q. In the locker room, at halftime, who was the one who just grabbed you by the lapels and said, "We've got to change?"**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: The whole defense.



Ventrell, especially, he sent a hard message telling us let's go. Like we can deal with these guys, like we can really shut them out.

**Q. He's kind of a quiet guy when he's in front of us. How is he in the locker room and at half? Does he get pretty fired up?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Oh, yeah, for sure. He's fired up, especially when it's not going the way it's supposed to go.

**Q. Billy called him an alpha after the game. Have you noticed any other, maybe even young players step up as an alpha in that sense?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I want to say, I know, like, Shemar is a really good player. He's really got the potential to be very good. I feel like if he just keep working, following Ventrell's footsteps he would be.

**Q. How did you find out about Britton (phonetic) last week and who was the first person who said, okay, this is basically your chance for more?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Coach Peterson, he was telling me that basically he was just like get ready to play because he said he knew I was ready. But it was just a matter of time when I was going to go.

**Q. Did you think you were ready?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Yes, I knew I was ready. I mean, I don't ever say I'm not ready. I'm always ready whenever.

**Q. Once the game was over, did you feel, not that you doubted going in, but did you feel validated and a way even more confident in a way?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Confident for sure. I'm even more confident for sure. (Indiscernible), when I got it, kind of gave me something that wanted to make me work harder. I guess that's a good thing.

**Q. Where would you like to see your game improve?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Everything. I feel like I'm not where I'm supposed to be right now, as far as, I mean, anything -- setting the edge, pass rushing. I feel like I can get better in everything.

**Q. Last game in The Swamp this season. What do you expect? Sounds like it's sold out. Just how important is it for you guys to send the seniors out with a win?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: It's very important to send the seniors out hard with a good one, a very good one, just to show them how we appreciate them. We can definitely get this win.

**Q. Have the issues on defense been more between the ears or physical, do you think?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I feel it's just the communication. I feel like we don't -- at times we don't communicate enough.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Dorian Finney-Smith he plays for the Dallas Mavericks. He actually went here and played basketball.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: We're from the exact same place. I watched him play basketball growing up at the high school we went to.

**Q. Did it have an effect on you? Did him coming here have an impact?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I mean, seeing him come here, yeah. But of course like he -- of course he's rooting for me. He supported me as -- wherever I wanted to go because it wasn't just about this. But he of course this is his school. He really wanted me to come here.

**Q. He's probably 10 years older than you. Did you guys ever play pickup basketball together?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: No. I don't think I want that anyway. (Laughter).

**Q. Did you ever play basketball with Booze (phonetic) AAU team there?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: No, I never played AAU basketball.

**Q. Were you surprised at how well he's done?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: No, not at all. I feel like he can do even more. He's just getting warmed up.

**Q. Do you have any contact with him now?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Sometimes. We talk here and there, not really too much. He's got stuff going

on. Of course I do too.

**Q. I was going to do (indiscernible) the (indiscernible). You're only 20 miles from Virginia Beach.**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: It's not that far. Percy Harvin -- Percy Harvin, he went here. I remember growing up hearing about him a lot.

**Q. Allen Iverson (indiscernible)?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Yeah, for sure. He was at Bethel.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I remember -- I know Bruce Smith was at Norfolk.

**Q. How do you guys as a defense kind of bottle what you did in the second half and carry it through for the rest of the season, do you think?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I feel like we can definitely build off this. I feel like that we -- this should be a turning point to what we showed we could do it. Now it's just the fact of doing it every time. And I feel like now that we see it on film, we've got no choice but to do it.

**Q. You had a chance to go to Ronald McDonald House, and what have you got from those experiences being able to give back?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Being able to be with kids that, like, families that's going through things and try to make their life better just by me coming in, I'd do that any day. So that's easy. It's not really a challenge for me.

**Q. Do you get some self-gratification out of it to see the faces light up when they see Florida Gators?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: You play for the Gators, it's a big deal. That's not really -- I'll go in there any day, chill with the families.

**Q. You've been able to watch on TV -- what do you see when you see Spencer Rattler, South Carolina quarterback?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I feel like he's a mobile quarterback. He likes to run. I remember playing against him in the bowl game against Oklahoma. He's a pretty good quarterback. I feel like we can get him, though.

**Q. How strange is it you played a guy in the bowl**

**game at another school and now you're playing him again in conference play?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: It is crazy, how that works.

**Q. Does it leave a bad taste in your mouth from the game last year?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: You said from last year?

**Q. The South Carolina game last year.**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: Oh, yeah, I feel like we've got to come -- like they're coming to us. So we've got to deal with -- they've got to deal with us as well as we've got to deal with them.

**Q. (Indiscernible) Spencer Rattler from that bowl game?**

ANTWAUN POWELL-RYLAND JR: I mean, I'm thankful that we get to see him again. He's a good player. So I want to play against a quarterback like that. So we'll see.

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