

University of Florida Football Media Conference

Monday, November 7, 2022
Gainesville, Florida, USA

Montrell Johnson Jr.

Press Conference



Q. You had a hundred yards. How good did it feel in the second half when you guys just are pounding away and you know you're going to get the yards every time you carry?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Felt really good going out there, playing in front of all those people and felt really good to finally come out with a win and do what I know that we were capable of doing. It felt good playing out there.

Q. How important was it to finish a game like that?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: It was very important for the program because we have a lot of -- we had a lot of downsides. It was important for us to get going here and finish out the season strong.

Q. What's the frustration level when you rally against like three very good teams and just can't close the deal and then you finally do?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I would say, like, the frustration level was really high because we knew that we had the talent in the room to do it. We knew we had the players to put it all together we've just got to keep champing at the bit and keep getting better.

Q. You hear sometimes running backs, they kind of want more to get in a rhythm but there's also a durability issue. How do you feel about that because I guess that was a lot of carries for you?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: It really didn't seem like a lot of carries in the moment. But the next day I felt it. My body was really sore. But I'm glad the coaching staff kept coming to me. I felt the rhythm late in the game and helped the team win.

Q. How do you feel like the rhythm is going now with you and Trevor (inaudible) seems like you guys are the guys. What's it been like for you?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I would say the rhythm has

been going great between us. Trevor is a great player. He's going to be great in the future. And he's great now. I think that going future in the season that we're going to continue to get better, continue to break those long runs that the fans want to see and we're going to be grateful to Gator football.

Q. Couple of Louisiana guys, any tips to share with them? Is there a bond that's growing between these two guys?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Trevor kind of gets complacent sometimes. I tell him he's got to stay focused. He's still young. I'm young as well but I'm a little ahead of him. But I always tell him he's got to stay focused and take things step by step, day by day.

Q. How do you guys complement each other as running backs? Where do you feel your two skill sets combine to make you guys such a good tandem?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I think our two skill sets combine really well because he's a very shifty guy. I call myself a hard-nosed guy. I get the dirty yards sometimes in the long run sometimes. He's the guy that does, makes guys miss. You know what I mean, shifting, like you said.

Q. Has the togetherness and the culture of this team improved over the course of the season so far?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: It's improved a lot. I think the adversity we've faced in the season has brought us together a lot because of that. We've just focused on staying together and play ball that we know we could play, you know what I mean? That's really what all it takes. It takes for us to play team ball and come out with a win.

Q. (Inaudible) on the field?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Jaware (phonetic)? Just like in hard games, like, close games, that's when he shows up. It targets like our togetherness, how hard we're going to respond, how we're going to stay together at times, that's when it shows up.

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Q. (Indiscernible) after the game said that you and Trevor -- that he is starting to see a little bit of the identity of this team based on kind of the way you played. Have you guys talked about that? Is this like what you guys were trying to become? That you guys represented the identity of what he's trying to do here on offense, offensively, run the ball, and physically beat teams up, things like that?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I don't.

Really know the answer to the question.

Q. You guys were trying to --

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: We're trying to become a team that runs the football, that beat up teams, that worked on teams throughout the game. And I get what you're saying, that's become our identity. And we're slowly becoming that.

Q. What's it like running behind O'Cyrus?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: It's great, man. He opens up the holes for me. Makes it easy for me. Gets me to the second level. Gets me to the guys I gotta make miss, you know what I mean. It's just easier on me.

Q. You're a New Orleans guy and Trevor is a West Louisiana guy. Have you indoctrinated him in the culture of New Orleans maybe?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Trevor thinks his culture is better than my culture. I never knew what (inaudible) was until I met Trevor. He thinks that their food is better than New Orleans food. And I always tell him that it's not. We always argue about it and play about it.

Q. Do you get care packages from mom?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I need to, though. I'm going to place an order in.

Q. What is the difference between the cuisines?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I don't know, really, but all I know is New Orleans is better.

Q. Billy called Saturday a pivotal day for Anthony. He's now gone three games without a turnover. What have you seen behind the scenes in terms of his confidence or maybe it just clicking?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I've just seen him approach practice with more confidence. He's very -- how can I say

this? He's more, like, shaking to the program, if you know what I mean. He's gotten more comfortable in the program since he's played a couple of games. He knows the offense a little bit better.

And you can see him growing throughout games. And he's going to be great. We need him back another year.

Q. You have the same position coach, same head coach and pretty much the same system. What's changed about the way you're running this year versus last year? Is it different keys or is it just year two of the same old, same old for you?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Year two, I see we're trying to pass the ball more than run the ball. I kind of like that because it takes off the running game. The defenses have had to spread the box out and account for everyone that's on the offense. And I enjoy that.

Q. Working with Seibel (phonetic) last year and getting to know him, did he talk to you much as a freshman before you came over here?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I ain't gonna lie, my freshman year, I was a quiet guy. I didn't really know many people. I just stayed in my lane. I just did what the coaches told me to do. And I was just trying to get on the field and be great.

Q. (Inaudible)?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Cam Wicks (phonetic). Cam Wicks came first and I came second. And O'Cyrus was the last one.

Q. (Indiscernible) got over here?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: With O'Cyrus? I was just glad he came because I didn't know he was going to come or not. He was playing games. He was taking his visits and stuff like that. I didn't know he was going to come. I was really happy he came.

Q. Based on all the (indiscernible) and stuff, he's having a great season. Does he look like a lot better player this year than last year or is he just a hard profile?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I think he's gotten better in his off-the-field things like nutrition. I think he's done well in that. He's very disciplined with that. He always eats salads at lunch, stuff like that. And I just think he's overall got better at his pass blocking as well and run blocking. I think he's getting better throughout his career.

Q. You guys had such a good comeback against Tennessee and it was close. You had the LSU, you came back on them. Georgia, you had a great second half. Is there a feeling among you guys that, look, we can play with anybody if we just get it, if we just get it together between the ears?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Yeah, most definitely. We feel like we can play with anyone in the nation. We've just got to tie the things together, put it piece by piece. Put the pieces into place and we've got to continue to play team football. And that's the main key.

Q. What's it going to take to get there?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: Team football. It's going to be the main focus. D has to play along with the offense. We've got to be one. Defense can't have -- defense can have a good game and the offense have a bad game. We've all got to have a good game, play together as one and complement each other. That's what it's going to take.

Q. The offensive line has been strong in the run game but the wide receivers have been great perimeter blocking. What have you seen from that group, how important have they been to help you guys go out?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: I've seen they've taken on the challenge to go block the safeties. I appreciate them for doing that because it can be hard at times. And I can see that they took on the challenge and they're doing great at that.

Q. Block on Anthony's 60-yard run. (Inaudible) - on that zone replay you carried out the fake so long that the backside safety, even while Anthony is going off the other end, he's coming up off the opposite end to try to tackle you and you don't have the ball. How much did they emphasize not just carrying it off for a second, but you carried it for like two and a half, three seconds?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR.: My running back coach always -- he always preached that we have to run the ball -- act like we have, run the ball like as if we do. And that's what I think I did on that run right there. It helped Anthony out a lot.

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