

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Anthony Richardson

Press Conference



Q. Florida State, what's this game mean to you? What did it mean to you growing up in Gainesville, just the rivalry?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: It's a rival game, a big game for the city of Gainesville, a big game for the University of Florida. We've got to bring it this week.

Growing up, I always heard about Florida State. I always heard about the Gators. A lot of people trying to pull you to one side or another, but it's a big game for the state of Florida as well. Definitely got to bring it this week.

Q. Any memories, a game, one that sticks with you?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I do have some memories, not great ones, you know, especially me playing for the University of Florida. I remember watching Dalvin Cook just go crazy against the Gators almost every year. So that's probably one of the biggest memories I have.

Q. Were you at that game?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: No. Actually, I think we did like a watch party or something like that at one of my friends' house, and we watched it and just screaming at the TV, just heartbroken all the time.

Q. How would you evaluate your performance from Saturday as a runner? Do you feel like you took advantage of opportunities like the way you should have on the ground?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I know there were times I could have pulled the ball and probably ran backwards into the end zone. I didn't realize until after I handed the ball off. Especially when it comes to RPOs and reads and stuff like that, sometimes you can misjudge the way defenses play at you or the way you're supposed to attack the defense.

So I think there were times I could have did it, but it's in the past now. I can't do anything about it now.

Q. What do you take away from that, though? What did you learn maybe?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: Whenever there's an opportunity for me to take the ball and run, I've just got to do it because I can potentially help the offense. That's what I took away from it.

Q. The way you guys come back on Tennessee, on LSU, and Vanderbilt and so forth like that, and even Georgia in the fourth quarter, does it get a little frustrating to know that you guys are capable of playing with and beating anybody and yet you've got five losses?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: It's not frustrating. It shows what we're capable of doing when we actually want to go out there and attack the game how we're supposed to. That's the day we go and just letting the foot off the gas a little bit. It's just eye opening for us and just lets us know we've got to go harder every time.

Q. What's it been like dealing week to week with different receivers being hurt?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: It's been a blessing getting guys in there, building their confidence, help them catching the ball, help them get acclimated to the game, how fast everything goes. So it's been pretty good. Just working with them, connecting with them, and just working like we've been doing since the off-season.

Q. We heard a lot about Daejon from the spring and then had a good camp, finally got his chance. What did you think of the way he performed?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I didn't expect anything less from him. He's a great player, great guy, one of my best friends on the team. Just him being out there able to show what he's capable of doing, I was happy for him.

I was definitely happy for him that he scored the touchdowns for us and got the yards that he did for us, helped us move the ball. So I was definitely proud of him.

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Q. From a momentum standpoint, just for the whole program, how important is it to beat Florida State this week? Especially given how fans are so disappointed after the Vandy game.

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: A lot of people are disappointed, but it comes with the sport. You win some, you lose some. Even though we don't want to lose, it happens if you're not on top of your A-game. So things like that happen.

But momentum is always something that we try to work towards, always try to put something in our favor when it comes to momentum. We try to win every game. So we're not really focused on who we're playing because that can really alter your mind, what you're thinking about when it comes to the game plan and stuff like that.

So we just try to focus on winning the game. When we win this one, it's definitely going to build momentum for us.

Q. What are some of the conversations like between the team and maybe the coaching staff about this game being on Friday? Is that a distraction or something you guys have discussed just because of how much it affects the preparation?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: It's not really a distraction for us. It's just a quicker turnaround for us. We have the same game prep, schedule. It's just bumped up a little bit. So nothing has really changed for us.

Q. Ideal Thanksgiving plate -- go.

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: Honestly it depends on who's cooking. If my grandma is cooking, I want everything she's making. If my mom's cooking, I want everything she's making.

But I've got to have macaroni and cheese, some ribs, some chicken, some collard greens, cabbage. I'm a big guy, so I like to eat a little bit.

Q. What's the plan for the team? Are you guys going to eat here or go back with your families, or what are you going to do on Thursday?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: We actually had a couple of gatherings with our coaches last week, just an early Thanksgiving for us because we knew with the game being on a Friday that we weren't going to have time to go spend time with our families.

I'm pretty sure we'll have like a Thanksgiving meal

Thursday night for us at the hotel. We're kind of already ahead of the game with that.

Q. You turning pro? Just kidding. Have you ever played at Doak Campbell?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I haven't. I'm excited. First game there. I'm just ready to put on a show.

Q. Billy, I asked him about just kind of the rush to judgment fans make, with you obviously too, but just with the program's direction. What's your big picture view of where things are headed under Billy Napier?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: Coach Nape has a great plan, a great scheme. He's a great coach. I don't have any negative judgments towards him. Just knowing him for the past year and what he's capable of doing, I trust him fully.

I don't blame the fans and the supporters for the way they feel because University of Florida once was a great program football-wise, even academically. So they're holding us to a higher standard, so we've got to hold ourselves to that standard as well. With Coach Napier, I feel like everything will get back on course.

Q. You said last week that you're not thinking about going pro at the moment. You're going week by week. In this era with the opportunities that could be handed to a player to come back and you compare that to the opportunities to go to the NFL, how difficult is that to balance in a player like your shoes?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I think it could be difficult. It could bring a lot of pressure on a person, but it's honestly up to them and their judgment and what they want to do regarding their future.

They got to have a lot of talks with their family and just consider everything that's happened. Sometimes you've got to be selfish and see what's on the table, but I think it's just up to the person and their judgment.

Q. On the subject of pressure, how do you think you've learned handling pressure and handling adversity this season? What have you learned maybe about yourself?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: I learned a lot about pressure and adversity this year. I'm glad I went through it because it just made me a better person. I'm a better son, better brother, better teammate, just everything regarding adversity.

Pressure, the only time we do have pressure is when you



put it on yourself because, if you worry about what everybody else is thinking about you and what they want you to do, that can make things harder for you. But just staying true to yourself and understanding who you are and what you are, it just makes it easier for the pressure to go away.

Q. A lot of aspects to Billy's plan that you mentioned. What would you say maybe one tenet of that plan that gives you the most faith that things are going to end up -- this program is going to end up being a national power again?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: He says it all the time. He says great people make great football players. So with him, recruiting great people, whether that's on the staff or just us as players.

I feel like he's on point with everything. He knows what he wants. He knows what he's going to get. So trust in him and understand he's going to have great people around here, just so much time until great things start to happen.

Q. How have you seen yourself improve? You talked about being a better brother, teammate, son, et cetera, like that. What specifically -- was there a specific moment, something that was said that made you give some insight to who you are and how you could be better?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: A lot of things honestly. Just going back to the Kentucky game, just talking to my teammates and my coaches and them just telling me I need to just go back to having fun and just being myself, that's one thing.

Just thinking hard about that and understanding where I kind of veered off from that, it kind of put it in perspective and made me understand how much pressure I was putting on myself instead of just being in the moment, living in the moment, instead of trying to live up to other people's standards. That was one thing.

And I always remember this, staying true to my heart. My old QB coach in high school, he always told me before every game, a happy ant is a dangerous ant. So just me being happy and enjoying life, I'm dangerous whenever things do happen.

Q. You're a happy ant?

ANTHONY RICHARDSON: Yeah, definitely.

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