

University of Florida Football Media Conference

Sunday, July 30, 2023
Gainesville, Florida, USA

Jaydon Hill Press Conference



Q. How was the summer?

JAYDON HILL: The summer was great. I feel like we made great progress as a team, and me individually, I feel like I've accomplished a lot of goals as far as for myself.

Q. What were your goals for the summer?

JAYDON HILL: Really with my body and numbers, as far as like my weight, I gained a couple pounds of muscle, and like my numbers in the weight room are pretty good.

Q. Obviously the defense is coming off a pretty impressive showing in the spring game. What kind of momentum do you think you can carry over from that from Austin Armstrong in terms of this fall?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, from spring we've just got to keep building on it, and in fall we plan on putting it all together and sharpening it for the season.

Like you said, yeah, we just plan on building on that starting tomorrow.

Q. What are you seeing from Princely?

JAYDON HILL: Leadership and just domination. Just every play, just trying to make something happen. Princely has just been -- what I've really been seeing is just consistency with Princely, too, not just on the field but just like in the meeting rooms and just in the locker room and stuff like that.

Q. What's this defense going to allow?

JAYDON HILL: To make plays. It's going to make all of us better. The more disruption he causes, the better we are in the back end. We're all tying together.

Q. With Corey Raymond now taking over the entire defensive backfield, have you seen a difference in the level of communication between basically your front end and your back end, or just what impression has he

made now that he's controlling basically all five positions?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, I will say as a whole, we are tighter, as one. We're all on the same page to an extent. We're all one to an extent. There's no separation. We communicate well, and I feel like our communication on the field has gotten way better.

Q. How is the move inside going?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, pretty good. I've been actually doing pretty good. I like it a lot. I plan on making a lot of plays there this fall.

Q. What's different about this team compared to a year ago?

JAYDON HILL: I would say the togetherness.

Q. How so?

JAYDON HILL: Just everybody -- I feel like we're closer as a team this year, if that makes sense. Like outside of the facility, we're all together and we're all kicking and have fun together.

Q. Billy has talked about the importance of that going into year two, or Coach Napier. Could you speak to a little bit of where you've seen it just across the board for this team and how far it can take you guys?

JAYDON HILL: For instance, something that we do that's big with Coach Napier, we do "know your teammates" and you randomly get questions and you've got to know what's his name and what's his hometown and he puts a lot of emphasis on that. Really we've took it upon ourselves to get to know each one another. I feel like it just makes the team closer and you play better just because like the person beside you, you really know him, and in the heat of the moment what he's about, basically.

I feel like this year like in the locker room, everybody is just getting along, everybody is talking. There's no really -- like just clicks. We're all one to an extent.



Q. How seriously does he take the get to know?

JAYDON HILL: Like super serious. You get points docked off for not knowing your team -- like with the off-season, I don't know if you've been seeing it and stuff like that, but you get points docked for not knowing your teammate or where he's from, even other staff members in the building. You have to know their name and where they're from.

Q. How are you at that?

JAYDON HILL: Good. I got a nine out of ten. I missed a coach. I missed Coach Peera. I just didn't know his -- I just knew Coach P., but I just missed it.

Q. What are you seeing from Eugene Wilson?

JAYDON HILL: Explosiveness. I could see his play making ability early on. He has like a -- he's kind of been a little limited right now, but like as far as just watching him go, I've matched up with him a couple of times. He definitely can go, and he's going to make a lot of plays for us.

Q. You said you got nine out of ten on the familiarity. How does that work?

JAYDON HILL: They list 10 players on the -- you'll be in a room by yourself with a coach and they'll have 10 faces pop up on the screen and you get a couple seconds to answer.

Q. Did you miss Mike Peterson?

JAYDON HILL: No, no, somebody in -- no, I know Mike P.

Q. If he's not satisfied, does he make you redo it?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah. I wasn't on the first week, but the first week all the scores was kind of low and he made everybody redo it. I think somebody got like a four out of ten and he was not happy.

Q. Has Coach Napier's face ever appeared there and anybody gotten it wrong?

JAYDON HILL: I haven't seen Coach Napier and I don't think anybody has.

Q. Ricky Pearsall kind of cut his body fat down to, he said, 8 percent. He looks real lean. What are you seeing from him, and what do you expect from him?

JAYDON HILL: I expect Ricky to just keep doing what he's

doing, just dominating. Ricky takes a lot of pride in his work ethic. Ricky is always that guy, he's going to be working after practice, before practice. He takes a lot of pride in his game and in his body. We know he's going to go out and dominate.

Q. Have you noticed a different in him this year?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, just his approach. Not that he wasn't serious about it last year, but his approach this year, it's like his last one, and you can tell all his chips are in.

Q. What's going to make the defense different this season in your mind?

JAYDON HILL: Me, I would say just being aggressive and running to that ball. That's probably the most intimidating thing. All 11 to the ball at one time is like -- it's a scary sight. Everybody is just celebrating together after a play. That right there is like the main thing right there I feel like.

Q. How about Graham Mertz as a leader; would you talk about that?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, Graham has been doing a good job leading us. Graham is actually on my off-season team, and he's been doing a good job just making sure everybody is where they're supposed to be, doing what they're supposed to do, and then just for the team, Graham has gotten up, he's spoken to us as far as just being a leader, and everybody, they listen. Graham has a lot of respect from us as players.

Q. Is he a good communicator you would say?

JAYDON HILL: Yes, sir, for sure.

Q. We don't get to see expectations this low for a team in Gainesville very often. How motivating is that, and can it be a good thing for a program?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, for sure. We talk about it all the time, us players in the locker room. We see the doubt and all that, and every day that's kind of how we approach our work, we just come with a chip on our shoulder every day and we just plan to get better.

I really feel like we're going to shock a lot of people this year as far as the standard is so low right now.

Q. Are you surprised when you see Gators picked fifth in the east, things like that?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, it kind of like -- it blows my mind a little bit, but then again, we've just got to win games. It just



comes down to winning.

Q. Why do you think you can surprise some people?

JAYDON HILL: Because the bar is so low. They can't know what we've got in the locker room. I really feel like we're going to shock a lot of people. We've got a lot of great players in the locker room and a lot of great coaches.

Q. Last time we saw you Coach Armstrong was on a crash course getting to know things. Have things slowed down for him from what you've seen and what kind of resource has he been for you?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, so in the spring Coach Armstrong just getting here, he's kind of new, and everybody -- we didn't really have that relationship with him as we do now. I guess like now we're just more comfortable because Coach Armstrong, he coaches my position basically like the star position, and over time our relationship has just gotten stronger.

For other players, too, he constantly checks in and just makes sure off the field you're okay. I feel like he's done a good job of just building relationships with players, and that goes a long way with the players.

Q. What does he do at the beginning of team meetings? We saw in the YouTube show that you guys put out, you all get up and greet each other.

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, so he's big on outing yourself to the team, so that basically means when we break it down on the clap just, get up and you clap a few people's hands and just talk for like a good minute, and then we sit back down and we lock in.

Q. (Indiscernible).

JAYDON HILL: He makes a good point. I feel like that just goes back to like knowing your teammates and what Coach Napier preaches a lot. I really feel like that makes us closer as a unit and just being to yourself, not just being silent in the meeting room but talking to your peers around you.

Q. He started that; you didn't do that last year?

JAYDON HILL: No, he started that, yes, sir.

Q. Is that kind of a unique approach, you watch film and you do walk-through, come back, watch film, do walk-through? Is it different the way he does it?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, but for a lot of us, it helps a lot

because a lot of us need to walk through it. It's way easier just watching it on this board and sitting down like oh, yeah, go here, but when you're out there on the field and you can see it on the flat surface, it helps people understand it way better.

Q. Does it keep guys' attention more because I could see sitting through film for 30, 40 minutes you start dozing off, looking through your phone, whatever?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, like a lot of guys like myself, I feel like I'm a little bit ADHD and I've got to go be out there and visualize it myself. And for a lot of players, too, a lot of players -- he makes sure that it works for us, and like he's not going to do nothing that we don't feel like helps us.

He does a good job of just asking for feedback, and we let him know, yeah, we love it, the walk-throughs.

Q. Did he explain why he wants to do it that way?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, because it's better for us to see it. Like basically in front of us instead of just watching it on the screen, we can go down and walk through it.

Q. When it comes to vocal leadership, Justus Boone seems to be one of the louder guys out there. Is he that way all the time?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, Boone is real enthusiastic with his work. He's very passionate about his game. Boone does a good job of leading.

Q. What's the most fun you guys had as a team this summer?

JAYDON HILL: The most fun, I don't know. We have balls every day. Well, a lot of the times we have a lot of fun. I probably would say after spring practice one time we all just went to the courts and hooped. There was no set day. I can't think of it. We all were just at the courts hooping one day after spring practice, and it was real fun.

Q. Who's the best player?

JAYDON HILL: I mean, I can get a couple buckets myself, but we do got some real hoopers. I would say probably Tony Livingston. Tony can hoop.

Q. You look a little stronger; is that part of preparing for the star position, the physicality of it, or how is that process going for you?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, I would say yeah, I'm a little bit closer, like in the box or whatever, so I gained a couple

pounds.

But I would say really just having a full off-season to really just focus on myself and just getting my body right, and the results just will come with it, just with the work I put in.

Q. Physically is this as good as you've been? How do you feel?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, this is probably the best I've felt in a minute, just because like I said, this is one of my first full off-seasons in a minute, just without an injury or anything. Just keep building on top of that.

Q. What do you expect from the battle for the cornerback position opposite Jason?

JAYDON HILL: We've got a couple of guys here that can go. With D-Mo coming back from his injury, I feel like he's going to be out there. Jalen Kimber had a big spring. With Ja'Keem, we got Dijon just came in, but we got a couple of guys that can go in there, and I look forward to all them guys in there contributing. I'm sure they will.

Q. There are not many battles in the team that seem to be as deep as that one.

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, it'll be pretty interesting to see. Yeah, it'll be a good one.

Q. How much time did you spend in the pool over there?

JAYDON HILL: I got in the pool like two or three times. I'm more of a -- I get in the hot tub. I contrast; I get in the hot tub, cold tub. You're talking about the fun pool out there? I don't really get in that one much. I've gotten in there like twice. We got in it the other day after a workout. I got in. It was pretty fun.

Q. What are your thoughts on R.J. Moten and being able to add a guy from a playoff team basically to the secondary?

JAYDON HILL: R.J. is my guy. I feel like he made our secondary better on the day he arrived with just like how he approaches it. He's very smart in the film room, and he understands.

He knows we have a lot of doubt, and he plans on coming in and helping us win games.

Q. Did you have to be talked into moving to star?

JAYDON HILL: Not necessarily. It was more so mutual

agreement with just like a team need and a fit. I feel like it fit me to do it, and I plan on getting it done.

Q. Have you had conversations with Chauncey Gardner-Johnson? I know he's been around every now and then. Have you talked with him about the transition to star made for him?

JAYDON HILL: Yeah, so Chauncey actually helped recruit me here. Chauncey is my guy. We communicate pretty often.

I told him in spring when he came down here, I told him I would be in the slot, and he basically was like, that's where the money is at. Just basically get paid, yeah.

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