

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Montrell Johnson Jr. Press Conference



Q. Talk about your summer; what do you think you improved from spring to summer? What improved the most?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: From spring to summer, I feel like I improved on my leadership role on the team. I became more vocal. I became more of a leader by example, as I've been doing, and just working on my speed, as well, stuff like that.

Q. Did you improve your speed? Did you improve -- how would you physically say you've improved?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: I feel like we have a great strength staff here. I feel like we have all improved our speed over the summer, and yeah, I improved my speed.

Q. How has the running back room changed? What have you seen from this group?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: From this group, it's a very young group. We have Cam Carroll, he's kind of an older guy. I feel like we kind of look up to him as the experienced player here. So we kind of look up to him. We just get pointers from him, and we kind of just lean on him.

But I feel like we have a great young group. Treyaun Webb is going to be great for us.

Q. What about Ja'Kobi? We don't get to know too much about him, but what does he bring to the table?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Ja'Kobi is a great player. He's shifty. He's fast. I feel like he's going to shock the world, as well, come fall, and I feel like a lot of people doubt him, as well, like you said.

Q. We keep hearing the term from a number of you guys about "shock the world." Is that something based upon some of the prognosticators, is that something you're talking about in the locker room because people doubt this football team?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Yeah, definitely. We take that to notice, because, like you say, they doubt us. We had a bad season last year, and we use that as motivation. We try to learn from our mistakes, and yeah, we feel like the world is against us, so we're going to try to keep it all in house and get better as we go.

Q. You and Trevor formed a pretty potent one-two duo. Any goals for you guys? What do you think you can accomplish this season after what you both did last season?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: We talked about this. Me and Trevor, we try not to focus on goals. We just go out there and play. Try to go out there and help the team as much as we can, and I feel like the goal is going to come at the end. I feel like it's been working out for us.

Q. How do you describe the culture of this program now compared to what you had in the one year at Louisiana?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: I feel like the locker room camaraderie is a lot better. A lot of guys getting along more than their position group. Just off-the-field things, like Coach Napier talks about, I feel like we got a lot better with that, a lot of guys are hanging out, building relationships, and I feel like that's really important to building a winning team.

Q. What's Cam Carroll going to bring to the team, and how do you guys -- there's so many talented guys. We ask this every year, but how do you share the ball?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: That's really a question for Coach Juluke right there.

Q. You guys have to put your ego aside at times and some competitive fire --

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Right, right. In the running back room, we cheer each other on. It doesn't matter who's on the field, we're going to cheer each other on.

But I feel like Cam Carroll brings to the team, he's a bruiser. He's six foot, 230, and he's going to wear down the defense, and that's what we need.

Q. Nice pass catcher?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Yes, sir.

Q. How much did you work on that and how much do you think that's going to be a part of the offense this year?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: As you know, we didn't use running backs in the passing game a lot last year. I feel like we're implementing it this year. I feel like we're implement it this year. We've been working on a lot of stuff out of the backfield with the running backs, stuff in the slot with the running backs, so I'm excited for this year.

Q. You and Trevor, what's you guys' relationship? Are you roommates? What's you guys' off-the-field relationship like? How do you balance that with the competitiveness?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: We don't kind of look at it as competitors, but we know we're competing at the same time. It's kind of like I'm trying to make you better, you're trying to make me better relationship kind of thing. Anything I see on film, I call him and tell him you've got to do this better, do this better.

But off the field, we hang out from time to time. We see each other every day at the facility, so we've got to have a little bit apart. But yeah, that's it.

Q. What did the team do that you say was the most fun as a team off the field away from the center this year, this spring?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Whenever we go to the basketball court, the rec, we go to the Southwest Rec, we kind of go as a team and just have fun, and I feel like that's been great for us over the spring and the summer.

Q. Do you play?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: A little bit, only a little bit.

Q. Who's the best player?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: The best player? Some people going to hate me for this, but I think the best player on the team right now is Kahleil Jackson.

Q. What do you see from Ricky Pearsall this year?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: I see explosiveness. Ricky is a dominant player. He's able to win 50/50 contested catches, able to win one-on-one battles. I expect him to have a big year this year.

Q. What do you think is going to be different in this offense under either Graham or Jack or whoever the quarterback is?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: That's a tough question right there. I kind of see it as kind of a timely matter. You've got to just wait and see. No one really knows right now. You've got to just wait and see.

Q. How is Graham different than Anthony?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: I feel like Graham is an experienced player. He played I think three years at Wisconsin, I believe, and I just feel like he's more experienced. He has more snaps, more reps, and he started more.

Q. Does that show up?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Yeah, most definitely.

Q. In what way?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Really off the field. He leads the team. He just got here, it's a transfer, he just got here, but he acts like he's been here. He leads the team. He talks to us in a way like a coach would talk to us kind of, and you obviously hear him in the meeting room, stuff like that.

Q. What's he like in the huddle, spring practices and stuff like that?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: He always focuses on ways to get better. He always wants players' input. He acts like, do like this, do we not like this, and that's what I think we need.

Q. How long did it take him to maybe earn that respect from the locker room?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: He kind of eased his way into it. I think it took about -- probably the second week of spring because he started like making plays out there and people like started respecting him more, and when we respected him more, he started speaking up and stuff like that.

Q. You were talking about the expectations kind of



motivating you guys. How do they motivate you guys, and how do you guys -- do you guys talk about it, T-shirts, signs, anything like that in terms of how do you keep that fresh in your mind that nobody is expecting much out of you?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: We talk about it all the time because we know what we have on the team and we know what we can do. It's just a matter of going out there and doing it.

Football is a game of execution. We've got to just go out there and execute and follow the game plan, and everything is going to go as planned.

Q. So many of the preseason magazines have basically trashed Graham. What would you say about that?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Man, it's the preseason. Like I said before, no one really knows until the season goes on. I feel like the most important accolades come at the end of the season.

Q. Mark Hocke, how much time do you spent with him, and what do you think his overriding message is to you guys?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: I spend a lot of time with Coach Hocke. Coach Hocke helps me with my speaking stuff. I go to him just to get like speaking points and stuff like that because I feel like I'm not a very good speaker.

Coach Hocke has done a lot better. He asks for players' input like how we think the strength coaching could be different, how it could be better, and I really appreciate him for that.

Q. What are your thoughts about seeing Utah for a second time to start the season and going out there? How much is that kind of circled now? It's only a month away.

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: It's a month away? We're happy to go out there to Utah. We're happy to go to the West Coast again and kind of redeem ourselves. It's going to be a great game in my opinion. You've just got to wait and see.

Q. Are there any personal goals you have for this camp, whether that be weight room or just general conditioning?

MONTRELL JOHNSON JR: Not really any personal goals. I don't really like to set goals for myself. I feel like it

restricts me from my true potential. I just go out there and just do what I can do, if that makes sense, like for the best of the team.

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