

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Ricky Pearsall

Press Conference



Q. What step did the offense take in that last game?

RICKY PEARSALL: We took big strides. I think it was more we were clicking on all cylinders, got the run and pass game going. We knew it was going to be a passing game. Knew they were going to give us a lot of man looks. Just took advantage of it.

Q. Do you think that showed you guys, gave you some belief that you can go toe to toe with an offense?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yes. I think that we kind of always believed that. I think we always had that chip on our shoulder that we can go out there and score as many points as possible. I think it's on us at the end of the day.

It was a little bit of a confidence booster for us, yeah.

Q. You saw Georgia's scheme last year. What did you learn from that?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, that they're a really tough team obviously. They haven't lost in about three years, so...

Q. 24 games.

RICKY PEARSALL: They're a really good team. Tough team. I'm excited to go out there and compete with them.

Q. What makes their defense effective?

RICKY PEARSALL: Just about everything, man. They've just got gifted players out there. They're really well-coached. They're really fast.

I think the biggest thing I remember from last year that stands out is they run to the ball. They gain tackle. They do all that.

Q. Having a chance to watch the rest of the SEC football, when you see what other teams are dealing with, does that put things into perspective, your set of problems? Give you a little bit of perspective?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I think it's good, especially on a bye week like that, to be able to sit down, watch some football, sit back and analyze everything.

At the end of the day we can't really control anything else that's going on outside this building. Being able to focus on each other and ourselves, what's going on in our locker room is my main concern.

Q. You take every opponent one week at a time. Have you seen any emphasis on this Georgia game throughout the year?

RICKY PEARSALL: Oh, for sure. For sure. Just showing that it's a rivalry, a big game. They're always a good team, ranked No. 1. They're in the east. There's a lot of emphasis on Georgia.

Q. How different was the bye week? Major changes compared to last year?

RICKY PEARSALL: To be honest, I don't really remember the exact schedule of last year. I think we maybe added a different walk-through, maybe an extra walk-through, an extra day.

We just wanted to get back in the building as soon as possible and get as much work in as soon as possible.

Q. What did you focus on on the bye week as an offense?

RICKY PEARSALL: Just focusing on ourselves. We had two really big practices that I think we got better at within each other. It was sort of, like, a focus on Florida kind of practice, I think just fixing the things that we need to do.

Q. Having a bye week at this particular time, how important was it?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I think it's really important, especially being midway through a season like this, going into a really big game like this. It was really important obviously for me personally taking care of the body, putting



an emphasis on recovery, emphasis on sleep. Really watching film. I think a bye week is a great time to watch to lot of film on your opponents, get ahead.

Q. The emergence of Trey Wilson, Khaliel, how has that impacted coverage? Does it open things up for you?

RICKY PEARSALL: I think it makes our offense a little bit more scarier, to be honest. We got a lot of guys that are very versatile, can strike at any moment. Just having guys by your side that can do that, the ability to do that, just makes us a scary offense, more explosive offense. Defense has no choice but to respect it.

Q. Where have you seen the most growth from Trey?

RICKY PEARSALL: It's just impressive to see a young guy get thrown in the fire like that, be able to adapt. He's a play-maker. Just in the South Carolina game, tipped off my hands on that slant, he caught it, immediately started running. Just shows the player he is. He's always alert, ready. That's not an easy play man. The ball is coming. He's running his route, not even expecting the ball. Just to be able to like he changed speed. Impressive.

Q. Can't get too high after last week, how important is that in your mind?

RICKY PEARSALL: We can't get too high, can't get too low. We got to treat our wins just like our losses, just get back to work every and every week. We can't get too excited about a game. We have to celebrate that win that night and next day roll.

Q. What do you appreciate about Brock Bowers?

RICKY PEARSALL: Man, he's a really good player. I feel like I can't say enough about him. He's a super strong runner. He's hard to take down. That's the biggest thing I take away from him.

I've heard a lot of good things, the way he carries himself in the locker room, the amount of dedication he has in the locker room, in the film room. I think the most impressive part is just him as a player, going out there and making plays when his name's called. He's a great player. I think everybody can say the most about him.

Q. You and Trey have lined up in the backfield. What kind of confusion does that create?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, just creating opportunities for us. I think Coach Neighbors does a really good job of putting us in places where we can have success at,

creating different matchups, putting us in the backfield, just being creative as an offense.

Q. Is that a role you're comfortable in, being versatile?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I like being placed in different positions, just show my versatility, be in the backfield, outside, inside receiver, wherever I can make plays at. I feel confident in each spot I am on the offense, so...

Q. What is the longest winning streak you've been on?

RICKY PEARSALL: Youth football, I know we had back-to-back winning seasons. We went undefeated (smiling).

I can't remember. I don't remember how many games we played as a regular season youth football team. I have to look, but we were really good.

Q. How old?

RICKY PEARSALL: When I was seven years old all the way up to high school I played on the same youth football team.

Q. What Georgia has done, how impressed are you?

RICKY PEARSALL: I'm really impressed, man. Especially being in the SEC, being in a high-level football like that, you can't say enough about it. They're on one of the greatest winning streaks ever.

Q. When the streak ended did you lose a game or age out?

RICKY PEARSALL: I think we lost. I can't remember. I know we were really good. I remember winning. I cherish those moments.

Q. Have you noticed anything similar schematically between Georgia's defense and the one you practice against?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, man, I think our defenses are just unique in their own ways. Different players, different coaches, different way of doing things. At the same time both really good defenses.

I'm going to take Jason Marshall over anybody going against them each and every day. He gets me better, I get him better. Competing against each other every day, that's the main thing.

Q. The way they're moving you and Trey around, has



that eliminated some of the double-teams you've been seeing?

RICKY PEARSALL: I think being creative in an offense like that eliminates some of those double-teams, maybe confusing the defense in certain ways, getting to certain looks as a defense. We just got to find ways like that to be creative as an offense to confuse the defense, being able to go out there and create plays.

Q. A little bit more fun when it's one on one?

RICKY PEARSALL: Oh, yeah, for sure. When it's one on one, that's when I get the most excited.

Q. How much have you enjoyed and appreciated the bond that you have with Graham?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, he's actually one of my closest friends now. I appreciate him as a player, as a person. He's just a great individual. On and off the field, he's the same human.

I appreciate that more than anything. We hang out all the time outside of the field. Obviously our girlfriends are friends as well, so it makes it kind of easy. Just being in the building, his energy is contagious. We just build off of him. He's a great dude.

Q. When you were deciding whether to return or go to the NFL, one thing you needed to figure out was who your quarterback was going to be. How great do you feel how it's worked out?

RICKY PEARSALL: For sure, I'm so excited, so blessed. God went to work with that. I just leave it up to him and trust his process. Obviously he's doing things that I'm super excited to do.

I'm more than happy. I can't even express how happy I am with Graham and what he's been doing. I'm excited to keep going, man. We're midway through the season talking about this. Hopefully you ask me that same question after the season and I give you even a better answer. Right now I'm just focused on one game at a time, one practice at a time, one rep with him.

Q. How much does it help the honest feedback process between you two?

RICKY PEARSALL: For sure, I think that definitely helps, having a strong personal relationship with him, being able to be open with him, really talk through certain plays. Even if we get a little personal sometimes, we never take it that way.

I'll be on the sideline yelling at him, Throw me the ball, just some receiver thing. It's never personal, man. Just having a strong relationship like that, being able to walk through film, he'll text me each and every day, be like, Hey, come to the film room, let's watch some film today. We'll watch film, talk through certain plays, make sure we're on the same page. I think communication is probably one of the most important points on offense.

Q. Do you feel like you are at similar points in your careers, came back to school to show people what you can do?

RICKY PEARSALL: We always talk about it, we're on the same mission, man. We talk about it damn near every day. We're just on the same mission, same goals, same motivation.

Q. Do you get a sense besides even you guys a lot of people are ratcheting up, doing extra for this matchup?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, man, we always do extra. We always do extra. To be honest, it's like a faceless opponent to us. I think Graham is a workhorse just as much as me. I think we're always working.

Obviously it's a different focus this week being a No. 1 team, being on the east. We're workhorses. This is what we do. We're football players. We work hard. Just another week for us.

Q. Do you and Graham have that signal or look that he knows?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, for the most part. For me, I always think the ball is coming to me. That shows how I try to run my routes.

In the South Carolina game, on the game-winning play, we were looking at the signal together. I stand in the middle of the field because we're getting the signal. I don't know what side of the field I am going to be on yet. They signal to us the first time. I like a look at it twice to be sure. I knew what the play was after the first signal. He stood next to me, was like, Go win the game.

I kind of knew he was throwing me the ball. I just looked at him and said, Bet. Ran out there, lined up in the slot, we got the look we wanted. I knew it was coming to my way. I knew I just had to make the play.

He looked off the safety, that's all we needed to get an opening. Came back my way, delivered a great ball, so...

Yeah, we have that look.

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