

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Ricky Pearsall

Press Conference



Arkansas 39, Florida 36

Q. I want to talk a little more about the emergence of your teammate Eugene Wilson because it seemed to have started with the Georgia game last week that he's targeted a little more. How much is that taking the pressure off of you?

RICKY PEARSALL: Well, first off, Trey Wilson, he's a tremendous player. He's a really gifted player. Then I also have faith in everybody in the receiving room, so I think anybody in the receiving room can step up and make those big-time plays, but to highlight him, he's doing a really good job, so shout-out to him.

Q. How were you able to -- you have the fumble on the first drive but you seemed to put that away, made some bigger plays. What's going through your mind during the fumble and how did the offense rally around each other down 14-0 early?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, it was a tough one, and I think it just shows how close this team is together, too, because as soon as that happened, as soon as I got to the sideline I was greeted by my teammates, next play, next play, keep your head up. I'm thankful for them, but that's the game of football right there. One-play mentality, next-play mentality. I've got to leave that in the past, just like life. Sometimes you have adversity and you've just got to push through it.

Q. Sometimes one loss can bleed into another week. Did you feel like the result last week had any effect this week, and how do you put this one aside before you go on to road to play LSU next week?

RICKY PEARSALL: No, I don't think this was because of our last loss at all. We go to work every single week and practice. Coach Napier and all the rest of the coaching staff gets us right every practice, and I don't think it led to that at all, and obviously we've got to put this loss behind us, too, and get right back to work.

Q. Is there anything in particular that you think stands out to you that's maybe been restrictive over the last couple weeks that maybe you guys need to solve in order to really take that next step forward and get the results you want?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I think when we go back and we look at film, there's going to be all kinds of things that we could definitely do better, but I also think there's going to be some good things on tape, too, that we can take advantage of and continue to move on and keep at that.

I don't think there's anything in particular that I can give you an answer to, but that's football. There's going to be things that you can do better and things that you've already done good that you can expand on.

Q. Your punt returning was really great today. What were you seeing out there and the ability to get that going? What went into that?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I saw on tape that I would have opportunities to catch some punts and return some punts. I knew I had to take advantage of that. Whenever the opportunity came, they kind of gave us some low kicking balls, so I was like, I've got some time, and then they were rolling and I'd catch it off the hop. My teammates do a good job blocking for me.

Q. This offense struggled for a few quarters here, did get it going in the fourth. Do you feel like you guys have shown and are confident that you can get in some shootouts, because they're coming it looks like?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I think it's just the same mentality every time we go out on to the field is we've got to score. I think something that I feel like we need to do a better job at is winning the 1st down. We've got to make sure that we get positive gains on the 1st down and get us going.

Q. Jayden Daniels you have familiarity with?

RICKY PEARSALL: Mm-hmm.

Q. You've seen the season he's having. How do you go toe-to-toe with a guy like that?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, he's one of my close buddies. We still talk to this day, and he's a super talented dude. He's putting a lot on tape. I'm extremely proud of him, and obviously he's putting the world on notice. He's an extremely gifted kid.

Q. The emotion of the final drive in regulation, I'm curious, you get it to a point where Trey could win it and he's been obviously very consistent for you but he misses it. Did it bleed at all into the OT drive or what were your thoughts about the execution of that first drive where you guys had to settle for a field goal?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, no, I think Trey does a really good job of kicking the football. Sometimes he makes them, sometimes you miss them. That's just the reality. Just like how I fumbled earlier in the game. We all went behind him and made sure that he kept his head up, and next-play mentality. He's going to get another opportunity to go out there and kick, and in overtime obviously he made a field goal. I don't think it bled into that at all. I think we can play all day long and have the same mentality.

Q. You're not a fumbler; I think that's the first time you've fumbled since you've been here. Would you explain what happened on that play? Nobody saw it, and all of a sudden, did the guy just rip it out on what?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, I made a mistake, went to cut back inside and obviously tried to make something happen, but I kind of lifted the ball up a little bit too much, and when I was making that cut back, I felt his hand actually go inside in the pocket of my arm, and I was actually trying to get down after that, but they kind of kept me up a little bit, and then he just ripped it out. He made a really good play on it.

Q. What was this whole week like with all the events going on for the Salute Those Who Serve and what Sergeant Slayton taught you guys -- running out on the field but taught you guys during the week? What were those things?

RICKY PEARSALL: Yeah, we had a lot of guys come in and talk to the team after practice. It's just a different level of respect. They try to obviously come out there and try to compare it to football, but it doesn't compare at all. It's life or death for them. We obviously have the most upright respect for those guys that came and talked to us, and we learned a bunch of good things, all the things basically on the back of our jersey.

Q. Billy said it was probably lessons you guys are

going to take for the rest of your lives. Would you agree with that?

RICKY PEARSALL: Oh, yeah, for sure. Everything they talked about after practice was all life lessons that we can take and move through life with. Extremely blessed to be able to get that opportunity to listen to them.

Q. Billy said earlier this week that Caleb Douglas was making some progress toward a return. What can he do to make you guys more dynamic?

RICKY PEARSALL: For sure. CD is an extremely talented kid, as well. He helps the deep ball a lot. He's a guy that can go up and get the ball, and we're going to be excited when he gets to come back. He'll give us some depth, too, and another playmaker out on the field.

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