

# University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Gainesville, Florida, USA

## Ricky Pearsall

Press Conference



**Q. Looking ahead a little bit, how important to you would it be to crack 1,000 yards? It hasn't been done at this school unbelievably since -- do you even know? Do you know when?**

RICKY PEARSALL: 2002, right? Yeah, someone told me that. I'm very excited to be able to go and do that. It's a goal I set in the very beginning of the season. So I'm still working towards it. Still got to go get it.

**Q. How old were you when that happened?**

RICKY PEARSALL: 2. That's when I found out about football right there.

**Q. How do you go about keeping a positive mindset despite the results not really shaking out the way you guys desired?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think all the guys have done a very good job keeping a positive mindset inside the locker room. I think it started with the coaches. They've done a tremendous job keeping our heads in it. Obviously I think the leaders stepped up this week too as well making sure -- we've got a lot of young guys in the group, keeping their heads up too and making sure we stayed locked in.

**Q. Have you thought about this being your last college road game? Have you gotten emotional yet at all?**

RICKY PEARSALL: Yes, it's been an emotional roller coaster for me for sure. It's my last year, and I'm not really trying to think about it right now. I've got to obviously give my all for these last two games. My two last collegiate games ever, so it's really crazy.

**Q. Maybe another COVID year, medical redshirt, hardship waiver?**

RICKY PEARSALL: There might be somewhere in there with all the new rules or something, but I don't know.

**Q. Talk about the chemistry that you've developed on**

**the field with Graham and how that's elevated your game this year.**

RICKY PEARSALL: For sure. I think just putting in the work and the time, I think that's the most important thing. Me and Graham put in a lot of work, man. I think that's ultimately where trust comes from.

And just getting to know the guy off the field as well. We became really good friends. We hang out off the field. Obviously we get extra work in after practices and through summer workouts and stuff like that.

**Q. You being a savvy receiver and a new quarterback coming in, and you think, hey, I've got to get on his good side so he knows where to throw the ball?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I text him. You can ask him. I text him before every game, I'm always open. I think we saw eye to eye before he got here. He's a really experienced quarterback, a great guy. We just clicked right away.

**Q. How do you reflect on your decision to come here and what it's meant to be a Gator the last couple of years?**

RICKY PEARSALL: It's meant everything to me. I can't thank Gator nation enough for accepting me and welcoming me into their family, and obviously accepting their traditions, everything that comes with the University of Florida. I'm super blessed to be here in these shoes.

**Q. (No microphone) you see them all time in the program. How motivated do you see them to bounce back from this performance last week?**

RICKY PEARSALL: They're very motivated. I think today specifically we brought a lot of energy from that side of the ball. I think team run is actually the period that I saw the most energy from those guys. They were flying around today.

**Q. Kind of all the way back in August about being a mentor to Eugene but just how you've seen him grow and develop. I think he's got five touchdown passes in**

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**the last three games. He's really becoming a factor. How has he managed to do that over the course of the last few months?**

RICKY PEARSALL: It's funny because, when he first got here, he was really quiet. I was like, is this how he always is? He's definitely opened up in the time that he's been here, and his personality is coming out. I started with that because I think what stood out to me the most is the person he is.

But you can't ignore how good of an athlete he is and the big strides he took this year. I'm just super proud of him. I look forward to watching him on TV one day when I have an off day or something on a Saturday and watching him ball out on the television on a Saturday.

I'm super excited for him. He's going to be an amazing player in the future. He is now.

**Q. You've shown a lot of resilience and fight in every game really pretty much. Cold weather, what's the coldest game you've played in? It's going to be in the 30s on Saturday night.**

RICKY PEARSALL: I'm not sure. I think I played in one year at Utah. It was really cold over there, I think.

**Q. Another factor, very good team, what are some of the headwinds you guys are facing? How do you just kind of battle through all that stuff?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think first it comes down to ultimately fixing our own problems that we have and going through practice and making sure that we're not shooting ourselves in the foot and we're eliminating our own mistakes, first and foremost. Obviously we're going in, and we're facing a really good Missouri team, a really well coached team and super talented.

Guys specifically, the DBs actually there, they're really good. I'm excited to go over there and face them, but I don't think the cold weather is going to be much of a factor.

**Q. Are you wearing sleeves?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I don't think I'm wearing sleeves.

**Q. Going into someplace that's cold and being like, this isn't going to bother us? This isn't going to affect us? We're not going to wear sleeves? We're not going to wear a turtleneck?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I'll probably wear a turtleneck. I might have the little cutoff sleeves here, but I'm not going to have

the long sleeves. I don't think it's anything -- it is a little mental. When you first get out there, okay, it might be cold, but once you're out there, and you're running, you're not going to notice it.

**Q. And with the cornerbacks, do you look forward to that, the one-on-one matchup when you face an elite, strong corner?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think they jumped out on film to me specifically. And then obviously the rest of the receiver group. Watching them, they have a really talented two corner group over there. I'm just excited to get the opportunity to go against them and compete.

**Q. Did you hear for the last couple weeks, their running back?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I have. He's been performing really well. I heard his story. He came from a D-II school, right?

**Q. (No microphone) and told them to give him a chance?**

RICKY PEARSALL: Really? I didn't hear about that.

**Q. What does it say about recruiting that a guy like that can still come out of nowhere and actually lead the SEC in rushing?**

RICKY PEARSALL: For sure. I think a guy like that, I think he's got a chip on his shoulder for sure. Even with me and my whole process I had to go through, I had that chip on my shoulder as well. There's talent everywhere, and I think he got found and got his opportunity, and he's excelling and proving everybody wrong.

**Q. With your route running, your precision, exactly what is it -- obviously you're getting the ball thrown to you more, but what's made the difference in having such a good season?**

RICKY PEARSALL: Just play by play mentality, to be honest. What I can do on that one play. Just lock in for those five to seven seconds on that play and just run as good of routes as I can and make sure I'm getting open every play for Graham and just obviously developing those relationships and watching a lot of film, all those sorts of things. There's a bunch of things. I have a whole list.

**Q. That FSU game to end last season on that kind of a note?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think it was really big. I think obviously we came out of it with an L, so it wasn't too big

for me. But being able to go there for the first time in that rivalry game and have a good performance like that, it definitely gave me a confidence booster going into the off-season and putting in that work.

**Q. I've got to ask you the tough question here, did Kahleil catch it? What did you see on that pass? Were you surprised?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I'm going to say he got it. I for sure think they got the wrong call.

**Q. How do you move on this week from a big play that's called back like that? How important is it to forget about it?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think specifically Kahleil, he did a good job of bouncing back mentally. It is tough as a receiver, when you get a big catch like that, and as an offense to be like we could have been down there with a big time catch. I think just being a receiver too and having the mentality of next play, next play mentality, because you've got to think as a wideout, you're running routes, running routes, running routes. You might be open half those plays but you don't get the ball thrown to you.

I think you've got to have next play mentality, and he does a great job with that. Kahleil is a really good player.

**Q. What did you think of Jayden?**

RICKY PEARSALL: I think he had an incredible performance. Shout out to him. He's one of my really close buddies.

**Q. What was your (no microphone)?**

RICKY PEARSALL: To go win the Heisman.

**Q. (No microphone)?**

RICKY PEARSALL: Actually, yeah, Coach Napier gave me my Senior Bowl invite yesterday, and he gave me the Shrine Bowl one two weeks before that. It will be incredible to do that, actually text him and see what he's going to do. I can't say all that much.

**Q. (No microphone) with Jayden. How much did you guys practice?**

RICKY PEARSALL: We practiced a lot. Before pregame, I thought one of us was going to forget it, but as soon as I saw him, we got it down.

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