

# University of Florida Football Media Conference

Saturday, August 31, 2024

Gainesville, Florida, USA

## Justus Boone

### Press Conference



Miami 41, Florida 17.

**Q. Justus, in your eyes, what went wrong for you guys and what was the disconnect between what you experienced in the preseason to what occurred in this game?**

JUSTUS BOONE: Ultimately, man, we just didn't play the best Florida football today, the football that we know we're capable of playing. We've really just got to go back to the drawing board and go to standing still, understanding execution-wise and making sure that everyone is on the same page. That's the main thing.

**Q. How unique was it to play against a quarterback like Cam Ward with different arm slots, quick release, and several talents that he has offensively?**

JUSTUS BOONE: The quarterback of that style, just honestly puts you in a more focused mind state where you have to be very precise on spokes, keeping the quarterback in contain, especially a quarterback that's going to be looking to scramble to extend the play, getting the receivers to move to the open spots. Yeah, that's just focusing on the spokes and making sure we contain him and don't allow him to do what he wants to do.

**Q. How did you feel like you guys did today?**

JUSTUS BOONE: I mean, obviously we didn't get the outcome that we wanted. We've got to work on it.

**Q. The early roughing the passer penalty, I know it was kind of close. I didn't know your read on it. How did you regroup from that the rest of the game?**

JUSTUS BOONE: I take full accountability, full responsibility for that. We were just talking about it in the team room. I was just telling them about how I take -- the first mistake. I feel like I was the one to make the first mistake. I was the one to put us on a bad path by getting that roughing the passer, just an undisciplined play, undisciplined call, and that's something I've got to work on

for myself, and that's my take from it.

**Q. Coach talked a lot about having so much football left to play, and you'll be able to prove the progress that you made during the off-season and in camp. But from the player perspective, how do you ensure that a loss like this at home against a rival doesn't spiral in terms of mindset and execution?**

JUSTUS BOONE: Honestly, this game right here does not define us at all. This is not what it's going to look like for the rest of the year, I can promise you that. From a player perspective, like I said, we beat ourselves on a lot of plays from the standpoint of from the game. But there was just a lot of explosive plays that was on our mess-up, not nothing that they did special but more on our end. The biggest aspect is just going back, watching film and seeing what we need to do better, seeing how we need to communicate better.

**Q. Billy said he was embarrassed, the players are -- not throwing that in your face, but what was the mood in the locker room? Was it upset, angry, despondent? What was the mood in there?**

JUSTUS BOONE: Yeah, I can definitely agree with Coach Napier coming from an embarrassing standpoint. I can honestly tell you I had no vision of us losing this game. No dream, no vision, no nervousness. I had full belief and full trust in my team and our coaches that we were going to go out there and execute.

**Q. What was the team mood?**

JUSTUS BOONE: Everybody got the same mindset as me. Everybody knows that we didn't go out there and play how we need to play, and we know that we're better than that. It's kind of embarrassing and a little bit disappointed in ourselves because we know that we're better than that. That's just our mindset that we're not fitting to be down, but that's already out of our heads, we're just fitting to go work on what we need to work on for the rest of the season. We've got more stuff to do.

**Q. 17-10 you get the score from Montrell on the long**

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**run, and momentum is in your favor, and all of a sudden they come right back, 75 yards right before halftime. How crushing was that going into the locker room knowing you were that close and now down two touchdowns and they were getting the ball to start the third quarter?**

JUSTUS BOONE: How should I answer that? Definitely in that point in time before going into halftime, going into the locker room, it definitely at that point in time, we was like, man, we feel like we should have capitalized on that. Honestly, our mindset once we get in the locker room, it's 0-0. We're not even worrying about what happened in the first half. We've got a whole new game to play, whole new juice to bring up.

**Q. Did anybody speak up in the locker room after the game, and if so, what was the message?**

JUSTUS BOONE: Yeah, I spoke up myself. Like I said a few minutes ago, my message was that we didn't play our best ball, and we made too many mistakes, too many penalties, and I took accountability for being a part of the mess-up, being a part of the penalty. That's just the main thing. I just wanted the message to be that this won't define us. I won't allow our team to be defined like that. We're better than this. We worked so hard, entirely too hard, and we didn't get a chance to present that today. We definitely will, though. That's just the main message, that this won't be us.

**Q. The pass rush struggled; what was Miami's offensive front like? Obviously very talented and had that reputation, but what do you think was going on there?**

JUSTUS BOONE: No, no disrespect to them. Not saying that their offensive line is not good or nothing like that, but I'm just more of a -- I'm an accountable guy. I'm just the type of dude that I'm not fitting to give nobody credit saying they did something to me. I'm the type of dude that that's me; I'm going to do better. I'm going to get better on that side. I just feel like that's from the standpoint we need to purse the pocket more, crush the pocket more and keep him in there. It's nothing they did special. I feel like we honestly beat ourselves today. I don't feel like we were a worser team.

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