

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Derek Wingo

Press Conference



Q. Derek, what are you hearing from the outside? There is a lot of heat on Billy and just negativity around the program.

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so I think when you're in college football you're always going to hear noise, right, no matter whether you're winning or losing football games, playing good, playing bad. Always going to be that outside noise.

So I think it's your job as not only a player or coach, anyone in this facility, you just kind of block out that outside noise and focus on kind of what's going on on the field, in the building, and kind of what you're doing behind the scenes.

Q. How hard is that to do when you got friends, family everybody, social media?

DEREK WINGO: I feel like we do a really good job putting people in position to make sure that you have that level of maturity to understand kind of you're here to do a job, you're here to play football. Your alignment, your assignment, get those things done regardless of what's going on and the noise behind the scenes.

Q. In the locker room what do you tell some of younger guys to keep them grounded as you look to get the season back on track?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, definitely just taking things one thing at a time. You talk about, you know, questions earlier in the year was always about the schedule, right? You can't look at that big perspective. You got to take it one step at a time. That's in-game atmosphere, taking it play by play, drive by drive, game by game.

That's the mentality that we have right now, having all the focus on Mississippi State this week.

Q. ...rushing and some missed tackles. How much anger was there about that postgame in the locker room and how do you fix the physicality aspect?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so when things don't go your way obviously there will be frustration. You work really hard all week, all off-season. When things don't go your way there is obviously frustration as a competitor. You want to be perfect in everything you do.

Obviously that just comes back to getting back on the field today, back in the film room, figuring out what we did wrong and perfecting it to the best of our ability to go out there this week and do a good job at that.

Q. (Regarding Ground Hog Day situation.)

DEREK WINGO: I think we've been doing a good job behind the scenes of putting a plan together and putting the right people around us. At this point now, it's just go out and execute. You know, you keep asking these questions about when is the result going to come, and at the end of the day it's just putting our best foot forward and trying to perform at the end of the day on the field.

Q. You were here for Coach Mullen's last year, the outside noise during that time. Eventually he was let go and now there is more outside noise with Billy this year. How are you taking that experience from years ago and translating to now maybe with some of younger guys who haven't been in the locker room with this type of situation?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so going through something like this before, I think obviously being the older guy I can have more of like guidance to some of the guys about outside noise.

That's just kind of anywhere, understanding the fact that just staying focused. Taking things week by week. Just understand that when we go out there to practice today, we're focused on what we're doing today. Not focused on tomorrow. Not focused on all the outside noise.

It's what can we do today to make ourselves better for tomorrow or our future.

Q. Rotation on defense cause communication issues at times?



DEREK WINGO: No, so I think the rotation on defense is primarily just having fresh legs. We have a lot of guys who are able to execute and do things the right way. It's good to be able to have rotation and have the depth to be able to put guys out there that can execute at the same standard.

So it's just having the execution and just making sure guys are all on the same page with kind of what plays we're calling and doing throughout the week.

Q. Billy too accountability after the game and said, this is my fault. Said he told you guys that in the locker room too. What was ya'll's response to that? Anybody speak up and have anything to say?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so I mean, for me personally, as an athlete, competitor, I feel like a lot of guys on the team can say this. It doesn't always matter the playcalling or this or that. We're on the field, right? We're making the plays. We're executing.

At the end of the day it's who is out there on the field executing the best? So you guys can point fingers or do whatever you might want to do. At the end of the day it's how we can go execute. We talk about we didn't execute.

At the end of the day it's just going back on the field, going back in the film room today and throughout this week to prepare for Mississippi State.

Q. Change the topics, what inspired you to launch a Podcast? What can you tell us about that?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so I'm super excited for that. Obviously been into a lot of the broadcasting aspects, speaking, doing things like that. But like you guys are sitting here asking questions, a lot of people like to hear the perspective of a student-athlete.

So I think it's cool for me to have a different like outing relationship with athletes. For me to hear that perspective on a relationship level and being able to perceive that to the outside world.

Q. Get a plug in of where we can listen?

DEREK WINGO: Wingin' it with Wingo. It's all over social media, so...

Q. Billy is going to take the brunt of the criticism obviously. How do you think he handles that?

DEREK WINGO: I think he does an amazing job. You can see how he just did up here. That's when you go back to

the maturity level. The outside noise, a lot of things going on. How well can you stay focus and keep the main thing the main thing.

At the end of the day that's what have to do.

Q. 11:00 a.m. start local time in Mississippi. I remember last year the start of Kentucky you guys came out a little flat. How do you keep that from happening again on the road?

DEREK WINGO: Yeah, so you can use Kentucky as like what happened before, right? So how can we as older guys get that on track, get that better for us, understand that, hey, we're going away. It's an SEC game. We don't have 93,000 behind us so we have to create our own energy, bring our own stuff to the field. Got to bring our own stuff to the locker room.

How can we create energy and make sure that we are able to come out fast, early, often, and being physical.

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