

University of Florida Football Media Conference

Monday, October 14, 2024

Gainesville, Florida, USA

Jordan Castle

Press Conference



Q. Obviously that Kentucky game last year, Ray Davis who's now in the NFL ran all over you guys. What do you remember about that game, and is there kind of a revenge factor, just in terms of dealing with stopping the run and their physicality?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, I'd say to be real, that game I felt embarrassed. We went out there and they beat us. They beat us bad.

But you could say it's a revenge game. We want to go out there and prove that what they did last year, they're not doing it again. Let's go out there and do what we're supposed to do.

Q. How much better do you guys feel defensively over the last three games versus the Miami game and the A&M game, some of the issues you guys had?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, ever since the bye week, we all came together and talked, like you can see just on tape we're playing so much faster and playing together. That bye week really helped us out.

Q. Did they simplify things? You guys look like a different defense the last two games?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, things are much more simple. Everybody is on the same page you can see. To be real, I'd say we're just playing fast.

Q. And getting aligned it seems because I remember after Mississippi State the alignment had -- Bridges, what's his first name?

JORDAN CASTLE: Oh, Trikweze.

Q. Trikweze said alignment and then Jason talked about it later. What did you do to fix that?

JORDAN CASTLE: We're just keeping things basic. We've got a lot of athletes on our team who can play ball. We have a saying that we say in the weight room, just

place the ball, put it down. That's something we just did throughout the bye week. We took it very serious and was kind of showing week by week that we're all playing together.

Q. Tackling, I know that was an issue earlier in the season. What did you do to correct that?

JORDAN CASTLE: Tackling is something that we take very serious, especially Coach Harris, something we talk about a lot and something we need to keep getting better at. I missed a tackle myself, and that was on me. I was on myself hard about it.

Q. Billy likes complementary football; do you feel like the pieces are coming together?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, the pieces are coming. You can just watch the tapes. I feel like we started playing our best ball after that bye week, and you can just watch it week by week, we're playing better. We're playing so much faster.

Q. With the offense, too, you have the weapons. Without Graham now, but special teams has been solid. Do you feel like this team -- I don't want to say surprise some people, but after the game the other night, I know it was a heartbreaker but it showed something.

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, we went out there, we put up a fight. We didn't get the result that we wanted, but we played fast. We ran to the ball, created turnovers, and controlled what we could control.

Q. How did you see DJ progress in spring ball and is he a guy who when he makes a mistake out there does he process it so it doesn't happen again?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, me and DJ, we're very close. Good boys. That's somebody I see in the facility all day. We'll even go upstairs and watch tape, just me and him. Just watching him get better every day and just seeing how serious he takes practice, every day you can just see him getting better. That kid is going to be great.

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

Q. How excited is the team to have him developing so quickly? I know it's tough losing Graham -- first off, just your thoughts on losing a leader like that.

JORDAN CASTLE: Losing Graham, it hurts a lot, but he's still going to be in the room, of course, and when D-Lag first got up here, he already took DJ under his wing, so he's still in the room. That's the same thing as Montrell. Those guys are still in the room to just take the younger guys under their wing.

Playing early is something that I had to do myself. I can speak on it. Last year I had to step up and had to play. It kind of helped out, and just having older guys who I can talk to, like even Asa. Asa Turner is not playing right now, he's hurt, but he kind of helped me out and took me under his wing, and we were out here until like 10:00 just watching film.

Q. What's something DJ does that keeps defensive coordinators up at night? I know he's mobile, but the ball seems to get there quickly.

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, DJ, he's full of confidence. DJ can throw a pick, and that next drive he's coming at you. It's like the kid is full of confidence, and he plays with so much swag. It's something that you've just got to stay on your toes.

Q. Sharif had an interception against Tennessee. How have you seen him grow and progress in the secondary this year?

JORDAN CASTLE: I'd say the whole secondary is just getting much better week by week. We're creating turnovers, making plays on the ball. So yeah, that was a big play he made, and we needed that.

Q. How do you build off that performance from a turnover standpoint?

JORDAN CASTLE: I'd say just doing our job. Our goal is to create three turnovers a game just to help out with the offense, just doing our job. That's a big help, and we needed that play.

Q. How important is that going to be with DJ now at quarterback because Coach talked about rallying around him and so forth.

JORDAN CASTLE: You know, just as a defense, we just want to get our quarterback the ball, create turnovers, strips, interceptions. Just get the quarterback the ball.

Q. Asa got added to the injury report last year but you got upgraded. How is he doing just being out and having to watch?

JORDAN CASTLE: Asa Turner, that man, he'll sit here all day and work. Me, Coach Harris will have to tell that man, hey, relax, give your body a break. Asa is going to be back soon, I can tell you that. That man is in the treatment room taking care of his body all day, so he's going to be back very soon.

Q. How much is he itching to get back out there?

JORDAN CASTLE: Yeah, he's been watching film with me, and he's not even playing, so just him taking his time out to help me prepare for me the game, I can tell he's itching to play. Every week he tells me, hey, I'm coming back, I'm coming back. But he's got to wait and make sure he's healed up all the way.

Q. How has your unit dealt with his injury?

JORDAN CASTLE: Of course him not playing was a big effect, but he's a guy who's still in the room, and how much he's in there you'd think he's still playing. He's still a big help and somebody we need in the room.

Q. I'm sure you've seen and heard the pressure your coach gets. Getting a win for the team but for your head coach given all of this, how special would that be and just to see that across the board?

JORDAN CASTLE: Is it would be a great feeling, of course, and everybody wants to win, of course, but what happened last year, what they did, it's something I still think about, and as a whole, the defense, it's embarrassing what they did.

We just want to come out there and just prove that what we've been doing week by week is just going to keep getting better.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports