

University of Florida Football Media Conference

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Chimere Dike

Press Conference



Georgia 34, Florida 20

Q. Just starting off obviously with DJ, just how devastating was that going out, a game you guys were in and still continued to be in with him being injured? What was the feeling on the field like when that happened?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, it's obviously really tough. DJ is a very, very good player. We felt like we had momentum kind of early in the game.

But at the same time, I'm proud of Aidan and the way he stepped up. My favorite thing about the way he played was he didn't flinch. He could see his eyes he was out there competing. He's going to continue to get better.

Q. Can you talk a little bit more about Aidan, a guy a few week ago who wasn't getting second-team reps and now he's thrust in against the No. 2 team in the country? Talk about how impressed are you that, again, the game is still close midway through the fourth, tied with him under center?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, Aidan obviously has a really good arm. The thing I like most about him is he's a competitor. Loves to compete. Wasn't scared of that big moment. We tried to rally around him. Obviously got to do a better job offensively. I was proud of the way he played today.

Q. Obviously Aidan doesn't have a lot of experience even though he's gotten on the field with a veteran receiver room with you and Elijah and even Aidan Mizell stepping up a little bit. How can you guys help him through his transition?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, I think it's everybody's job. There are things to do that I could have done better to help him, and those things that I got to evaluate and improve next week.

I think it's just everybody just attention to detail and supporting him and rallying around him.

Q. Was there any particular advice or words of wisdom you had for Aidan? That's a pretty scary situation to be in.

CHIMERE DIKE: Uh-huh.

Q. Did you have any advice for him?

CHIMERE DIKE: I told him we all believe in him. Take it one play at a time, and go out there and compete. I think that's the best thing you can do in that moment. I think he handled it extremely well, and I think he's going to continue to get better.

Q. Obviously just injuries continued to pile up today. Just a lot of misfortune, for lack of a better word. How did you attempt to find the energy to keep on going in spite of all the hardships you faced as the game went on?

CHIMERE DIKE: I think injuries are something that's out of your control. I haven't been in a game where we had this many, but I think that shows the growth on our team. I think that we were competing at an extremely high level.

There is no moral victories. We're at the University of Florida. We're not saying that, but I think this team is taking steps in the right direction. That's something that we can kind of be proud of and continue to move forward with.

Q. Chim, looking at a game like this, the Florida rivalry, obviously reasons you come to Florida, to play in games like this, but how does this compare to playing for the Axe in rivalry games, just the comparison?

CHIMERE DIKE: It was a unique experience. I think definitely really special. Split down the middle, obviously we have amazing fans at Florida, and I'm just appreciative that I had this moment.

You know, obviously we wish it was a different end result. All we can do is keep getting better and move forward.

Q. Did you find yourself taking the time to take it in or was it all about business?

CHIMERE DIKE: A little bit, but once you're in the game it's kind of just trying to execute at the highest level you can.

Q. What was the mood like in the locker room afterwards and how do you move forward from here?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, obviously we're disappointed. You know, I felt like we had opportunities at the end of the game we just didn't capitalize on. But I think that we understand that we're taking steps forward and not backwards.

You know, I think that going forward we're going to keep working and just have to learn how to finish the games out.

Q. What was Billy's message to you about what he saw from you guys today and how he wants that to show up in Texas?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, similar to some of the things I've reiterated. No moral victories. We're at the University of Florida. Our team is competing at a really high level right now. The way that we responded to some of that adversity that we had was something that was kind of shows the character of our team.

I think that's going to be huge having that as we go forward through the season.

Q. How was DJ just emotionally, mentally?

CHIMERE DIKE: I mean, obviously got to talk to him for a little bit. Obviously an injury like that you're a little upset. He's got a great family. He's got a lot of teammates around him supporting him. I know he's going to be more than fine.

Q. Nobody is making excuses, I understand. Have you ever been part of a team that's had this kind of a rash of injuries one after another like this?

CHIMERE DIKE: I don't think I've had as many in-game injuries. We have a next-man-up mentality, and I think guys stepped up in certain situations today that haven't before in a big game like that. It takes a lot and shows the character they have.

No. To answer your question, no, I haven't.

Q. The run game today, Jadan Baugh and Ja'Kobi, how did they -- do you feel they stepped up and tried to

keep you guys in the game?

CHIMERE DIKE: Yeah, those two guys play and practice extremely hard. Proud of way they competed today. They run downhill and they definitely kept us in the game in a lot of aspect on offense.

I think that if we can clean up the passing game a little bit and block in the second level, those guys are definitely guys we can lean on.

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