

University of Florida Football

Media Conference

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Billy Napier

Press Conference



South Florida - 18, Florida - 16

BILLY NAPIER: Not good enough, and it's my responsibility. I think when you evaluate the game, the red zone missed opportunities caught up with us, and we let them hang around. Certainly the penalties contributed to the game. I think we had over 100 yards in penalties. It extended their drives, and it slowed down our drives. You add in the bad snap for the safety, and then you lose the explosive play battle and you lose the turnover margin, you don't deserve the right to win.

We had seven possessions in the second half and punted six times and ultimately let them hang around. They kick a field goal there. They take it down the field and kick a field goal to win us.

I want to keep it short and sweet. I think that we can do much better, we can coach better, we can play better. Obviously I don't like these any more than our fans do or you do. We have to do much better. I think that we have a group that will respond, and tomorrow we'll present that opportunity.

I think that sums up the game. I know you've got questions. So what are they?

Q. Billy, the undisciplined actions by your team, how surprising was that given that you've preached about this team being different, this team having a level of accountability? And then for them with the penalties on the offensive line, some of the PI -- obviously the spitting -- how unacceptable is that for you, and what do you say to people you've talked to for months about this team is different?

BILLY NAPIER: Yeah, I think the procedure penalties -- obviously we can live with the technical penalties. There's always going to be a handful of those. The ones that keep you up at night are the ones that are player decision-making, so there's got to be some ownership there on both ends.

They're under my leadership. It's ultimately my responsibility. So we need to eliminate the false starts. We need to eliminate the personal fouls. We did have a substitution penalty as well. So those are the ones as coaches that we have to take responsibility for.

Q. Is that coaching, or do you put it on them in terms of their accountability?

BILLY NAPIER: No. I think that the players make mistakes, it's part of the game, but I do think that ultimately it's my responsibility. So I think it is coaching.

Q. A season starting in the hole again, heading to LSU now. What's the challenge for you guys ahead now? It's like you're kind of already behind the eight ball before the season barely began.

BILLY NAPIER: I don't think there's any question about it. Look, this will be a challenge. It will be a challenge for every individual in the organization, player and staff. But I do think the game can teach you a lot, and I think we'll have our opportunity to respond. I think that this group has been through some of these battles before. I'm hopeful that can help us.

Look, I'm more concerned with the football. Ultimately, I think there's a lot of positive. In terms of the other stuff, the football's got to get better. We've got to take ownership of the football.

Q. What's the message to fans? 14 straight sell-outs? You had a lot of their support?

BILLY NAPIER: It was incredible.

Q. But you come out --

BILLY NAPIER: Yeah, they were a factor. We have no -- there's no excuse here. I'm not up here to make excuses.

Q. They were able to hold for the game-winning field goal. Was there a thought about trying to burn some timeouts sooner, or how did you view the clock management in the last two minutes?

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BILLY NAPIER: We had two. At that point, there's going to be a field goal kicked. They had one, so they had an extra down. So regardless of when the timeouts get called, it's going to end up about the same.

Q. All the noise at the beginning of last season, it's probably going to start again. Does that concern you at all?

BILLY NAPIER: We created it. We deserve it. If you play football like that, you're going to be criticized. It comes with the territory, right? Only thing you can do is go get it fixed, and that's what we'll start working on tomorrow.

Q. What did you say to your player about the spitting penalty?

BILLY NAPIER: Well, I haven't had that conversation with him yet. We'll take a good look at it, but it's unacceptable. I think we've got a lot of players in that room as well that have the same belief that it's unacceptable.

When a guy does something like that, he's compromising the team. He's putting himself before the team. Everything the game is about, you're compromising. So there will be lessons to be learned there. Yeah, it's that simple.

Q. How would you assess the step back that the defense appeared to take this week compared to last week? Missing more time, struggling to keep Brown contained, and obviously the big passing touchdown you had on that. What did you see on that in particular?

BILLY NAPIER: I think that the ball's in the air. I think we've got two players breaking on the ball. I think there's opportunity there. I think ultimately there, there's a quick substitution. We've got to get our call in. I think that was the biggest issue is we didn't necessarily have a call. They snapped it as quick as possible.

In general, there's an opportunity to make a play on the ball. We misjudged the ball a little bit. Ultimately, I think that's the thing that you're going to evaluate.

Q. Do you think you're the right man for this program? 14-7 in The Swamp, the losses keep mounting, and some of the mistakes that keep happening with this program. Do you think you're the right guy?

BILLY NAPIER: Yeah, I think I'm more concerned with doing my job to help lead these young men. That's a big picture question, and I think right now it's more about today. It's more about what we do tomorrow, and I think

that's what we've got to get consumed with.

I think I'm consumed with doing the best job I can do for the players, leading the staff, and getting the football fixed because ultimately that's going to decide how far we go around here.

Q. Coach, when you talk about the football, there will be some people that question some of the calls based upon a heavy box or looking out man to certain sides and then running to that side. How much leeway does DJ have responsibility with getting you all into the right play, and does he have that flexibility within the scheme to maybe get you guys out of that? Is that a by-product of just him continuing to grow as a quarterback in ninth or tenth start?

BILLY NAPIER: I can take a better look at it and let you know on Monday. I like to watch the tape. But I do think there's a lot we can do better. There's going to be ownership from staff and players here, but in general, I'll be able to give you a better answer on Monday.

Q. Obviously a lot of football left. Last year you praised the team for not fracturing amid the difficult circumstances. With the amount of veterans you have, just your confidence level that this is maybe going to galvanize the group and they're going to get the response you're looking for?

BILLY NAPIER: Yeah, we won't have that issue. We won't have that problem. This group, they won't splinter. There's too much good in that room. That's not the issue.

Q. What were your thoughts on the play calling tonight? Offensively.

BILLY NAPIER: I think there's a ton of missed opportunities in the game early. I think that we shot ourselves in the foot quite a bit. I think we played from behind the sticks. Penalties were a major issue.

Then I think we probably were -- we didn't get it done in the second half. We had seven possessions and six punts. To me, when I think about it, I think about the second half. I think there's some opportunities there to make some plays, but I also think we contribute to that as coaches.

I'd like to watch the tape before I comment on that, but in general, I think there's a combination of both. That's how I would say it.

Q. How costly was it to have those two touchdowns called back on the same series there?

BILLY NAPIER: Yeah, I think the holding penalty was definitely a penalty. We grabbed the guy. I think the OPI, I think it will be up for debate. We'll see what that looks like when we turn it in. I think the guy's running a route. There's some -- yeah.

Again, those are huge plays in the game because they allow the opponent to hang around. So we're in the red area a couple different times. We have two touchdowns called back. We have false start penalties in the red area. We're forced to kick field goals. We got nine points to show for it at the half. We moved the ball. I think we had close to 220-something yards at halftime. So we had moved it up-and-down the field. We just didn't score touchdowns.

Look, we can sit here and talk about all of these technical things, but it's not good enough. We've got work to do. You guys know it. I know it. Anybody that watched it knows it. We got to take ownership of it, and we got to go back to work. That's it.

Q. I was going to ask two quick ones. You may have kind of addressed it more or less, but the one drive where they get the ball back, what kind of went into that? DJ's throwing on first down. Is that just one where you guys got to line up and just get first downs at this point?

BILLY NAPIER: Sure, that's exactly what you needed to do at that point. I think we got ourselves into a good play. We had a chance on third down to put the game away basically, right? So we had a matchup in the slot and we had a chance to make a play, and the game's essentially over at that point.

But there's a lot of individual plays. It's the summation of them all. We contributed too much to their success.

The last thing I want to say is I don't want to discredit South Florida. I think they did a lot of good things out there. I have respect for how they play. Give them some credit for hanging around and finding a way to win the game. But I do think that we had our opportunities to win the game tonight, and we've got to go get it done.

We've got to clean up these things that are under our control.

Q. Positive ending here, please? Tre Wilson, Vernell Brown, the big punt return. Tre looked like he kind of emerged a bit tonight. We haven't seen that for a while.

BILLY NAPIER: Two really good slot players, both made a

bunch of plays tonight. We tried like crazy to get them involved, we did. Obviously the punt return was huge. We were able to capitalize on that. So those will be bright spots, but it's hard to have any when you don't get the results you want. So back to work here.

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