

University of Florida Football Media Conference

Saturday, September 12, 2026

Gainesville, Florida, USA

Jon Sumrall

Press Conference



Florida 52, Campbell 3

JON SUMRALL: Appreciate you all being here to cover the game. Happy for our guys to get a win. The goal this week, just like every week, is to be 1-0 at the end of Saturday. We're 1-0 this week, which I'm pleased with.

Some positives. I thought clearly VB in the return game came through when it was really clutch with what he did with the ball in his hands on those two punt returns, the third one that we had the penalty on. He did some really nice things in the return game.

I thought defensively did a better job. Once we settled into the rhythm of the game, that first drive they got us a couple times down the field early throwing the ball, but I thought our guys settled in and played with more confidence at times in the back end.

Really in two situations in the second half, I was pleased that after the muffed punt forced a field goal opportunity, they missed it. With a lot of young guys in the game there at the end, got a defensive stop on the fumble, which I was pleased with, to hold them to three points.

A lot I was not pleased with, to be quite honest with you. Some guys proved maybe in the second half, you get an opportunity to prove people right or wrong, some guys proved us right why they're not playing right now.

We were way too sloppy. I think in the second half we had more penalties in the second half than we have all year prior to the second half. That was really frustrating.

If we play like we did in the second half, we're about to have a real rude awakening. We have got a lot of improvement to do.

While I'm really happy to be 1-0 this week, I'm not real pleased with just maybe where we are from a maturity standpoint, executing at a really high level all the time. What we're about to walk into in conference play, we will get absolutely embarrassed if we don't improve a ton.

A lot to be excited about, but a lot to work on. I thought Philo played fairly efficiently, did some good things. I thought our running backs, to be quite honest with you, were subpar, not so much Jadan, but the depth of the room I thought did some things that were not as clean as we've asked them to do.

We had a guy go the wrong way on one run, missed a protection call on one. Didn't really play clean football.

A lot to be to be quite honest with you that I'm really frustrated about.

We'll open it with that.

Q. You mentioned clutch. How did that get the team going? The energy wasn't great.

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, we were a little sluggish early. I think going and making a play in the return game... Anytime you score on special teams, the percentages of you winning the game goes way up. We scored twice, you almost have to screw it up to lose. Those were both big-time plays.

I think those type of plays, too, gets the crowd involved in the game. That was fun to see VB make those plays and create that momentum for us.

Q. How do you address the second half starts? Unnecessary roughness calls, consecutive drives. How do you address that?

JON SUMRALL: We pulled the guys out of the game as soon as it happened. I talked to 'em. I said, Look, that's not okay. You can't put us in first and 25.

Not all personal fouls are created the same. What I will say is one of them I felt like was us just trying to play through the echo of the whistle. I'm not going to make an excuse for it. But I'm like there was no whistle blown, so the guy is playing through the echo of the whistle. He doesn't have eyes in the back of his forehead to tell when the play is over. That was on the one with Rod Kearney.

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He didn't know when the play was over.

Maybe he shouldn't have jumped on the guys is what they're saying. It's football. You're allowed to push somebody in the ground.

We cannot have those things happen. Last week we got to third and goal on the 28 yard line and scored. You get to conference play, you're in first and 25, I might as well get the punt team ready most of the time. Not all the time, but most of the time. Just go ahead and get them at their spot to get ready to take the field.

Q. We saw the special teams emphasis certainly in fall camp. Curious to see that kind of crystallize, what you saw in some of the blocks.

JON SUMRALL: We spend a lot of time on special teams. I'm very involved in it. Coach Galante does a great job. Our special teams coaches put in a ton of work.

Greg McMahon has been a great addition for us. What he does is he meets with some guys one on one, help them understand their job better. Just their little role that they may have within the team.

On both punt returns we actually had blocks called. What we're trying to do is get them to maybe hold the front guys in longer, knowing that was going to give VB a little bit more room to operate and catch. Sometimes you when you have a punt return on, the guys on the punt protection team read it and get out in coverage fast. When you have a punt block on, it's holding them in longer.

Sometimes the biggest returns happen on punt blocks, not always holdups. Both of those were more of a block type of look to make sure we put some pressure on the punter, keep the blockers in a little bit longer to protect.

But it's nice to see us execute those plays well and create special teams plays, create momentum. Obviously when you score, it's a big deal.

Q. You talked about settling into the rhythm of the game defensively. Now two weeks in a row. Is that something that needs to be done as a unit or are there a couple of individuals that can take charge and make sure the defense is ready to roll?

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, sometimes it's both. Sometimes, like, they made a nice throw and catch on the one to start their drive in the first quarter when they got the ball to start the game.

I went over to our DBs after that drive and I said, Guys,

they may catch a pass or two. Do not be afraid to stay down there and challenge them. Do not get cautious.

At corner, you're going to get beat. The other guys are going to make a play. When you get beat, you have to pick yourself up, All right, next play.

That's what I was most pleased with out of those guys tonight, maybe we didn't start great, we do need to start faster, it would be nice to get a three-and-out the first drive, we haven't done that yet, but at the same time you look back-to-back weeks, even though we gave up a first-drive interception, this week forced them to a field goal. Don't want them to get points, but nonetheless, we didn't let them in the end zone.

We do need to start a little bit faster, though. Sometimes it's on a guy to make a play. Your one-on-one matchup, you got to go make the play.

Q. Another big night from Jadan. What did you think of his performance, break another long one?

JON SUMRALL: It's fun to see him hit that long one. Last year I think his longest was 23 yards. For him to have two in back-to-back weeks that were long ones, it's fun.

I thought he did a nice job. I thought we didn't maybe provide him as many rushing lanes as we should have up front tonight. I don't think we played awful with the first group on the O-line, but I don't think we're where we need to be yet either.

Jadan did some really good things.

Q. A lot of penalties on the O-line in the third quarter. What did you see there? How frustrating was that?

JON SUMRALL: We had a couple of holds and a couple of personal fouls. It's really frustrating. Like, that was one of the things I was most pleased with in week one, we had four penalties last week. The first half this week it felt fairly clean. The second half, every time you felt like we had an explosive play, there's another penalty flag, another penalty flag. You can't do that. The Gators can't bet the Gators.

When you do that in the games we're getting ready to go play, we will lose the game. I think we will not give ourselves an opportunity to win the game. We have to clean a lot of that up.

The good news is our guys owned it. They understand accountability. Every one of them after I brought them over and corrected them, half of them before I came in here,

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they came to me, Coach, I'm sorry.

I am like, Yeah, good, you should be. It's not okay. It hurts the team.

We've got to get a lot of that cleaned up and addressed.

Q. After the first series your defensive line really stepped it up. Would you talk about what they did in the last 90% the game.

JON SUMRALL: I thought they played bigger than last week. Last week was a different challenge because a ton of quick game. Tonight a little bit more some screens, perimeter screens than even last week.

I do think you felt maybe the talent gap in the trenches when our defense was on the field. Made more knock-back plays, physical plays, affected the passer a little bit more at times.

There were a couple opportunities we missed. Coach White made two really good calls in situations where we knew they were going to spread out. We didn't contain the edge the right way. That was on us executing a call at a high level that we missed tonight that I was a little bit frustrated with.

I think they asserted themselves a lot better tonight.

Q. I know this is probably something you wouldn't have even thought of, but there might have been a possibility that your punter might not have gotten into his first game until Auburn. Hostile territory, SEC game. Is that a part of you that's relieved that he finally got a chance to punt?

JON SUMRALL: I don't care if we ever punt.

But yeah, I do think the operation of the punt team not having worked in the game, you go on the road the first time next week, it's going to be a hostile environment. They have a great home field there. So for your snapper, your punter, the communication of everybody, it is nice to at least rep it.

But I'd just like to never punt. That would make it even better.

Q. The first three halves, out of 19 possessions, you scored 18 times. How do you describe what you've seen in those three halves?

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, I think we found a way to finish a lot of drives, maybe in spite of ourselves at times, put

ourselves in some bad situations.

Like I said, we have a lot to clean up or those numbers are going to go the other way real fast.

Q. You briefly touched on how some guys proved you right as to why they're not getting looks on the field. Was that a prior expectation on your end that your depth pieces were going to make their impact in this game? Did that cause that feeling of disappointment?

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, I expect every player on our team when they get on the team is to play to the standard that is a Florida Gator. I don't care if you're a first, second or third team player, there is a standard here. It's non-negotiable. Doesn't matter how many reps you got in practice, the standard has to be met all the time. I'm not okay with a guy telling me, I'm a freshman. Or, Hey, I only got this many reps in practice.

All of our freshmen have been here since January. They've got plenty of reps of every call we've got to do it the right way.

I expect everybody that gets in the game to be ready to go play. I told the guys this week, I tell them the truth, on Monday's team meeting, I said, We should handle this game the right way, like not cruise through it, get some guys some opportunities to go play. Don't tell me you're not ready for your opportunity. Like, you should always be ready for your opportunity.

I think maybe some guys learned tonight what readiness looks like isn't quite where they are.

Q. You mentioned Campbell at times can be a fast team. There was a period to start the second quarter you had three touchdowns in 5 minutes and 33 seconds. When you're able to control the pace like that, how important is it?

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, I mean, I think being in control of the flow of the game is really important because the momentum shifts that happen within it. Getting off the field quickly on defense matters. Scoring matters. The flow of the game. You have to play complementary football on the offense, defense, kicking game. All have to work together to maybe take the momentum back in the game.

Q. What did you make of Dallas' performance as well as Aaron there?

JON SUMRALL: I'm sorry, I lost you.

Q. Looked like he was going through all his

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progressions.

JON SUMRALL: Yeah, I thought Dallas played really well. He went for over a hundred yards, had 104 yards, five catches. Dallas is a really talented player, man. High ceiling. Just going to continue to get better and better and better. I'm excited about where he's headed.

Philo, I thought he's played really, really efficient. He's operated well. He's been a great leader. He's communicated at a high level. I think we're playing good football with him in the game right now. He's just got to continue to get better.

Q. Sitting here after two games, one-sided performances, what is the message going into SEC play?

JON SUMRALL: We have to get better. Like, I'm a little uneasy with where we are. I think you can win games in the fashion we've won them in. It feel guys for everybody. But if we are not really urgent and detailed in our preparation, the outcome next Saturday will not be what we desire.

What's on my mind is how do we get this team better because where we are right now is not good enough.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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