

Florida State University Football Media Conference

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Adam Fuller

Press Conference



Q. I know you have one more practice to go, but in general how pleased are you with the amount of takeaways you had throughout the spring? I know that's been a focus for you?

ADAM FULLER: We're getting better at it. Somehow we've got to continue to find ways in coverage to create some more vision so we can get our hands on the underneath balls. I think the emphasis has been there. And I like what happened today. That was a really good play with D.J. Lundy and Kalen DeLoach on the ball carrier getting it out with the scoop and score.

The takeaways, I've said this before, are really critical because they get the ball back to our offense quick. Just the ball disruptions have really gone up. That's just getting your hands in throwing lanes, getting your hands up when the quarterback's throwing the football, just attacking the ball on the catch point with the wideouts. We're tallying those things, and those numbers are really going up.

We've just got to keep at it and keep the summer training to keep working on those takeaway circuits.

Q. Speaking of takeaways, Kalen DeLoach had two of them today. What have you seen from him this spring, what areas has he improved on, and what can he do for you guys this season?

ADAM FULLER: Kalen's played a good amount of football. I thought his improvement from last scrimmage to this one was impactful. I didn't think he was his best. I've got really high expectations for Kalen. He's played some really important football, and I think he's got a lot of leadership capabilities to him too.

He's constantly building his body to get it bigger and stronger, but it was great to see him have that impact. Those are two game changing plays. He might have had two defensive touchdowns today. That's huge for him.

I think he has that in him. I think he has that in him to be that way week in and week out. I think the next several

months it's important for him to build that portfolio because I do trust him and I do believe in him.

Q. I think we've talked about Byron Turner a couple times already, the spring he's had. He had a sequence where he had back-to-back sacks and stalled a drive, forced a third and long, and got a sack on third down. How much improvement have you seen from him this spring?

ADAM FULLER: Byron has made strides. We've invested a lot of reps in Byron, and I think we saw some of that impact today. Just through 14 practices we can trust that he's going to do his job and be in the right position. It's just his pad level and just the fundamentals and being consistent with it, for him to be a really good player.

He's really physical. He's probably behind Jared probably the fastest defensive line we have just straight line besides Jared. I just think his consistency with the fundamentals -- because he just kind of plays through contact. He's a ball of knives. He runs through people.

At times he gets pushed out of the way or gets run by the quarterback and things that we can still really clean up with him. But I've got to remind myself he still is a redshirt freshman. We've had some good young players play good early. I don't want to say he's ahead of schedule or behind schedule, he's just on Byron's schedule.

I think there's more in him, but it was good to see him have some success today. That's a spot that we've obviously had some impact players. I think Byron can be a good piece to us this fall, and I'm looking forward to seeing the gains he makes in the future.

Q. Wanted to follow back up on what you were saying about Kalen. The sense I'm getting maybe is maybe he doesn't realize how dominant he could be. Is that accurate? Or just he hasn't been in that position?

ADAM FULLER: I think we live in a program where each day we try to tell them what they do well and what they need to improve. Today was the most important practice we have because it was today.

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I know Mike said this numerous times to everybody out there, but that's how you get better. So I don't want to say -- I think Kalen does have high expectations for himself. I think he thinks he could be one of the better linebackers in the country. I just -- I trust what I know, and I trust what I've been through with Kalen.

I just know from a consistency standpoint, if he plays at his optimum, he can be a big time playmaker for us this fall. I think that can be from week one all the way to whatever the last game happens to be. I just want to see him maximize each day.

And not just Kalen, but there were times this spring where we weren't our best all the time, and we're constantly striving to get to that point. I think we've seen Kalen make some really splash plays. And it's easy to talk about him right now because he just maybe scored two defensive touchdowns, so he happens to be the topic.

But from where he's been to where he is now has been great growth. I just think there's more. And I think he knows that too, and I can't wait to see what that looks like.

Q. I know you're focused on the guys that you're able to coach that are on the field with you, but are you able to at all kind of project to what you guys will look like when you have the full allotment that you've seen at practice throughout the spring and the guys you were able to bring in but couldn't coach this spring?

ADAM FULLER: Yes.

Q. How does it look?

ADAM FULLER: Well, I don't know, I'm kind of projecting it, but I do -- because the recruitment is still the recruitment. You can't be the coach that, well, I'm going to recruit these guys. He's kind of hurt, so I don't know what that's going to look like. That's awful. It's your job to know what that's going to look like.

Now, it can change because your evaluation could be wrong and they can get here and change directions. So you've got to be open minded to that. But when we signed this class and we brought them into this current group, we knew what it would look like from a structure and how we can use different pieces.

Now, the great question would be, if we had them all, would we be doing everything we could do for the fall? And that would be yes. Just we couldn't do all the different maybe personnel packages or get as much of the dime look stuff with DBs because there's been guys down.

That's part of dealing with spring. But we could get it done with drill work.

There were times we were playing with six DBs in some perimeter drills or some seven-on-seven drills or some half line Skelly drills. During pods, we played some of the defensive ends inside to run some of the games. We played some of the defensive tackles outside in different fronts.

We just haven't been able to do everything we want because of some of the guys that weren't available, but definitely know what it's going to be.

Q. We saw Quindarius show up again today, make some flash plays. That's really been a lot of what we've seen this spring. How impressed have you been with him as a playmaker consistently?

ADAM FULLER: Very impressed. He had a very good winter program. For someone to graduate high school and show up and do what we demand in December, it really takes a very special young man. I think Quin did a really good job. He had a really good tour of duty. His winter sessions were excellent, they really were. He kind of stayed the course and was very consistent.

Then we got out there in practice one, and he looked like a freshman. In practice two, he still looked like a freshman. By practice three to four, I remember grabbing Coach Surtain, and I said, he's really taken to coaching already. By five to now, like I'm comfortable with him when the ball's thrown at him.

Now it's about just getting him when the ball isn't thrown to him, and he's involved in the blitz game, the run fit, the pass fit. Just making sure that we can count on him being where he needs to be with the right leverage. That's not Quin's fault. That's just reps and practice and time and investment.

For me to sit here and say, when the ball's thrown at him, I have a lot of confidence in Quindarius, that's really good praise because that's a young man that's really taken to the program the past couple months. Really like what Pat's done with him, and it's a credit to him and his work ethic, Quindarius.

Q. Last time we talked to you after the second scrimmage, paraphrase, but you mentioned a sense of urgency being needed for some of the safeties. Since that moment to now, what have you seen from how they responded from that second scrimmage?

ADAM FULLER: Better. It was good to get Duke back

involved. He was down for a little bit there. It was good to get Akeem and Shyheim involved. I feel really confident in the skill set of the group. It's my job to make sure they're playing to their abilities. I think today was a good showing by them.

If we do what we should do up front, then maybe all the production isn't there. Do we use them like we're going to use them against LSU? Probably not. Maybe in some categories, but to just -- I think they were good today. I thought our communication was better in the red zone when we started out practice. I think that first group went 3-0. So that was a good start.

First series when we got some of the other guys in there, I thought I like that group. I think we've got the right people there. It will be good to get some of these guys back to be able to add some depth to the group, but I like the top of the group.

Q. If you could talk a little bit about the young linebackers. Omar, obviously, you've talked about him this spring, but also DeMarco and how he's come on as another true freshman.

ADAM FULLER: I thought DeMarco has played really well throughout spring. I thought today probably wasn't his best day. He looked a little bit slow in reactions today. But take away today's performance, and I do think like -- it's hard to say, wow, that looks like a freshman. And at linebacker and safety, that is so difficult not to look like a freshman because you're in the middle of it.

So things come at you from both ways. Coach Fuller, Coach Shannon, Coach Surtain are telling you, hey, look at this guy. Then Coach Norvell's lining up in this formation, they're doing this. And you say, yeah, you've got to do that, but on this, you have to do this. These kids, their wheels keep turning.

He has not been that way. He's been very composed. He's been very assignment sound. He's looked like he's shown good quickness in short areas.

So I've been really pleased that you can go into the summer and you're not on day one with him. I just think the speed of the game, he's got to pick that up, and that's going to come with some reps.

Q. Veteran guys like Renardo and Dennis, they've been here since day one when you guys have gotten here, and they've moved around some positions, and now they've kind of found homes. How reliable are those two guys for you? If you could expound on those guys individually. How good could Renardo be,

and how good is Dennis with rotation up front?

ADAM FULLER: When I got here, I watched Renardo, he played some corner. I went back and watched high school film. There was some film of him as a freshman here. We made the decision to move him to safety based off what he'd done in the program at that point. He gave us some good reps, and he had up and down moments of injuries and trying to come back from it.

I think one of the better decisions we did as a program was putting him at corner. He could have played safety. He can play nickel. He's got all the skills to play a lot of different spots, but we made that decision. And he had a really good year.

I think now he's going to year two of playing the same position, getting the same reps, and that comes with confidence. I think Renardo is one of our strongest competitors. I think he's a really good one-on-one player. He's a really good tackler for a corner. Overall, he's somebody that's really worked hard and earned the trust of his teammates and his coaching staff, and he plays the game the right way. He plays hard.

He's a physical, good one-on-one defender. He's become a really good team player, and I think our players believe in him.

Dennis, taking it all the way back, he was the one in the COVID year, all of a sudden he came back in that North Carolina game and played after practicing three times. It's been a -- look back all those years and everything that's had to transpire for him. Then he was playing really good football, then got hurt, missed most of the year.

Last year did what was best for the team, and we moved him out, moved him a little bit back inside, and that was probably his best football. I thought the Bowl game was one of his best games since he's been here.

Just looking forward to getting some consistency with him and just looking forward to what the impact will be.

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