

Florida State University Football Media Conference

Monday, November 18, 2024

Tallahassee, Florida, USA

Mike Norvell

Press Conference



MIKE NORVELL: Appreciate you all being here. Good getting back out on the field yesterday, getting the guys back in game prep mode. I thought they did a really nice job there last week. Had two really good practices. Mostly was good-on-good, trying to keep speed, working on just overall elements of communication, execution and really having a big fundamental focus in regards to our growth and the development throughout that work.

I thought the guys have handled the changes, some of the changes there just around the program. I think guys have handled it really well. Obviously everybody has feelings about that, coaches, players, all of us, just anytime you do have change, but I thought they did an outstanding job of coming in, focusing on the moment, continuing to push and work, and just looking to play our best game here this week and going to be able to put that on display.

I thought yesterday was a good start to the week, and obviously we have a great week of preparation, and seeing these guys continuing to grow with the opportunity that's in front of us.

Q. With regards to the last couple practices with the staff shift, how have guys responded to the new roles of the coaches and also just in general how have those coaches handled their new roles?

MIKE NORVELL: I think the coaches have done a good job. Some guys are in different or expanded roles from what they've been, and I think they're doing a good job in their preparation for the players, and I think the players have done a great job in their response.

At the end of the day, we're all in control of what we're willing to invest, what we're willing to do, as I think as an entire group, everybody is excited for the opportunity to go get better, and that's what our focus is.

We've got to go play our best game, and it starts with having the best week of prep and making sure we're taking all elements of where we are and the areas and the urgency to go get better. That has to show up on a daily

basis, and I think our guys did a good job of that in the meeting room, and it's carried over to the practice field, and it's got to continue throughout this week.

Q. The positions that have new position coaches, is there a main person? You mentioned last week it would be different people helping out. But like at safeties, is there a main person or is it still kind of a combination?

MIKE NORVELL: Yeah, we've assigned roles accordingly throughout the staff so guys have a point of contact. Obviously we've got multiple guys that are helping coach and facilitate a lot of those things at each position group.

Q. You mentioned early on in the season DJ and Roydell being ruled out for the season. Do those two still have a chance of playing in the final game of the season, and if not will they look for a medical redshirt?

MIKE NORVELL: You know, Roydell is progressing well. I don't expect him back this week. He still has one more game of opportunity to be able to play. We're going to push with everything that we have to probably have him available the next week. He's still just now kind of getting back into the swing of things, and I've liked the progress, liked the work. He's done a great job just trying to pour into the group of running backs.

I don't believe just where things are right now that DJ will be available. He's progressing, definitely putting in a lot of work on his end of it, but he's been remarkable in the meeting room, and I've talked throughout the course of the year just the way he's been there to help kind of support the quarterbacks, obviously that position group, and obviously this team. He's been at every practice, been very engaged, trying to assist and help, but as he's coming back, he's starting to get a chance to throw the ball a little bit, but I just don't know if it's going to progress in time. But definitely he's working every day.

Q. Even though there are coaches in new roles or different roles, how are you looking at the next couple weeks as an evaluation process for them to see if they can stay in those roles permanently or is that even an



option?

MIKE NORVELL: Yeah, we all have a job and responsibility. Some roles have changed. Some responsibilities have expanded. My expectation is that we go be the absolute best that we can be. I'm definitely grateful for the work our coaches are pouring in, and I definitely believe in what they'll be able to accomplish with these roles and the expectation for what needs to show up there on game day, and as we continue to go and play these next two weeks.

I have no doubt that that's what we're going to get from our staff and definitely looking forward to these guys showing all of who we are with the opportunity that they have.

Q. You mentioned last weekend and Mike Alford mentioned in the boosters' Town Hall that you've had a lot of people reach out and show interest in different positions. You already have a pretty full plate. Are you apportioning time to focus on those long-term decisions, or how are you handling it?

MIKE NORVELL: This last week, there was a lot working through it, and even throughout the course of this past weekend. It was a lot of time that I poured into that, whether it was conversations, whether it was evaluation, where there's been a really good amount of interest in the positions. So just kind of sequencing through what could be the right fit in each of the roles.

There will be time that I have kind of sectioned off throughout the week that I'm going to be able to have the best balance that I can have. I want to pour everything that I have into these players and the opportunity for the week that's ahead, but where there are moments and chances for me to focus on the coaching whether it's search or continuing to go through that process, obviously I'm going to be able to do that to the best of my abilities with that, and I think I've got a great structure to be able to make that happen.

Q. When you look at the last two games, particularly this game, Charleston Southern, is it more about looking at what they do or is it strictly about execution, and what's the focus this week?

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, it's all. We've got to go out there, we've got to play our best game. For what they do, it's a part of -- we're working to put our players in the best position to be able to achieve success, to be able to go out and execute and to be able to play fast, play free, and you get the opportunity to go make the play. We need to see that happen.

So you don't go into the game -- obviously we've been studying for all things that they do and throughout the course of the season, and you're looking at match-ups, you're looking at structures, schemes, all of that, and then at the end of the day it's upon our players, coaches to go out there and put together the best plan that we can that fits our players, for them to go and be able to execute at a very high level.

Q. (Indiscernible) kind of evaluating what an ideal candidate would be?

MIKE NORVELL: Absolutely, that's a huge part of what we're doing and looking to be able to fill is we want the best staff of coaches that are teachers, developers, guys that have shown and proven that on the field, and then also guys that are great relationship builders.

I think when you look across college football, the statement of what a great recruiter is, it's really twofold. Somebody that -- can you sign them? Great. What do you do with them? You've got to have the relationship, but you've also got to have the development factor that ties into that, and then making sure that the evaluation piece of it is critical, too. I think that's one of the things that we've got to make sure that the guys that we're bringing are the right fit as coaches, players, everybody involved that really can embrace and help us advance in all those areas, but absolutely, the recruiting piece of that and the relationship, people that truly enjoy that aspect of this profession and building relationships with the players is going to be critical.

Q. I think I know what you might say, but I feel like I should ask. I know Brock and Luke have basically been co-starters. Last week Brock started but they both played. How are you evaluating them going into the next couple weeks and is there a chance that Luke could start this week's game?

MIKE NORVELL: Well, you know, every rep that they get is an opportunity for them to show where they are, their development, their execution. So as both of them have played, I think it is right because that's how they've basically approached each game, and I'm looking forward to this week. I'm looking forward to these guys coming out and competing to get better. I thought they did a really good job of that there in the bye week and their work.

What I love about both of those guys is the ownership of action. There's been some challenges at playing the position this year, just with different elements of things that we've seen, things that you've had to kind of work through, the good and the bad, but they own their work, and their passion to go get better, and I think they're doing a good job of what they're doing in the meeting rooms, of what

they're trying to transition that and become more consistent there on the practice field, and to see that carry over into the games is big here in the next couple weeks.

Excited about the evaluation part of it for them and just continuing to see them grow.

Q. You mentioned last week that throughout the season your team has kind of faded in the second half of games. Do you think strength and conditioning is any part of that, and have you had any conversation with Coach Storms about changing up the strength and conditioning program a little bit this off-season?

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, we've got -- I believe in a very high level of our strength and conditioning program. Coach Storms has proven and done a job throughout the course of the years. Still when you look at speeds, numbers, things that translate from practice to what's showing up in games, all those things are things that are factors that I do look at.

There's a lot of things that have shown up that don't really deal as much with the strength and conditioning aspect of it when it comes to elements of our execution or things that we're doing, but we all have to push and get better, and there's not one department that -- whether it's strength and conditioning, athletic training, coaching, all of it, we're all pushing to be the best that we can be to go and improve.

We all have ownership in it, but I definitely believe wholeheartedly in that group, and it's just proven through the course of time. What they've been able to do this year obviously as a football team, our performance is nowhere near what any of us expect or what we desire, so we go back and evaluate where our potential disconnects, where can we have maybe a bigger point of emphasis to get the desired result that we want, and that comes in every area.

But to answer the question, I've got a lot of confidence in that group.

Q. Obviously Coach Shannon had a role in the defense before. Have you got any sense since the change that (indiscernible) personnel or scheme and whether or not those are things that could be implemented in the last couple weeks?

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, yes. As Coach Shannon has now assumed the role of our interim DC, we're going to do everything that we can to be the best that we've been throughout the course of the year, and if it's personnel changes, if it's different things there that we can do to attack in the course of a game -- I want our players to play fast. I want them to be confident in what they're doing. I

want them to make sure when they get on the field, the communication, what they're being asked from a schematic responsibility, that it's something that plays and fits to them, but I want them to be able to go out and play fast and play free here these next two games.

I think Coach Shannon has got a great plan for that, and obviously last week was -- him jumping into and assuming that role, obviously he's had a lot of ownership in a lot of things that we've been doing and a lot of respect for the coach that he is and has been for this program, but now he's making the call when it comes to just some of the finer elements of the game plan and things that -- working to fit our personnel in this match-up and obviously just seeing our guys continue to grow.

I've given him the freedom to be able to have some of those subtle changes, but ultimately it's still all about our guys being able to be confident when they step on the field and being able to go out there and execute and be the best that we've been throughout the season.

Q. You mentioned last week respecting conference championship games in terms of like a timeline, but if that's not a factor, how likely or unlikely are you to have some vacancies filled before the regular season ends?

MIKE NORVELL: Probably out of respect for all people in the regular season, we're working through process, but like I said last week, ideally when the regular season ends you'd like to be able to have a really strong direction of where it's going, and there might be guys that could potentially continue to be playing, where either announcements, agreements that are made, we'll see if that's potential options. There could be guys that assume roles really quick after the season ends.

That's kind of -- there's still a lot of ebb and flow before decisions are made on who's going to take those positions and obviously all the conversations that surround that.

Q. As you approach the off-season, how do you view restructuring the front office stretch of it and the Town Hall meeting that I referenced earlier they talked about evaluation being more important. How do you view the front office changing alongside that?

MIKE NORVELL: I think when you look at all parts of the program, there's different dynamics that are going to be new, with the revenue sharing, with that on deck. I think when you look at roles, responsibilities, the personnel structure of it is something that we definitely want to continue to enhance to make sure that we're able to fill the needs and also make sure that we are doing the best job of



our evaluations on multiple levels, whether it's within our roster, whether it's the high school level in recruiting, whether it's the transfer world. Just make sure that we have the personnel that's necessary and having that structured to where we can be as efficient and effective as possible because obviously high school recruiting, that stretches over years, and when it comes to who's available in the portal, what that ends up becoming, it's an absolute sprint whenever it comes to that level of the evaluation.

So make sure that we're doing our due diligence throughout the course of all levels of that process and having the right personnel structured to be able to be as efficient but also as effective as we possibly can be.

Q. Specifically about the offensive line, you mentioned guys handling the changes. But that position is one where there's multiple guys who have been here for a long time with one position coach, and on the one hand they're probably more mature than some other guys, but on the other hand that relationship is so tight. Have you spent any time with those guys, especially the veterans?

MIKE NORVELL: I think they've handled themselves really well. In all reality, there's a lot of ownership within this program. It's players, coaches -- obviously anytime you make a change, there's nothing easy about that, nothing easy about it for the staff, nothing easy about it for the players. Players take accountability to it, as well, and that's where for them to even -- you work through the emotion of change, and when you have great relationships -- I thought our coaches, they did; they poured into these players.

Obviously the on-the-field results of this year have not been what any of us desire and changes were made. But the players take a lot of accountability to that, too, and helping them understand, well, we are where we are, but you have the opportunity of today, and what are you going to do with today to honor the work of those that have helped you throughout your journey, that have helped get you here, that have helped provide the stage that you get to go play this game on.

They might not be with you here now, but you can still honor that by the work and the performance and the growth that you show. That's something that I think those guys, they really care about each other, and I've really been proud of -- especially the older players, how they've kind of poured into the younger guys, and even the younger players, which they all have emotions, but even for the younger players that maybe this is the first time they've ever been a part of a change and just how to kind of work through that and make sure that you can still focused on the task at hand, control the things that you

ultimately can control, and just be there to support each other, through the work, through the continued investment in relationship, and just working through what is a challenging situation. But I've really been proud of our players and how they've handled themselves in that.

One thing I do want to recognize this week is our Seminole Heritage game. We are definitely excited and honored for the opportunity that we get to represent the Seminole tribe of Florida and for what they mean to this program, this university. I've had the opportunity to build many great relationships with members of the Seminole tribe, and it has been really special. As we go out this week, we understand that this is -- it's a football game, but it's a lot more than just a game. Definitely look forward to honoring the Seminole tribe of Florida and obviously all the heritage of that with how we play good this week.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports