

# Florida State University Football Media Conference

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Tallahassee, Florida, USA

## Coach Mike Norvell

### Press Conference



Florida 31, Florida State 11

MIKE NORVELL: First off, extremely disappointed in today. Made too many mistakes throughout the course of the game. Turned the ball over five times. Too many negative plays. Their offense, lacked explosive play. Had our shots. Had opportunities. Just couldn't capitalize on them.

Defensively we gave up the explosive play. Missed tackles. You know, couple times missed communication. Didn't fit where we needed to be and they took advantage of that.

You play in a game like this, I mean, you got to play with passion. You got to play with control. You got to make sure that with all the emotions that you have, it still comes down to discipline and fundamentals.

When you turn the ball over like we did, puts you an extremely difficult situation to have success. Unfortunate learning experience for some young players, but something that ultimately this game means so much to our program and to what we're about, and absolutely nowhere near the standard of how we want it to be and what it needs to look like.

So it's a disappointing ending to an awful season. It's the best way I can put it. Very disappointing that we performed the way we did. There's a lot of circumstances that have shown up. Had our fair share of adversity and some things outside of our control and some things we did control.

Had a lot of young players that got opportunities and had to kind of get thrown into it before maybe their time. But with each of those reps they got, it's an opportunity to grow, opportunity to build upon it.

Just like I told the team there in the locker room, this is getting fixed. It's going to be an immediate, fast fix. We are going to make sure that every person a part of this program is all in in that process for what's necessary to go be better in how we respond, in how we continue to fight,

develop, to execute, to go out there and perform to win the game and putting everything that we have to be the best we can be.

And it's going to start here in the off-season. Obviously we have recruiting. Signing day here this next week. We've got the portal I guess recruiting season opening up. That will be our focus of high school and potential additions of transfers coming in.

Then starting in January and really leading up, everything to that point it's going to be our focus to bounce back as a program. That is what we're going to do. It's going to take an incredible amount of work. It's going to take a unique set of guys that are going to come in here. The ones that are returning and the ones coming in, be prepared to fight every day for our identity and for what we're all about.

I've got a lot of confidence in who I've got in this locker room that will be returning and a lot of confidence in the guys that we'll be bringing in to help on this journey. This is done being the way that we played this year.

Obviously I take full responsibility in that. Went through the season, a lot of evaluation, a lot of areas where we have to improve and where we have to get better.

I'm willing to do what's necessary to make sure that we don't ever have a season anywhere near what we put on display here this year.

So to the Florida State fans, the University, past players, even the guys in that locker room, I'm sorry. I'm sorry for what showed up throughout the course of this year. It will be fixed.

**Q. You spun it forward a great bit there. What did you learn from this year? What was the biggest lesson to help prevent something like this from ever happening again?**

MIKE NORVELL: There were layers to events that happened throughout the course of the season. It's every area of the program has to improve, has to be better when it comes to all elements of our development, continuing to



challenge the mindset, continuing to make sure that we are executing doing the things and being able to translate through the course of the game the things that we emphasize throughout practice, fall camp, the off season, because we did not do a good enough job of that.

It's the coach's responsibility; player's choice. When it comes to the accountability of the actions that show up on the field, obviously did not do a good enough job as a coaching staff, and there is joint accountability in all of that. I'm solely responsible for all things, right, that happen within this program.

But everybody that is within the program has to make that same choice. They have though make the same decision. Just as I told the team as we move forward, I want it all from every single person that's in that locker room, a part of this team, people joining this team because we did do a good enough job of taking the things that we work and emphasize and push as values and standards within this program to not show up well enough on game days throughout this season.

**Q. Can you comment on the reports that Gus Malzahn is coming in as offensive coordinator? Where do you stand with the coaching hires you have to make, I guess?**

MIKE NORVELL: You know, I know we've identified an offensive coordinator and very excited about who that will be. I know there is still some things we have to finalize there in the I guess hiring process before I can comment.

Is that right? I'm excited about who we have identified though.

**Q. You've talked the last few weeks about having to split time between starting to do some look-ahead stuff and trying to give your best to this current team. I don't know if excitement is the term, but how ready are you to make this off-season and that improvement your full-time focus starting tomorrow?**

MIKE NORVELL: Yeah, I mean, obviously you got to -- this is a unique calendar that I guess is our new normal. When you have big changes like we've had, you know, everything that we do is either building us for what's going to be ahead and obviously trying to put ourselves in the best position for the results, the experience on the field as we finish the season.

Did not do a good enough job here tonight. There is a great deal of excitement for what's ahead. You know, I believe in, like I said, the young players that we have that will be returning. I'm absolutely excited about guys that will

be coming in to be a part of this bounceback.

For us, I mean, as a staff, making sure that we evaluate and find the right leaders, which I'm very confident we are doing, and have done in spots.

But it's going to be a great push. I'm excited for that work. I'm excited for that challenge. I'm excited for all the things to be able to put an identity and who we are on display, because we got a way from that. Our identity did not show up on a consistent basis the way it needed to throughout the course of this season.

That's on me, that's on us. It's my job to get it fixed.

**Q. I know just happened like 20 minutes ago, but talking about the drive and your want and will, how much do you think pulling that flag out of the field is something that starts that? Is that an image, a moment that will -- you could foresee driving you for the next months, weeks, years?**

MIKE NORVELL: I mean, I don't need anything extra, but that's not going to happen. That's not going to happen here. I'm going to do everything in my power to make sure we don't experience that again.

**Q. Coach, just following up on that, can you talk about what happened in mid-field and your discussion with Coach Napier?**

MIKE NORVELL: Told him what I thought. They won the game and they have the right to celebrate just like we have in the previous years. This is the way that you operate? That's fine. You want to come do that? That's absolutely your decision that you can have within a team.

But I just told him what I thought.

**Q. Kind of touched on it, but the next few days filling out this recruiting class, how important is it going to be and how quickly do you have to change the mindset and get in that recruiting mode?**

MIKE NORVELL: We've been in it. It's not something tomorrow you're all of a sudden going to turn on. We've had a really tough season. Obviously you go through a tough season, deal with a lot of negative, that kind of builds upon that.

You know, recruiting 18, 17, 18 year old young men, easily influenced through opinions of others, when you find the guys that have a strong understanding of the opportunity, of what they're looking to be a part of and what they want to be able to leave their mark throughout that journey,



that's when you got a chance to do something special.

We have had those guys that have come in in the past and we're going to have them come in now. Because like I said, this will be a year we look back and it's going to be sick to remember, but it will be one that absolutely will never happen again.

The people that are coming in are going to be a part of that. The people that are here and that return will be a part of that. And, yes, the choice has to be made. So as much of the talent and the ability, which all are critical, it's the mindset. It's the approach. It's the toughness. It's the willingness to be uncomfortable.

It's all of it, because that's what happens in life. That's what happens throughout the course of a football game. That's what we're going to go seek and that's what we're going to bring into this program.

**Q. Coach, said it will be an immediate fast fix. Took you four seasons to make this a championship caliber program. Why will it be such a quick fix to do it all over again in one year?**

MIKE NORVELL: It took us two years, and the third year we won ten games and we had games that we weren't good enough in the middle of that season where we had opportunities to compete. We won the championship and went undefeated and won 19 games in a row between that third and fourth season.

I know what it looks like. Even coming in that first year, plenty of challenges with even how we got to get started, that kind of made it even that much more difficult. We didn't get to go into a high school for the first year, almost year and a half that we were here. There are plenty of things that we've had to work through during our time here.

This year, absolutely unacceptable. Awful season. I know the guys that we have, especially in these last few recruiting classes, guys that got a lot of early experience that didn't always look good, but opportunities for them to learn and grow through.

It will be all those experiences, the growth, development, and the push moving forward. That's going to be a huge spark for us as we get into the off-season, get into building, identifying -- building that identity for this team in the next season and making sure we get the right guys to come in and be that spark as well.

And so I'm confident, because I went through my entire life, I know what it is to be successful. There is plenty of situations you might find yourself in that you might not want

to be in, but there is a way that you work, you approach the things that are in front of you and you will rise and you will achieve it.

And we're going to do that here.

**Q. Obviously the roster is going to look much different next year. Do you already have an idea what it's going to look like? As far as the young players you really like and are excited about, do you feel good about how many of them are going to stay?**

MIKE NORVELL: The question keeps getting asked for six weeks. Who is going to stay? At the end of the day, yes, kids can transfer. That's not a secret. Ultimately, if you have a bad season, things don't go the way you want, first instinct is just to run and go, I got to get away from that, well, you're not -- we signed up for this together, and guess what? We're all a part of it. The players that are here, the coaches, we are all a part of what this season was.

You know, ultimately, yeah, we all have to take accountability. What are you going to do to fix it? It's easy to leave, to quit. It's human nature. It's what everybody wants to do. You know what? If that's going to be the driving force, go find an easier situation to go jump myself into, good luck. You're probably not going to fulfill the things you're capable of.

We've had guys that have left here before. A lot of them thought they were going to go to some great situation in a much better place. You know what? I usually get a call back a year later seeing if they can come back. Even throughout this year, for as bad as we've been, I mean, I totally understand that, but you know what? Also, I've watched these guys work.

There has not been a time where our guys have pulled back and not worked. Now, has it been as disciplined, detailed, have we been able to translate that to the field? No, we have not.

That's why there is a full scope evaluation. But, yes, do I talk to our players about what it's going to look like moving forward? Absolutely. I try to go as far from sugarcoating it as possible so they know how hard and challenging we're going to push to go get this right.

If that scares them off, so be it. Not one of them has pulled back. You know, there is all different circumstances in college football nowadays. You know what? It's going to be out there. If they're quick to leave, then probably not going to be the difference maker that we need to be able to get through all -- where we are right now.

I've got a lot of confidence in this group. I got confidence because I am around them. I've around them a ton. You know what? Some guys, we got some players that didn't even play this year I think will be contributors this next season. They just need time.

Guys that played this year that honestly didn't really want them to play this year because I knew there would be some challenges, but they got thrown into it and had to grow through it.

It's just one of those parts of life. Sometimes you find yourself in situations that you just don't want to be in but you get to make the choice to go pour everything you have to be the best you can be.

We'll learn and grow from it. Obviously anybody that we're going to be recruiting, I'm going to let them know exactly what to expect, too. Just like we did two years ago, three years ago when guys came into this program and said that's what I want to be a part of. That's what I want to be -- I want to be that spark.

I want to be somebody that's going to stand up and be able to help guide through what was an extremely challenging season. That's how you become legendary in a place. We had bunch of guys in these last two teams that left here as legends because of the work and decisions they made. You know what? Carried them really well here and it's carrying them really well there in the next phase in their life, too.

We got a lot of those guys, I firmly believe that, on this team. I'm not expecting a bunch of them to go run away. I'm not. Do I talk to them? Yes. But I don't sit there and say, are you going to come back? Please don't leave.

That's not going to be it. They're too strong for that. I mean, they understand what's in front of us. They understand the opportunity. Go be what you came here to be. Didn't show up this year for our football team, but you're here to be a difference maker. Go be a difference.

**Q. You spoke of the calendar and how December is cramped. How important is it to have your staff finalized as far as dismissals and hires for returning players?**

MIKE NORVELL: Most important thing is right. That's the most important thing. We have to get it right. Do I want everybody hired yesterday? Yes. I do. It's an easy thing to be able to work through. You can point to it.

You can have the relationships. But that's not going to be the reality of what it is. We are progressing really, really

well on what the staff is going to be. Very excited about developments and the opportunities that are ahead. It's going to be an incredible staff.

But still the most important thing is to make sure it's right. The right fit for the young men we're bringing in. The right dynamic. Going to be some continued development throughout our football program of areas where I know we have to be better.

When you have a season like this, there is a lot of areas we have to be better. So from a top-down approach that's what I'm searching for. For the minds, the abilities that a coach brings, the heart they have, the impact they're going to have on others, whether it's coaches, players, all elements of this program, there is a great responsibility what it needs to look like.

So I'm not going to rush just to say that we have somebody. I'm going to make sure that we're detailed and thorough and we get the right person to come in and be the best at the job they're tasked to do. Obviously be sprinting forward from the minute they get here.

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