

Florida State University Football Media Conference

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

Tallahassee, Florida, USA

Coach Mike Norvell

Press Conference



MIKE NORVELL: Good morning. Appreciate everybody being here. Excited to be at report day. Already started meetings here this morning with the players.

Really proud of the work that they've put in throughout the course of the summer. I think it's been a very productive summer, one that we've tried to utilize the time we could spend together. They're on the field, being able to maximize the time in the meeting room as well.

Really working to build a cohesiveness within this group, and that's one of the big focuses as we get into this fall camp, is really work to establish each side of the ball. It can be a lot of competition, guys that have done a great job and continuing to grow and develop in their time here at Florida State, whether it's been seven, eight months or whether it's been five or six years.

But for this team to come together and to be able to put their stamp on this 2025 season, it's a ton of energy, excitement. I've talked a lot a week ago there at the ACC Media Days about the edge that we've been looking for and really demanding on a daily basis and what we're doing and what we want it to look like, because there is one shot, there is one opportunity.

And it's going to take everybody in our program to go and push, pull, whatever the task is that's in front of you, whatever it takes to go and to win at all things that we're doing and to continue to push this program and to get this program back to what I expect it to be, what it deserves to be.

And what better way than to be able to kick off here in Doak Campbell Stadium at full capacity on August 30th. There's a lot of excitement within all things in our program for what's here ahead.

We've got 25 practices starting off tomorrow. And I know our guys are ready to work. I do want to give a shout out to just all of the departments that have invested so much time and energy in helping prepare these players, from Coach Storms and his staff in strength and conditioning, to

Josh Chatman and all of our athletic training group, to Jaden Hamil in nutrition, and obviously Kenneth in the group there, academically.

It's all hands on deck when it comes to helping these guys continue to grow and build that confidence that's necessary and obviously the work that's gone into allowing them to put themselves in a position to really go do something special. That's what we're set out to go do.

The work continues, but the 2025 journey starts tomorrow, once we hit that practice field.

Q. What are some of the things you did this offseason to try to establish that edge? What was different about this offseason in regards to working towards that goal?

MIKE NORVELL: For us, everything had a focus of competition. Whether it was back in winter program, tour of duty, there was not a day that went by where you would have the work, the reps, the things that were throughout the course of a workout. But we ended with a competition.

I wanted to see guys, with all eyes on them, where they would go, what it would look like when it's one-on-one, somebody's going to win and somebody's going to lose, and what you're willing to pour into it, what you're willing to take from the experience. Nobody ever wants to face disappointment with those opportunities.

But also got to see the response. I got to see the edge that was brought when things were good for somebody and at times whenever it wasn't. A lot of group opportunities that guys that had a chance to work through and work with, and just trying to establish that identity. It didn't matter where, when, time, situation. If you get a chance to compete, go put it all out there. And with the result, where do you go from there?

I've really liked the mindset of this team. I've liked the way they've challenged each other, inspired each other, pushed each other. And that's something that is needed and is something that I think this football team has really embraced.



And I'm excited to see that carry over into fall camp as we get a little bit deeper into the situations that we're going to potentially face and making sure that we're building this team in all three phases with these guys truly leading the charge.

Q. You talked before about, with Gus being, your role, being able to meet players where they're at more, spend more time with them in different ways. For you, what has that meant for you to be able to spend time with players, get to know them at a personal level?

MIKE NORVELL: I love that part of it. I'm here to help these guys go live out the dreams they have and to maximize the potential, to be able to showcase and shine for all areas of their life, but then specifically for the players that they're continuing to grow to be.

As you go through the course of a year, whether it's offseason, spring practice, summer workouts and the season that's ahead, there's going to be plenty of situations that are going to show up where guys have to, they've got to go take a step and they've got to respond to the good, the bad, the things that feel good and then obviously the things that -- it might be a disappointing play, a disappointing moment or might be a tragedy that they experience outside of the football field.

But to be able to meet them where they are and to help guide them and elevate the response that they have, that's what makes this journey worth it, is to be able to tell the stories.

We've got an incredible group of young men. I think they've got outstanding character. They really spend a lot of time investing in each other there on the outside.

That's another part of it, just to get their perspective. As a coach, you can see it, you can believe it, but these players, I mean, they live it day to day and side by side. And just to be able to even hear from them who it is that's having that positive influence or who that is that is challenging them and just really being able to grasp that perspective, whether it's in a one-on-one meeting or just kind of meeting them where they're at has really been good for me.

It's something that allows me to implement different -- whether it's different strategies, different things of where we might have a need, or be able to just help a player along through a situation that they're going through.

So really looking forward to continue to build upon that for all the things on the field as well as off the field as we go through the course of this season. But specifically starting

with fall camp.

Q. We haven't asked you about Zach Arnett what he brings to the staff, and now adding to this larger group of former head coaches you now have on the staff, what does that do for just the staff overall?

MIKE NORVELL: So grateful for the opportunity to have Coach Arnett here. And I think Zach is, one, outstanding person. Just having him for the last, I guess, right around a month or three weeks, whatever that time frame has been, just seeing him and his interaction with the guys on this staff, seeing his interaction with the players, he brings great energy.

This is the first time I'm getting a chance to work side by side with him, but has had great relationships. I've had a great deal of respect for the job that he's done throughout the course of his career. And to be able to bring him in, somebody who is obviously very familiar with Coach White; Tony coached him when he was in college. This goes back 15, 20 years, just for their relationship.

And to be able to have guys that have that belief in each other, the understanding, but also can -- Zach brings his perspective on all things and helping support and push our defense as well as our program to where we all want it to go. So it was a great opportunity and very excited about his role and the impact that he's going to make here.

Q. We've heard you say, we've heard some players say it, but the word "desperate" to be better. We've heard you say that. Can you contextualize what that looks like on the field? What are you looking for out of this group of players when you say you want them to be desperate to be better?

MIKE NORVELL: I want every bit of who they are to go be what they can become. And there's not going to be a player who stands up and says they want to be mediocre or they want to be average. Everybody's going to say the same things.

It's like every team when they report -- this is the year, this is the time. It all sounds the same. But on a daily basis, what shows up? I mean, are you truly willing to give everything?

As important of the one play, the one moment, the one day, the one opportunity that you have, are you willing to give all with a sense of desperation to make it happen? It might not look good, might not feel good. The odds might be stacked against you, but are you willing to rise up and overcome?



And as we go through this process of helping a group of 18- to 22-year-olds, a coaching staff, everybody coming together for this season, are we really willing to go and put it all out there and to live and be what we say we desire.

You've got to come with a daily focus, a daily edge. That competition has got to drive everything that's within. But you have to eliminate all areas of complacency. You've got to eliminate all areas of comfort. You've got to be willing to give every bit of it.

That sense of desperation, that's what I want for this team. I don't say it in a negative light or anything else. It's just being able to get all that we can with the players, the staff, this program that's in front of us. And I've got a lot of belief for what that can be. I don't want to hold anything back.

Q. In checking with Coach Storms after the summer workouts, did you guys notice any notable or remarkable physical transformations amongst any of the players specifically?

MIKE NORVELL: Yeah, I've been really pleased with what I've seen from our guys. We've had some guys that have done a great job in gaining, losing, all that, but what I like is just the body comps.

Yes, everything is tested, everything has gone through. At the end of the day, I know what speed looks like and I know what the power of movements in the weight room. Now it's about the application.

I feel good about where this team is from a skill set process and what we've been able to build and develop and kind of the position that they're in. Now it's time to go apply that.

But they've done a remarkable amount of work in helping prepare themselves for what's ahead here for these next 25 practices. But that's what I want to go see. I want to see the application of all of the gains in the weight room for the things that they've been able to do physically because we have an impressive group when it comes to that, but it's time to go apply it into and play a game.

Q. Guys in the summer, talk about what you've seen out of them so far. I know you haven't done a fall camp yet but them coming in. And, two, there's a lot of excitement for 2026. Seems like a lot of kids are believing what you're doing going into the Alabama game. Talk about those.

MIKE NORVELL: I think it's been great seeing this entire team really come together with the guys that returned from a year ago, just the mindset that they brought, the work they've been pouring in. The newcomers that have joined

us that were here throughout the spring, I thought was really good to get a sense of the foundation of the relationships and the impact that these guys can make.

And even coming into the summer, we've been able to add some really impressive young men that also, I think, have a chance to be dynamic players. Jerry Wilson is a guy that's really stood out to me, just through the workouts. His mindset, his approach, the work that he's poured in, even just in the meeting room, doing things on his own to be able to help accelerate his practice.

Gavin Sawchuk and Gavin Blackwell, those guys, they've transitioned very nicely into this program. And I think that you see the skill set that you had seen on film and the opportunity that they're going to have to be able to make an impact within our program.

But coupling that with some of the freshmen that have come in that, I think, absolutely have a chance to be able to make their impact as we get into the season. Obviously getting out there and seeing them in pads and being able to go against somebody else rather than just the athletic talent. That's going to be a big part of our evaluation.

And putting all these different guys into position to showcase all that they can do and finding those right groupings -- obviously the competition and who's going to go out and be the game changer that we need on a consistent basis as those guys are able to perform and showcase all that they are.

Q. Cromo is one of those guys who has come in over the summer. I remember you saying at a booster event that he might be the recruit you've watched the most in that process. Has he been what you guys think so far in the early stages?

MIKE NORVELL: Absolutely. I mean, he's one of those freshmen that I'm excited to see his transition. In my coaching career, I don't think I've ever watched a prospect more in person than what I've watched him. I think every year I was able to see him play in a game throughout his high school career -- basketball, I mean I know the competitor he is. I know the versatility that he can bring and just the overall level of talent.

And he definitely has not disappointed through the course of summer workouts. And it's a lot to be able to make that jump, but I think he's built for it. And very excited to get him out there on the field and see him and what he can do.

Q. Seemed like there was a lot of excitement about the backup quarterbacks in the spring, the way they were adapting to the offense and settling in. What have you



seen from them since spring to now, in terms of just understanding and comfort level?

MIKE NORVELL: It's been a great push. Obviously, as you go into summer workouts, you can get your allotted time on the field but you can't go against the defense. There's some things that limits you in that type of action.

I know our players, they did a great job of trying to do as much as they could on their own in helping facilitate that competition. But these guys have done a wonderful job knowing what their role and responsibility is on a given play, but being able to take command and control of what we're asking them to do and asking the offense to do as a whole.

I think you see the efficiency in how they're operating, you see the growth and just their comfort and footwork, timing. The things that they're able to do on air has been really good. And I'm excited to see that carry over as we get a chance to compete, offense/defense, here in fall camp.

Q. Obviously since the spring, the House settlement has passed. How did that change anything in your offseason? Did you feel like you guys were prepared? Did you feel there were any challenges you didn't anticipate? Kind of talking about that settlement structure and the rev-share agreements, where are you guys with that?

MIKE NORVELL: I think we're in a good place with that. Obviously, it's something that was anticipated of coming throughout the year. But until it was set and done, it was something we kind of had to work through and be prepared.

But worked hand in hand with our general counsel, and I think that they've done an extraordinary job, poured in a lot of time, work.

This is an opportunity that's really special for our student-athletes to be able to impact their futures. Obviously all the things they've put themselves into a position to do, and I feel really good about where we are and just all things as we get to kick off here tomorrow.

Q. What gives you confidence with your offensive line, specifically the four transfers you brought in, who are kind of perceived starters at this stage?

MIKE NORVELL: I've seen it. You see it through -- every guy that came in was a multiyear starter at a previous institution. You've seen their growth, their development. I feel like we've got a great group that they understand what it is to play that position.

And it's easy to come in have a singular focus of themselves, but these guys have truly done a wonderful job of building the group as a whole and bringing some of the guys that were here, some of the guys that have come in, whether it's the freshmen or younger players that are continuing to develop, just seeing that group really gel together.

But we've seen these guys. We've got a great understanding of ability, potential, but also how they've responded throughout the course of their careers to the good, to the bad, and I have big expectations for the growth that they're going to show this year, as an individual, but collectively being able to reestablish our expectation for how that position needs to go and perform.

And I've got a lot of excitement, and I think we've got depth. We've got talent. We've got ability. But guys that I think really have a high ceiling for what they can do together.

Q. Knowing that depth charts are always fluid and moving, do you have a sense for just how fluid this might be in preseason camp given the amount of new guys you have coming in?

MIKE NORVELL: I think finding those, probably more into specifics of here's early into the season, the roles that guys define for themselves.

And you're going to have a lot of competition at positions, I think guys that bring versatility in what they can do on both sides of the ball.

We've got two dynamic coordinators, I think the way they utilize personnel as their secret sauce in their success throughout the course of their careers. So finding roles that our players establish for themselves as they've shown continued growth from when we ended in spring practice or when guys have now come on campus and whether it's the different groupings, different roles, packages, all the things we can do because of that to help showcase that I think will really make this a team that can be dangerous with the talent that we have and the guys that we've been able to see grow within this program.

So I think there will be a little bit of ebb and flow in it throughout the 25 practices, but all of our focus is about making sure that when we get here August 30th, whatever grouping it is, whatever situation that shows up, that the best are out there and confident in what they're being asked to go perform at an elite level.

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