

14 Florida State (7-1, 4-1 ACC) 33, NR Miami (4-4, 3-2 ACC) 20
Sun Life Stadium • Miami Gardens, Fla.
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Al Golden Postgame Press Conference

On the decision to start Stephen Morris...

I thought it looked better on Friday than clearly it did on Thursday. Until you see him go out there and run around and actually stress it like he did in pregame, we were uncertain. I don't regret playing Stephen in this game. I thought he gives us the best chance to win the game, and we didn't get it done.

On keeping the game close until the fourth quarter...

I thought we played hard. I thought we coached hard, I thought we played hard, and we lost to a good team. That's it. We lost to a team that is ahead of us right now. We have to develop our guys and recruit some more and keep working, and don't make any excuses. They're a better team right now. We had opportunities that we did not convert. They did - hats off to them. Clearly they have an excellent pass rush and got to our quarterback, and we're not doing the same on the other end. We're not getting to the quarterback in four, and obviously we let [EJ] Manuel out too many times.

They wore us down a little bit because we weren't converting on third down on offense. I think we were 25 percent for the day, had to keep giving the ball back and we just couldn't hold up. Then it turned into a field position game. Just too many opportunities - too many catches down field we didn't make, too many interceptions we didn't finish, and obviously an onside kick that we couldn't get a better look than we got, and to not convert it is a shame.

On the timeout situation at the end of the first half...

There was a lot of confusion obviously. I knew they had one timeout left, so that was their answer for the 10-second run-off, and then they said it was the half so I lost half my team. Obviously I wasn't worried about that, but if we're in the situation where it's the final kick of the half, we'd like to get Seantrel [Henderson] and Malcolm [Bunche] and our big people in there. Just so much confusion.

On the performance of the offense...

We just have to keep getting better. We're playing a lot of good teams. We certainly have to be more efficient - that's fair. We have to do a better job on third down, I don't think there's any question about that. We have to make some plays on the ball. We had some chances downfield, where we have to make those catches. We just have to take a deep breath. It's been a long 12 weeks against a really tough schedule playing a lot of young guys. We need to take a deep breath, get healed up and see where we're at over the next couple days. See if we want to practice at all or if we won't, we'll see, and then get ready for Virginia Tech.

On Duke Johnson's injury...

I have no idea to be honest with you. I couldn't even tell you what it is. I was told he was out. I think they x-rayed him, that's all I know.

On the importance of the bye week...

It's critical. We're hanging on by a thread. We need time off. Brutal schedule, eight weeks in a row, young team. We need time off.

On the defensive momentum during the game...

I think we got worn out a little bit. You have to keep pace with them and you have to convert on third down. We weren't making the plays. Clearly they're rotating three backs in there and they wore us down a little bit in the fourth quarter. We probably needed another takeaway, we had opportunities. They're throwing the ball into Cover 2 for 30- or 40- yard gain and it should be an interception. We have to come through and make a play there.

As I said to the team, give Florida State a lot of credit. They're a very good team right now. They're deep, and that's okay. We know what we need to do. They're ahead of us right now. We need to buckle down and get better. We need to develop our current team and we need to add to it.

On the team's fast start...

I think it was a better feel - I think that's fair. The last two times we've played at this level, we didn't look the same - Kansas State and Notre Dame. It's fair to say it was a different look, a different feel, a different focus. I can say honestly that's what I told the staff last night and that's what I told the team. It did feel different. Just disappointing we didn't convert on a couple more opportunities to give ourselves a chance. I'm disappointed in that. We have to get back to work there. I've been saying it all year we have a long way to go as a team. Are we competing? Yes. Do we execute all the time? No. We had some costly penalties and we had some costly errors in the game and that's on me. I have to get that fixed.

Miami Players Post-Game Quotes**Stephen Morris on his ankle injury -**

I felt great on it (ankle). I responded good to my cuts. I tried to run on it a little bit and I felt fine.

Stephen Morris on FSU's defense -

They had a very good defense and were very well coached. They're ranked number three or four in the nation on defense, and they're a great team. We had a lot of opportunities. They play man and get up in your face, and we really just didn't capitalize on a couple of opportunities we had. That's the story.

Stephen Morris on the game -

I think that FSU's defense is just a great defense. They get to the ball fast and you know as soon as you get out there you're going to get caught up in the rivalry. The emotions will fly high and

especially in the first quarter, the game was going extremely fast for everybody, but that's how college football is, especially with the great Miami-FSU rivalry.

Tyriq McCord on how great the crowd was tonight –

For being a freshman, it was pretty amazing, just seeing all the people supporting us and their loved ones. I've never seen that here in Miami yet. So it was a great feeling. It does affect me. I feel like I have more than 11 guys behind me.

Tyriq McCord on how close the Canes defense is to getting to the next level –

We're very close. Just how we came out today, we need to stay at that level. We want to be a championship team and we need to play at a championship level. We get compared to a lot of teams, but we just want to be that 2012 team.

Tyriq McCord on the importance of this game –

It was a big game and we knew how important it was. It wasn't a Coastal game, but at the same time it was still important. We still came out strong and told ourselves to continue to fight.

I was telling our defense that we can't be losing any more at home, and that we have to have that same mentality even at away games to be a championship team.

Denzel Perryman on the hard hitting –

We were just out there playing. Coach told us he was going to let us loose today, and told the guys to play your game, but play within the scheme and let the game come to you.

Denzel Perryman on the change in the fourth quarter –

I think it came from a lack of execution. Florida State has a good offense, good team action, they just kept pounding and pounding away and it was just a lack of execution.

Denzel Perryman on the defense taking a step forward –

We've gotten a lot better, but there are some plays where we just miss opportunities. It's just a lack of execution.

Brandon McGee on the eight-straight weeks of football –

It's definitely been a grind, but that's why we play the sport. The sport in itself is a grind really, but with this bye week we have an opportunity to heal up and we'll take advantage of that.

Brandon McGee on Miami controlling their own destiny –

We understand that we control our own destiny, especially in the Coastal. We won't put our heads down, or hang our heads. It's a tough loss, but we'll bounce back.

FSU Head Coach Jimbo Fisher

Well, that's a Florida State-Miami game for you. There's always excitement. It's one of the great rivalries and the kids played extremely hard in the game and overcame a lot of things, a lot of things that we caused. I'll wait and evaluate the film and see what the situations were. But we did a lot of good things, but we did some poor things. We had some balls dropped in the beginning, uncharacteristic things that we did but, we kept competing in the game. Defensively they got on us early and did some nice things, but all of a sudden we started stopping them. On offense we moved the ball up and down the field. Kelvin had some big plays called back. We had good balance, 2-2-1, we were able to run it when we had to. Hopkins kicked pretty well, missed one field goal but kicked the ball pretty well, did some nice things. Any time you come to Miami and beat Miami, that's a great day. I don't care what you say at Florida State, that's a big rivalry. They played their hearts out. I give Miami a lot of credit. Al's done a great job with those guys. They played very hard. They're very well-coached. But it was a typical Miami-Florida State game. We've got to clean up a lot of those mistakes. We're getting banged and bruised a little bit right now, try to get healthy and ready to play a very good Duke team next week. I was very proud of our kids to come out with a victory and that's the way it goes I guess.

Is there anything you can attribute the sluggish start to?

No, it was just weird! We got a stop, and just got a turnover off the bat. That's a very rare situation there. And then we had the other, they drive and get in, and then we're actually not handing that ball off. We're faking it. We've got Debrale wrap running wide open down the side, and we get too close and the elbow hits the ball. We're not supposed to be that close, we're

supposed to come close and make the fake, and he got back on the quarterback a little bit. I was watching Debrale wrap and I didn't even see it. I saw Debrale, the guy was wide open down the sidelines. But we've got to execute. We lost that right there, and then had the penalties and just kept overcoming. But the kids, I give them credit. They went to play the next play, put their head down, made plays and still come out of there pretty efficient. 450 yards, 33 points, and left a lot out there. But rivalry games, sometimes that happens.

On injured player...

I don't know. We'll have to wait and see. We'll have to wait for the MRI on Monday and see. You know, it's scary. It scared me a little bit but I don't want to make a statement yet.

That was a physical game. It's always a physical game. That's eight games with no off week now. That's a long time, you usually don't go that long. That time of year you're starting to get banged and bruised.

On the running game...

That's always the key. You go back in the history of this series, that's been the biggest thing, who can run it and who can't run it. Last year we won the game and didn't win the rushing. That's the first time in a while that's happened, and we want to keep establishing that so they can limit the blitzes, make them one-dimensional on offense. We're not going to let them run the football with that big offensive line and try to out-physical them up top and that was huge.

On needing to have a good road performance after what happened a couple of weeks ago...

We did! It's tough to go on the road, and you're going on a rivalry game. I thought it was very big for our kids to overcome what they did today. I think it's very big in our development. And that's something we haven't done all year, and to battle in that circumstance is a very good question. And the environment, and all the things that went wrong, we could've did the same thing we did up at NC State, but we didn't. We battled back through it and kept staying aggressive in what we were doing, and the kids fought through it.

Do you think they learned something from that?

Oh they definitely did. And we talked about it. There are too many good guys on our team, too many leaders, too many good human beings to sit there and everybody look at each other and not do anything. I told them sometimes you may like each other too much. Every now and then sometimes when you're on the field, like I used to tell them, you'll be my buddy off the field, but on the field we're competitors. If I need to get on your tail, I'm going to get on your tail. You've got to get on each other and start pushing each other, and I think they did today.

Were you surprised that Morris played?

No. I mean he might've been a little bit limited in his mobility, but I said Wednesday night I thought he would play. I did. That kid's a tough kid, he's a competitor. He played a nice game.

On what he told the team at halftime...

I said listen, you did about everything wrong you could do. But you overcame it and had a lead. That says something. To me, that's a sign. People say that's crazy, but I think that shows a competitive, good football team that's growing up and learning to fight through things. Some days you don't have it. I said, now what we need to do is refocus and play a great second half and put that behind us and not let those mistakes dwell on what we were doing. And for the most part, we did.

Florida State Players Post-Game Quotes

#3 EJ Manuel (QB)

What he attributes all the mistakes/fumbles in the game to...

Maybe a lack of concentration, we have got to focus in and we will pick it up.

In regards to pollsters...

I'm not really sure about those pollsters but we won a game. We won a great game versus Miami.

On being sluggish early on in the game...

I don't know, I don't know.

On Miami coming out early in the game with 10 points...

Going into that, the biggest thing for us was to get some bigger points going into the half and we turned that ball around and gave those guys a jump start. We came to do this thing and we put ourselves behind the ball and pushed before the half and into that second half.

On expecting Miami to come out fired up...

We knew all week that those guys were going to be revved up, just like we would be. It's a rival game so it's always going to be a great game.

On having major wins in every city in the state of Florida...

I think it's a little part of my legacy and it's not just myself but my team that did a great job helping me win these games.

On not playing their best game but turning it around for a good game today...

It says a lot, considering it's a huge game. It may not be a huge game ranking wise or poster wise, but it's still Florida State-Miami and that's something special to us. For us to come out here and get a W it means a lot.

#95 Bjoern Werner (DE)

On whether he was surprised that Miami got out first...

We did the same thing. We just had a miscommunication at the first touchdown and then we got to 10-10 and people just started getting their act together.

On getting the sack...

It's getting harder and harder to get these sacks, and I needed to get that off my chest and finally I got one.

#8 Devonta Freeman (RB)

On carrying his team in the second half...

It feels great, they worked hard, especially everybody on the offense. I just knew that I could contribute to the team so I just tried my best.

On scoring the touchdown...

It feels great just to score. I had a lot of family members here so it actually felt really great.

On being down 10...

I was always told that if a team scored 10 you have got to score 11, it doesn't matter what the score is, you have to score higher. So you just have to settle down mentally and calm down and play.