

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Tuesday July 16, 2019

Kirby Smart

Georgia Bulldogs



COMMISSIONER SANKEY: Good morning, again. First coach of the day is Kirby Smart, who will be beginning his fourth season at the University of Georgia, his alma mater. He's a 2017 SEC and National Coach of the Year and a two-time National Assistant Coach of the Year. I think you probably are aware that he was an All-Star player coming out of Bainbridge High School, and a football student-athlete at Georgia, earned all SEC defensive back recognition, but is known as the second best athlete within his own household, perhaps based on his children's accomplishments dropping IN those rankings. His wife, Mary Beth, was a Miss Georgia Basketball in high school who Vince Dooley once described as the best three-point shooting guard he'd ever seen. She made 101 three-pointers her last two years as a student-athlete in woman's basketball at Georgia.

One more note, it takes a team twice, Kirby does, to Camp Sunshine, summer camp about an hour from Athens for kids with cancer. He's actually been involved with that camp since his time as an assistant coach, probably an anonymous assistant coach at Valdosta State. Had a brother attend Camp Sunshine himself after being diagnosed with cancer, leukemia, and his brother is still active in lending his support. University of Georgia head football coach, Kirby Smart.

KIRBY SMART: Well, I didn't know that was coming this morning. Greg taking a shot at me in my own house, how about that. First I want to thank Greg for the tremendous job they do as leaders of this organization. You know, you can't compare any other conference to the SEC. It's really hard to when you think of the job that Greg Sankey and his staff do, we get to visit with those guys annually down in Destin, and their leadership is just impeccable.

When you think about Steve Shaw and the job he does, I know you guys just heard from Steve. He does a tremendous job for our conference, and I got a lot of respect for those guys. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize this is the 150th season of college football. And when you think about that, you think about the impact that college football has had on the lives of student-athletes, I think that's pretty incredible. I certainly think it's impacted my life, impacted a lot of kids that have been able to get

educations through those 150 years, pretty tremendous when you think about it.

Also, the fifth birthday of the SEC Network, I think that changed the face and exposure of the SEC. I think the teams in the SEC are now able to go out and recruit nationally because of the SEC Network, and it's been pretty remarkable to have those two things in the same year. So this is a special year for the SEC and college football both, but it's also a special year in Athens, Georgia. We're naming our field for Vince Dooley, who served as our head coach for 25 years, athletic director for 25 years. He's a legend in the history of college football and had a significant impact on the SEC as well. It's a special year for us in Athens since we're doing that, and he's meant a lot to both my wife and myself in our careers.

Confidence, confidence is a word I think about a lot this time of year. Confidence is not about speak, about words. It's really about actions taken by someone. It's not given to anyone. It's earned. And that's something that we want to do with each and every year and how we build up the season. It's year four for our staff and our program. That fact excites me, that it's year four for us.

I feel like we made great strides in each season in the way we teach, in the way we learn, in the way we develop players. It's been tremendous for us to grow. You don't have to have experience to excel, but it is an invaluable teacher. I came into this job after working in many different environments. Those each gave me good perspective, but I also acknowledged that the last three and a half years have been a great teacher as well. And those last three and a half years have been a tremendous experience for me.

I'm grateful day in and day out for the players and staff we've been able to have at the University of Georgia, whether it's Roquan Smith, Sony Michel, Mel Tucker, guys that have been in our organization and gone on to do bigger and better things. They have helped put our program where it is. Their contribution can't be overstated. UGA is a special place both athletically and academically. One of the themes our players have adopted this year has been to do more. It's a great theme because it's simple.

We like it because we understand how close we've been to taking the next step. And although 24 and 5 the last two seasons is good, it's not good enough. It's not where we expect to be at the University of Georgia.

Our mission is to bridge that gap, you know, by the actions we take, hence the word "do more," those words require action. And I heard a quote coming in here. I read a quote coming in this morning that really grabbed me, and I'm not a big quote guy, but when I heard that quote, I thought that's something that our players can relate to "life has no remote. You got to get up and change it yourself." And if you think about that, so many of us want to take the easy way out, whether it's changing the channel with the remote or anything else, not doing the work that has to be done, we want to do more at the University of Georgia. We're not complacent in what we've done, and we know we need to take that next step.

And for us, pressure is a reflection of ambition. We put a lot of pressure on ourselves day in and day out. The stress and pressure we feel emanates from our building, from our coaches, from our players putting it on each other, from our university. We apply it every day. We're always looking for the aggregate of marginal gains, and I want to explain that simply like we have to our players, we take a situation like the PGA Tour and look at 2017 in the PGA Tour and we say, here's Brooks Koepka and here's Justin Thomas, these guys were .5 strokes apart, meaning they were half a stroke difference in their play over 86 rounds. So that's that much difference between each one.

Their earnings that year, \$5 million difference, which is pretty significant. It's a lot of money, but we're looking for the aggregate of marginal gains. If we get a little bit of marginal gain through our nutrition, through our weightlifting, through our film study, through our effort on and off the field, through other dedication to our community, whatever our edge can be, we're looking for that aggregate of marginal gains and that comes in every facet every way possible for our program. I got three guys with me today. This is the first time I feel like I've had these kids for a longer amount of time, being I'm coming into the fourth season.

J.R. Reed is a guy that's a repeat visitor. He decided to come back. He's also a product of a transfer which has been a lot of topic of conversation. He's a kid that's come into our program been a great leader, been a starter. He does things the right way. He commands respect of the other players, and he's been an asset to our program. And his sister, ironically, is a student-athlete at Texas A&M, a track athlete.

The next one, Andrew Thomas, one of the first guys we were able to identify and recruit early on. He's a

communications major -- I'm sorry, he actually a sports management major, J.R. Reed is a communications major. But Andrew Thomas is a sports management major which is coming into his junior season. He started every game that he's been at University of the Georgia. He's a tremendous leader, person. Charismatic. Doesn't say a whole lot all the time. That's why it's fun to bring him to this event. I told him today as we got off the plane: Andrew, you're going to have to talk today. And I think he's excited to do that.

Jake Fromm who we all know has been a tremendous asset for the University of Georgia. He leads the right way. Does everything you ask him to do. He enjoys the game of football. He plays the game of football the way it should be played. When you go out to practice every day, this guy's got a smile on his face, he's competing, he's challenging people. He challenges me day in and day out. I know defensively we try to stop him, and he does a tremendous job. He's in our Terry College of Business. He a finance major.

With that, I'll open it up for questions.

Q. The loss of Mel Tucker, especially, on your staff, if you could also speak to losing your offensive coordinator as well, how are things going be different with different coordinators both on offense and defense?

KIRBY SMART: I think any time you build the infrastructure in a program, when people leave, as long as you're not changing that infrastructure, it doesn't create a lot of doubt or anxiety in the players. And certainly from my perspective, very comfortable after being in our system for three years that we've got really good coordinators. James, our offensive coordinator, has been with us a long time. I've known James from graduate assistant days back at LSU. I have tremendous respect for him. I know the offenses he's worked with in a past. And he's also been a part of ours. He has been a very integral part of that offense.

So there won't be a lot of change. It will be more about what our players can do than what our coaches do.

From a defensive standpoint, Dan Lanning and Glenn Schumann are very bright. Mel was a really good teacher to them. Mel helped them tremendously grow. He gave them opportunities to grow, to get in front of the defense so we can see them interact. I'm still going to be involved defensively, makes me feel comfortable with Dan and Glenn and Charlton Warren and Tray Scott to do a tremendous job there.

Q. I'm curious how you were able to get a guy like George Pickens. I know he'd been committed to Auburn for a long time and what he might mean for

your program.

KIRBY SMART: We're excited to have George. He's come in this summer and worked tremendously hard. He's been there from day one, grinding with our guys. He's a kid we recruited throughout the entire process. He came over to our place for several football games. He knew what he wanted. He knew what style offense he wanted to play in. He saw an opportunity when he saw two guys declare early for the draft in Mecole and Riley and Terry Godwin leave and then Isaac Nauta, there was a lot of touches there available, and I know he wanted to have an opportunity to play with a quarterback like Jake Fromm. We're excited to have him. We're looking forward to seeing him work and earn his opportunities.

Q. Given the fact that the Maurice Smith situation happened three years ago, are you surprised at how much the transfer landscape has changed, and do you think that situation got the conversation going in?

KIRBY SMART: Well, I think Maurice's situation was maybe a little different than just transfer landscape. He was a graduate transfer, which I support when a young man graduates from a university that he should have the opportunity to go play and play anywhere in the country that they're willing to allow him to play, they need him to play. I thought that was a good situation for Mo.

If you look at the overall picture of Mo Smith's situation, he was able to come in, being voted a captain, a leader, start every game and play, when may not have been afforded that opportunity where he was. So I think that's a very beneficial thing. And I do think it's been more prevalent, obviously, mostly at maybe a position at quarterback than other positions. But it's given a kid that gets his education, gets his degree -- which I think is a tremendous ability to do that. That's tough. You get your college degree and get it in a window where you still have eligibility left, you should be afforded the opportunity to go play.

Q. Given the success you were a part of at Alabama, how important has it been for you in taking the Georgia job to feel like you're going to a school that was willing and able to compete financially at the highest level? And do you believe Georgia stepped up its efforts in that area to do more?

KIRBY SMART: Yeah. I certainly think so. I think any time you take over a program that's one of the top five jobs in college football, they are going to answer the bell for your needs and the things you need to be able to compete at the highest level. And when you're in the SEC, you better be able to compete at the highest level. That's across the line of scrimmage. That's in

the administration buildings. That's in what you can do for student-athletes. And we've been able to do that since my arrival, and it's been a tremendous relationship between the athletic director and the president, both.

Q. I have a two-parter. Talk about I think there could be up to five grad transfers starting quarterbacks in the SEC this year, and you obviously lost a great quarterback, not a grad transfer, but transfer. How do you feel? Do you see that trend continuing? How do you feel about that?
And the second part losing, Jim Chaney at Tennessee, how did you feel about that and the fact he knows your personnel most and what you guys do most. How does that impact that game when you play Tennessee?

KIRBY SMART: I'll try to remember both of those. But the first being the quarterback, I think it's unique that you would have five graduate transfer quarterbacks possibly starting in our conference, and it's also a really good year for the quarterback in the SEC. It seems in my experience having been in the SEC for a lot of years, whether as a coach or a player, I don't know that there's been a year where there's been so many quarterbacks that have the experience they have.

Some of them may not have the experience at that university, but they have experience. That's usually not a good sign for defensive coordinators in our conference because I've been through that as defensive coordinator where everybody has a good quarterback. It makes it really tough because that position determines a lot of the outcomes of games. That's your leader and the guy that touches the ball every day.

As far as Jim, Jim did a tremendous job for us. I got a great relationship with him. He worked really hard at our place. He helped us develop to where we are, and we wish him nothing but the best. I know he's going to across -- one of our rivals, and we understand that and respect that. The fact he knows our personnel, I think that the game of football boils down to football players making plays, and there's not going to be anything that Jim Chaney or myself can do out there on that field that our players aren't going to control.

Q. Kirby, you've been around a lot of NFL quarterbacks. I'm curious kind of where you think Jake Fromm stacks up and what do you think about him as an NFL quarterback as somebody whose been talked about a lot in that regard in this offseason?

KIRBY SMART: First of all, I'm extremely excited he's

our quarterback. He is the leader of our program, the face of our organization, a guy that has given so much to Georgia and Georgia means so much to. As far as where he stacks up in the NFL, I don't think that's for me to determine. I think Jake's got tremendous ability. He's a leader. That's the first quality you look for.

We had a guy come speak the other day to our team talking about characteristics that scouts look for. He checks every single box on that list. He's won a lot of football games. He's thrown touchdowns and hasn't thrown interceptions. All of those qualities he has are going to give him a chance of success whenever he chooses to go to the NFL.

Q. Coach, I wanted to ask you about a kid from our community that's on your team. I know he's a little banged up last year. How is Monty Rice progressed and then as far as the new staff, Dan Lanning and Glenn Schumann, do you want them to be more aggressive defensively this year for you guys?

KIRBY SMART: First question about Monty Rice, this is a kid that's a very good leader on our program. He works day in and day out, really does a good job in the classroom. He was banged up last year. He's one of our faster linebackers, which we're trying to increase some speed at that position. He's been very productive.

When you look at what Monty has done in games, ability to making tackles and close on people, we've been really excited about what he does. I think defensively, it would be coach speak if I sat here and said we don't want to be more aggressive. We always want to be more aggressive. But you want to do it with what you have behind it in mind.

We were a young defensive football team last year. We had a lot of guys from the previous season that were gone. We have a lot of guys coming back. We should be able to do some more things. We should be able to be a little more aggressive and given the opportunity to do that if we want to.

Q. Quick question for you. One of the talks points during opening day whenever Greg Sankey took the podium and was talking about mental health of student-athletes. What's your thought process on handling athletes who are dealing with a lot of struggles more so off the field, but also a little bit on the field?

KIRBY SMART: That's a great question. We actually discussed that at the Destin meetings. I think Greg was at the forefront of it. Several coaches in our room discussed different issues within their programs. I think it's maybe not talked about enough, and we talked

about the education of us as coaches on dealing with mental health issues.

I certainly think it's beginning to show itself more and more in college football. And if you polled the coaches, it happens more and more where you're dealing with a kid that's really tough on you to deal with, you have to have professionals within your department, which we do, at the University of Georgia. They do a tremendous staff. Our medical staff, Ron Courson, handles all of those mental health issues. You can't do enough to help the young men be successful, and we want to be able to give back to them that way.

Q. You mentioned J.R. Reed, a transfer guy. The NCAA transfer portal rule right now, how does that change roster building for years as a coach? How does that change the staff kind of building a team now that it's here? For players, you mentioned the graduate transfer part of it that you're in support of with a player that you have in there, I mean, how do you see the NCAA transport portal from the players' perspective as well?

KIRBY SMART: I think from the players' perspective from the NCAA transfer portal, it makes it more streamlined. It's easier to initiate contact with other schools. It allows you at times an easier pathway when sometimes that may not be the best thing. But the players have to decide that.

And if the transfer portal has done one thing, it's made it easier for players to understand what they have to do to be able to go look and see other places, but they also have to be careful about the grass being greener on the other side.

It's going to be very interesting to see how many people in this room report how many guys are in the transfer portal with no home to go to when the season kicks off because I venture to say there's going to be young men that have nowhere to go with lost scholarship opportunities that now don't have a scholarship in other places. I think we're learning as this goes about, and we'll continue to learn and do the best thing we can to benefit our student-athletes.

Q. Kirby, unlike recent years, you're opening with an SEC opponent, Vanderbilt, and on the road, does that make preseason preparation any more focused or intense or you would hope it would leading up and going into conference right off the bat?

KIRBY SMART: I don't think you ever take any opponent for granted regardless whether it's conference or not.

That's our focus. We work on ourselves in camp, but

there comes a point where you got to turn your attention to the opponent. We go on the road to Nashville to play very well-coached Derrick Mason football team. I have tremendous respect for those guys and the job they do, and our guys will be focused on that game.

Q. I apologize if these questions have been asked before, but with you being so close to the national championship and not wanting to take that step back, how important is it for you to promote in-house with your coordinators?

KIRBY SMART: Well, I think that confidence is what allows you to promote in-house. And if I didn't have confidence in the men in the room in the building, I probably go outside and look and try to find the best guy that gives Georgia the best opportunity to win. But I think we did some good things last year and the years past, and the men in that room were part of that.

I think any time you can promote from within, it gives the structure of the organization hope. It gives the guy beneath that guy the opportunity that -- if I assert myself and I do good things, then I have an opportunity to grow here. I don't have to leave here to grow. If you hire good people and you grow them, then you want to keep them in your organization.

Q. Kirby, back on Vanderbilt, Vaughn, Pinkney and Lipscomb coming back, that's not typically the skilled guys that Vanderbilt would have in one year. What do you specifically say about what they bring to the table offensively?

KIRBY SMART: Extremely talented. I feel like I played against those guys for ten years. They seem like they've been there forever. Really talented players. They're right down the road from us. I know how talented he is, and he has done a really great job, and they do a great job offensively getting those guys the ball.

Q. Are you happy to see Jalen Hurts at Oklahoma and how did that fourth quarter -- how are you going to use that fourth quarter to sustain and motivate the team throughout the season?

KIRBY SMART: Jalen has done a tremendous job. Jalen was there when I was there, and he came in the last time when I was getting ready to play at Clemson when I took the head job at Georgia. I have a lot of respect for him and his dad, high school coach, and has done a great job. He's played really well against us, and I give him a lot of credit. What was the second part of that question?

Q. Staying motivated --

KIRBY SMART: It's easy. You turn it on and see. It's more than the fourth quarter. It is the performance

against Texas which we're not proud of up. We have to grow and get better. There's learning experiences all across the board. Going to Baton Rouge, tough experience. We didn't play our best game. We have to go on the road in the SEC this year and play in some really tough environments. Biggest thing we take from those, we learn, but we also learn from our victories. We had quite a few of those last year too.

Q. Not to belabor the point, but you talk about taking that next step. Obviously that means going through Alabama in the SEC. What's it going to take to kind of get past that and get over the hump? You've been the closest among really anybody in the SEC of doing that.

KIRBY SMART: Well, the next step for us, and I don't mean this to be trite, but it's Vanderbilt. You have to get to that point because we don't have Alabama on our schedule. We know Alabama has been very powerful in this conference for a long time. We respect the job they do. I got a lot of respect for Coach Saban and his program. I probably wouldn't be here today if it weren't for him. I also understand we have a really good program too.

We have been able to recruit at a high level. I'm excited about this team coming back. The biggest thing is concerning ourselves with us and not concerning ourselves with somebody else.

Q. You've been around Georgia high school football for quite some time. How much better have you seen that get over the years and how are you as a program benefiting from that through recruiting?

KIRBY SMART: Yeah. I don't know that you could measure it in statistical gains because they only play each other. It's not like you can measure it in wins and losses. I think you measure it in the quality of coach you get, and I think that our state of Georgia does a great job with educators. Number one, paying educators, paying high school coaches. And when you have a support structure like the State of Georgia education department, you're able to get the best of the coaches.

I can't tell you how many places I go in the country to speak that they say, I would love to get a job in the state of Georgia. I got a lot of respect for the state of Georgia, not necessarily just the talent of the players, but the structure of the school systems, the support of the communities of their football programs, and that's hard to beat anywhere in the country. And we're really proud of that. It's certainly been an impact on our program.

Q. Coach, are you definitely for moving that

Florida/Georgia game to home and also, what are your thoughts on Gator fans sort of trolling Georgia fans on social media this offseason considering the way you guys have handled them the last couple of years?

KIRBY SMART: I'm for what's best for the University of Georgia and as a group and as a staff and as administration, and we'll look at that internally and make the decisions based on what is best for our student-athletes and what is best for the university.

I don't get caught up in the emotion of this decision or that decision. I look at it from a perspective of 10,000 feet where I say: What is best for our program? And it's that simple. And we'll make that decision as I group and go with it.

As far as Florida's concerned, we really don't get caught up in that. We're really focused on us. We got enough in-house things that we have to manage that I'm not caught up in the affair with social media and trolling.

Q. You guys have a lot of depth in the offensive line this year. Are you getting a sense of what that starting five will be, or it still up in the air? And then, also, are you expecting a lot of rotation during the year?

KIRBY SMART: Yeah. It's hard for me to get a sense right now because I'm only able to see them work out and go out and lift and run with the strength coaches. So it's hard to measure that. We've got some really good competition across the board. The unique thing, we've got some guys who have started games who may not be starters. Some guys who have been starters who may get beat out by some guys who are rotational players.

I love the competition we've got at the offensive line. I wouldn't say that you ever have enough. Because we learned last year that you can have injuries at that position probably at a higher rate than any other, with the offensive linemen getting tangled up and with the war in the trenches. So we had to use that to help us.

Q. Nick Saban's assistants or former assistants are like 0-16 against them, or 0 and something --

KIRBY SMART: I'm well aware.

Q. Seems like half the conference used to coach for him. Are you confident somebody's going to beat him? You've obviously come close. What's it going to take to beat him? And, also, what's it like going against him the recruiting trail?

KIRBY SMART: Am I confident somebody's going to beat him? It depends how long he coaches. It depends on how many opportunities they get.

Inevitably, with enough opportunities, anything can happen.

I got a lot of respect for the job he does. I got a lot of respect for the program. The success he's gotten has been earned. Make no mistake about that. He's earned it. There's not one thing he asked assistant coaches to do that he doesn't do himself.

As far as on the recruiting trail, he's like he is on the field. He's very relentless. He's active as a recruiter. When you talk to a kid, a lot of times you find out he's talked to Coach Saban as well. That's part of it. It's communications skills that help you recruit, and he doesn't leave any stone unturned, and I got a lot of respect for the job he does.

Q. Coach, can you please explain further the decision and what went into Jeremiah Holloman's dismissal from the team. And for Jake, this is a unique challenge for him to kind of lead a wide receiving corps that isn't as experienced, maybe talented, but they don't have the reps that guys had in years past.

KIRBY SMART: The second part of that with Jake was what?

Q. His challenge of leading this wide receiving corps that doesn't necessarily have as much starting experience.

KIRBY SMART: I think he's in a position to do that. He's certainly earned that right to be the leader of those receivers. I think a lot of those receivers understand exactly what he wants. He's able to convey that in a positive way. Jake has an aura about him. He rubs off on people. He has a positive energy that he rubs off on the other wideouts. I think he's kind of embraced this challenge now with this young group of receivers to grow those guys. You know, a lot of those guys have been waiting in the wings for quite a while, because there was three guys last year when you look at Mecole, Riley, and Terry. There's some other guys training and developing that whole time, and they're ready to jump into the forefront.

As far as JJ, we were made aware early in June, this June, that there was an incident. And once we were, we took action and removed him from the team. Very unfortunate. I wish JJ the best.

Q. You're involved in one of the -- in the deep south's oldest rivalry with Auburn, and seeing there's 150 years of college football, this rivalry has been going on since the 1870s. How does it feel to know Georgia is part of such a historic rivalry going into such a big year for college football?

KIRBY SMART: It's pretty cool. When you think about

that game, I don't think everybody knows the history that that game was played in Columbus for a long time. It's a tremendous game. It's a game that's been very balanced. And you look at the history of the two schools, it's really incredible the amount of wins and losses on both sides.

And it's one of those games that no matter where you go in the state, people talk about the Auburn game and it being one of the oldest, richest traditions. This year makes it that much more special.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Coach. Thank you for your time this morning.

KIRBY SMART: Thank you, guys.



2019 SEC Football Media Days Georgia Player Quotes Tuesday, July 16

Junior Quarterback Jake Fromm

On a potential rematch with Alabama ...

“For us, it isn’t about worrying about a certain opponent. It is about how we can get better this summer as we head into camp and treating every opponent like they are the best team we are going to play.”

On competition in the SEC East...

“Every single game is a tough one. It may not look like it on paper, but in the trenches, it really is a tough football game. It starts with how we can prepare and do our best, week in and week out.”

On his message to the young receiving corps...

“The message for those guys is that they don’t have to make all the plays right away. We want them to get in, learn from the older guys in the room and not be afraid to fail. For those guys, it is really how they can be available and how can they run routes.”

On the SEC quarterback talent...

“We have a lot of great football players who are in the SEC playing the quarterback position. It definitely makes me want to raise my game to the next level and compete with them.”

On the challenge on playing road games...

“We look at those games where we didn’t quite get over the hump in the past. It starts with what we do in the offseason and summer with how we prepare and condition. We have to play every single game like it is our last and try to go 1-0 every single week.”

On the variety of offensive weapons...

“We have great guys in great positions. Our offensive line and running backs are very talented rooms who can really help propel this offense to the next level. That is really going to help and take a little pressure off the receivers, but I think the receivers are ready to go.”



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Georgia Player Quotes

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Senior Defensive Back J.R. Reed

On his goals for this season...

“I want another crack at the SEC, and I want another crack at the National Championship. I don’t care who it is or what opponent is there, I want another crack at that SEC Championship and that National Championship.”

On the team motto for this season ...

“It just means that you got to look at your film and what you got to look at what you did last year. Whatever you did last year wasn’t enough, and you got to do more. You always have to do more each and every day. So you outwork what you did yesterday. If you think you have do enough, you have ‘do more’.”

On the preparation of the Georgia defense for the 2019 season ...

“Going against one of the best quarterbacks in the game, Jake Fromm prepares us. Day in and day out, even 7-on-7 or talking to him, he’s so smart. Extra film study – watching more film and being a student of the game.”

On the expectations of the freshman roster for the Georgia defense ...

“I expect whoever is going to make the plays and whoever is the best is going to step up. We not only have those freshmen, we have got guys that have been waiting their turn, guys that were freshmen last year, those guys have been working really hard. We are really deep in every position, and I think that brings the best competition out of everybody. I think the best players are going to step up and play.”



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Junior Offensive Lineman Andrew Thomas

On what it is going to take for Georgia to bring home a National Championship...

“Our motto for the offseason has been ‘Do more’. That means doing anything and everything you can to get over the hump to get to the next level, whether that is working out or doing something extra or eating healthier. Anything you can do – watching more film, just to get us over the hump.”

On his earliest memory of playing piano and his favorite song to play...

“My earliest memory would probably be in ninth grade. At my high school, we had a piano, and sometimes I would go in before we had class and practice. My favorite song would be ‘All of Me’ by John Legend.”

On his sense of pride if he blocked for a Heisman winner...

“A lot of pride. I want to see all the guys I block for to be successful, and to accomplish a goal like that would be really crazy.”

On what it is like with such a mix of big guys...

“I guess what makes us such a good group is that we all have different backgrounds, but through Coach Pittman, we all come together. We are all like brothers. We have our differences, but we all have the same common goal, so we love playing next to each other.”