



**No. 14 Florida State vs. No. 15 Florida
Saturday, Nov. 27, 2016
Jimbo Fisher Postgame Press Conference**

"I will tell you one thing that was one heck of an atmosphere. That was a great night to play college football. The Florida/Florida State game in Doak Campbell with the chop going, that was an incredible atmosphere thanks to our fan's support. It was the typical Florida/Florida State game, it was hard fought and they were a very good team. They were a very good defensive football team. They can run the football. They can cover your receivers. Our kids played really well. We got a good start, a fast start. We were able to run the football and that is hard to do. We ran for 249 yards on the night and had some good run support. We were able to make some big plays in the passing game when we had to and were really good on third down. 11-for-17 on the night on third down was really big. We were 3-for-3 in the red zone with a field goal and we had a couple other chances to score tonight, but we didn't get it done. You know in these games when you play those teams they do a good job. Our defense was outstanding. Six sacks. The pressures. Contesting every throw. There were no easy plays for them. We had the turnover, which was the only time we put the ball on the ground during that punt. We can't do that. We had a three score lead and needed to start putting the game away. We were able to go down and score again. Deondre (Francois) had a very bad decision there in the third quarter on a misread. What I was happy about was that he had those two rough series and he was able to come back and make that throw for a touchdown and make that run for a touchdown. He led us and made some plays and kept his poise and scrambled. For a young player, in the magnitude of a game like that against Florida to keep your poise and come back after getting flustered is hard. You have no idea for a quarterback how hard that is to do. Sometimes the game is going so fast you don't know what to do, but that he was able to do that was unbelievably mature by him and I am very happy that he was able to do that. Then there is that little guy number four (Dalvin Cook). Wow. I'll tell you what you are blessed to coach certain guys in your career and he is one of them. I can't say enough about him. We see the player and the toughness and all that, but man the selflessness and the leadership on the sideline. The way he was at halftime with our guys. What a dadgum football player. I don't know what else to say about him, he was outstanding with another 153 yards. Travis (Rudolph) was big, just all of them. I'm excited to see where we get to play in a bowl game."

Q: How the team has improved after the early struggles:

"I think this team the way they have improved, and people say what do they have to play for? They have each other to play for, they have pride to play for, they have getting better to play for, they have the seniors' legacies and what they are leaving. The young underclassmen and what they have in front of them on how to work and how to play in these games and play well. The ground work they laid for what they can do in the future. I told them I am as proud as this team as any team that won a national championship and won it all. In 29 years this team makes me as proud as any team I have been around. The way they persevered and the way the seniors kept leading. Everyone said what did we have to play for? Goals kept going away but they continued to play their tails off."

Q. They were 0-for-12 on third down?

JIMBO FISHER: Yeah, they were 0-for-12 on third down, but two fourth downs they converted, and the big fourth down we got the stop in the first of the game was huge. Then we were able to move the football right back. Even though we missed the field goal, we changed the field position back and got that, and to go 0-for-12 on third down, that was unbelievable by our defense.

Q. With your offense shaky like that, how important is it to have a defense?

JIMBO FISHER: That was good. But I'm going to say this, I'm going to say this, I don't think we were shaky. You're talking about a team that was giving up -- that was the number five team in the country for defense. We ran the ball for 250 yards and put up 30 points, and if we hit two field goals we put up almost 40.

But our defense, when you're a great team, you've got to be great on defense, when you're great, and they set a tone. That's the way they did it. We were able to control the clock and run the football and pick up third downs and played situational football. Good in the red zone, good in third down and won those battles.

Q. How fitting is it for a guy like Demarcus to have this kind of performance in his final home game?

JIMBO FISHER: He has it in every game. What he end up with 15 sacks or something like that now on the end of the year? Burns had more than that, he's at 9.5. But those seniors to never have lost to Miami, that's never happened in this school history. Think about that. All the great players ever sat in those chairs in front of you, to be able to achieve what they achieved and never lose to Miami and never lose to Florida, that's something they can always take with them. That's what you play for. That's what it's about and the legacy they leave and what it means.

Those are great football players. I'm not saying that to brag about play against Miami. But we just know those are important games and rivalry games and those are great programs and that's how hard it is to do. My hat's off to him. DeMarcus, man, what a player and leader he is. Golly. All of our seniors. You go back to Marquez, I mean, all of them.

Q. You talk about Dalvin and coaching him. What was it like as a coach to hear the crowd as the crowd was chanting his name before the end of the game?

JIMBO FISHER: I couldn't hear it. I was coaching the game. But I'm glad they did. I hope he did. Because you know when you're around special people in your life, and he's definitely one of them. No one deserves it more than him.

Q. Can you talk about the offensive line?

JIMBO FISHER: Had no sacks, we passed, got the ball out of our hand, made good decisions. They're just getting better and better and better.

Q. Can you talk about your kickers tonight?

JIMBO FISHER: The first time he (Aguayo) kicked he caught his foot on the ground and he hurt his foot and he missed. That's what happened on the first one. It was low and blocked. Then he came back on the second one. It was bothering him and he didn't get it up and his foot was bothering him. And he wasn't in a good rhythm, and that's why you have two kickers. We were able to put Logan (Tyler) in and he was going to kick in the second half because he just lost rhythm.

Q. What about the kicker situation moving forward:

JIMBO FISHER: No, just like we always do. We'll go back to what we're doing. We'll go back to the normal thing, whoever's kicking better will kick.

Q. The defense in the past three games after you guys played N.C. State, you were giving up 11 points a game, 64 yards per game rushing. Talk about how the defense has really stepped up?

JIMBO FISHER: They have even before that. Even before the N.C. State game they did some things. The last six, seven weeks of the season, I said I've seen it in practice and they're carrying it to the field. Everybody's healthy, we're setting edges on the defense. Safeties are making the calls, getting the rotations. The ends are playing. Then we're playing (Derrick) Nnadi and (Demarcus) Christmas and Fred Jones and Wally (Aime) and all those guys inside. Our backers are fitting better. They're filling downhill. We're just now really hitting our stride.

Q. Talk about Deondre Francois's pass to Travis Rudolph for the TD?

JIMBO FISHER: And after he had a big interception on the third down, I told him it's going to be a big play. I said you're going to have a heck of a chance. We had it open earlier and that's one of the ones he went backside on and tried to throw to Kermit and he shouldn't have. He should have stayed on the front side. And we said it's going to have a chance to be there, and he said okay.

That's the thing about him, trust what we say. Then when you're out of whack, go back to fundamentals and he stuck that thing. It takes time. That's good protection. But hit it right in stride, and Travis ran through the catch and came out for a touchdown. That's about as good as it gets.

Q. Can you talk about the offensive line on the touchdown?

JIMBO FISHER: They were outstanding. The way we ran the football, the protection they gave, the offensive line is getting better and better and better.

Q. On some missed opportunities in the game.

JIMBO FISHER: No, you're right. We had a couple, dadgum, we had that bubble screen down there down the sideline and I couldn't see that. Had a couple penalties there on some things that man, oh, man we could have really been in good shape.

Q. Teams are always hyped for big rivalry games. But why do you think your team has been so consistent against its rivals?

JIMBO FISHER: We emphasize it, but we don't overemphasize it. Everybody wants to win. Our guys do a great job preparing to win, and I think that's the key. We hype it, and it's important. But at the end of the day it's still one game, and our guys understand they want to play. And we've got good players and they're practicing well, and they learn to control their emotions, at the same time, keep it, have enough emotion and control it and be able to execute. Been very blessed.

Q. How important is it to close out the season strong?

JIMBO FISHER: Remember November and the way this team is right now, we're as hot -- we're hot. We've got a good team. We're hot. We're a good football team right now. We're learning to be a good football team in all phases, and funny thing is we've still got a lot of room for improvement.

Q: There is a chance of playing in a New Year's Six bowl.

JIMBO FISHER: Yeah, somebody said that. I had no idea. We're just trying to win games. That would be wonderful. But we've been in New Year's Day Six. Us and Alabama are the only two that have that streak in the playoffs and won National Championships and been in New Year's Day bowls. It would be wonderful.

Q. What was the impact of Josh Sweat forcing the fumble?

JIMBO FISHER: Oh, man, it did. Our guys getting the pressure and stripping and knocking balls out. And then capitalizing on turnovers. And our defense, we give up one and they did a great job of stopping. Except they couldn't on the one, on the 13 points, but our defense was outstanding.

The offense took advantage of the things. And that's what I'm saying, we're learning to play as a team. Before we played in segments. And you feed off the energy of the other side of the ball. When one goes down, the other picks it up. When the other creates a play, you push that momentum, and that's part of learning to play too and how to seize the moment. You know what I'm saying?

And like I say, there's a certain time I don't know as a player and a coach, you've just got to boom, it's just got to be done. That's what they're learning. It's got me excited.

Q: Did players ask about you leaving for LSU:

JIMBO FISHER: I love Florida State. I always want to be at Florida State. I told them a long time ago I want to be at Florida State. I love what we're building, and I think we can have a great legacy here and keep the culture that Coach Bowden and everyone else put in place. We've got great young players and I love the hell out of them.

Q: Did the rumors weigh on you:

JIMBO FISHER: The players, not one time. You know why? I'm straight honest with them. They can read my body language. They can read me. If they ask, I tell them. They know. There's a trust factor, and I trust them, and hopefully they trust me.

Q. Does it wear on you any about your future?

JIMBO FISHER: I learn to ignore all that. I mean, how does it wear on you? You ignore it and move on. As I say, you handle it. I say ignore it, but you handle it, and if something needs to be handled, you address it. At the end of the day, when you have success -- have you watched Coach Bowden's movie? Anybody seen that yet? We watched it the other night. You talk about a great movie.

He said for the first ten years he was here, he said my name was up for every job in the book. Every job kept coming up. And he was going to go to LSU if you remember. He was going to Alabama. He was going to Auburn. He was going to everywhere. And if you're successful, and I'm not trying to -- people always are going to do that. That's part of being -- I'd rather be talked about than not talked about. That means we're doing something, not for me, but I'm saying we'd rather be successful here. When you're successful, people do that.

When I was at LSU, Coach Saban had it every year. Every year I was ever around him he was going to 32 different jobs. He made me look like me times ten as far as jobs and things. But we were having success. People kept saying, you want to come, and he did the things he wanted to do. I'm happy. I'm doing exactly what I want to do.

Q. On that note, how excited are you about next season based on what you have?

JIMBO FISHER: I am. We can keep going the same thing. It's hard to carry momentum, but to me it's the understanding of what you do and how to do it. I think we have a bright future. I really do. I'm anxious for the bowl season. I want to finish this season off the right way.

Q. When did you see this team turn that corner?

JIMBO FISHER: I told you about seven, six weeks ago in practice. It wasn't quite hitting the field at the levels it needed to. But it was on the practice field. And I know it's part of the process of it's got to get there and they've got to learn to translate it from there to here and start fast and do all that. I really saw it six or seven weeks ago.

Q. You see it every day, was there ever concern it wouldn't get to that point?

JIMBO FISHER: Heck yeah, heck yeah. I mean, even when we were winning 29 in a row, the lines of winning are that thin. When you were losing, and we lost those couple games, the lines of winning are that thin. You're always walking that tight rope. You're never comfortable winning or losing, because you know how hard it is to win and how easy it is to get on the other end of it, and what you can't accept is the mentality of it, which creates the culture.

There's going to be bad things, but if you never accept it here, it never gets in your culture. That's why I'm so proud of this team. They never let it get in their culture, and they kept going back. And that's the key to the whole thing is culture. That's why I was so proud of this football team, the leadership of it, and the young guys buying in and saying, okay, I need to go higher with my game. I need to raise myself.

That line, I fear it every day. Because winning and losing, it's that thin. It's that thin. That's the facts of life.

Q. Charles Kelly, I know early in the season there were some rough patches, but it's gotten better?

JIMBO FISHER: The guy can coach football. He knows how to coach. He had injury, we had situations. It was a perfect storm in a lot of areas. But again, high character, high quality person, believes in what he's doing, been in the business a long time. Father was a coach, everybody's a coach. He can get it done.

Q. Going back to what you're saying about the progress this team has made. How successful has Deondre been this year? He's over 3,000 yards for the season.

JIMBO FISHER: Oh, he was awesome tonight. He was as awesome tonight as any game he goes and throws it 400 yards. I see things differently. I see development. This is one of the first times a couple times he got going too fast. He made some mistakes. He did this, he did that. And, boom, he was able to trigger back.

Again, you don't have any idea how hard that is, especially at quarterback. It's unbelievably hard for him to do that. He took another huge step today. I mean, huge step in his development. He's been rock solid. And I can't ask for any more out of him.

Q. Along with that, did he say anything or did you say anything to him?

JIMBO FISHER: No, we've just looked at each other and been there and done that, that's part of it. It is.