

2025 StaffDNA Cure Bowl Introductory Press Conference Transcript

Dec. 7, 2025 – Camping World Stadium, Varsity Club

Alan Gooch – *CEO of Orlando Sports Foundation and Executive Director of the Staff DNA Cure Bowl*

Opening Statement...

Well as you all know, the mission statement for the Orlando Sports Foundation is bringing teams together to find a cure for cancer. So, our opponent every year is cancer. This year, the teams that we're bringing together in the Cure Bowl are the 9-3 South Florida Bulls and the 9-3 Old Dominion Monarchs.

Looking for a great battle in the game as we all know in the college football world how important it is to get 10 wins for the program, and very important for the teams as well. It's an opportunity to play and be a part of a 10-win program is something you'll never forget. I had that opportunity to do it as one time as a player, one time as a coach, and you never forget that. And so, I know that they're going to be doing a big battle on the field.

South Florida is going to be led by coach Kevin Patrick and also Davey O'Brien semifinalist Byrum Brown. He's a good-looking player. I had the opportunity to bowl scout South Florida when they played at Miami. Great player.

Ricky Ronnie, the head coach at Old Dominion, is the son of a breast cancer survivor. So, this game is going to have great meaning for him.

We're looking forward to it, December 17th, 5 o'clock kick right here at Camping World Stadium. That day gets started at one o'clock with our T-Mobile Fiber Fan Fest, and then at 3 o'clock, we've got our March 2Cure that's going to be led by Owens Corning, Pink Panther, all of our survivors join the team bands, and we join in at Fan Fest, and then they march into the stadium at 5 o'clock. So, a big day for us, it's Cure Cancer Day on December 17th and the Cure Bowl.

Question: We've known about this matchup for a few days, but have you talked to both coaches and what were their reactions initially?

We are an ESPN Events bowl game, and we had talked strategically if it made sense to have an opportunity to announce the teams early. So, both teams were really happy about that. It gives their fan bases an opportunity to plan. You know, this is a quick turnaround for us. Selection Sunday, and then we're playing the game 10 days later, so we had a couple extra days for people to take an opportunity to plan, and it has helped us.

We've had ticket sales coming in. We're looking forward to having everybody from Tampa. You know, it's a 90-minute drive from campus at South Florida to Camping World Stadium. So, we're looking for a good crowd from Tampa.

Question: You mentioned Tampa, with a move to Camping World, is it nice to have someone close proximity to help you fill it up?

No question about it. Every bowl wants an opportunity to have a team that has a great opportunity to drive up. You know, bowl tickets in general are important. How a team travels is important for the bowl season, but also for the university and the football program itself. For us, it takes on another meaning because it means more dollars to cancel research.

Question: Now, can you say that this might be the highest profile matchup in the Cure Bowl's history?

You know, great question. The Cure Bowl has actually had the opportunity to have a eight conference champions or runners-up in our 10-year history, we're getting ready to play 11. But I would say that this is our third American Conference team that we've had the opportunity to have in the game. South Florida, you know, with nine wins an opportunity to go to 10, is high profile. They were ranked, I believe, as high as 18 during the season, and the CFP actually had them ranked at 24. So high ranked team, and ODU won five straight to get bowl eligible to be here. So, we are definitely expecting a battle on the field.

Again, both programs have an opportunity to get 10 wins, and that's very important for each program.

Question: How are you guys feeling about playing here as opposed to maybe being at the Bounce House next year?

Well, we love playing in Camping World Stadium. It's a great neutral site. When you play at other stadiums, somebody gets the visitors' locker room and that's always not as fun for that team. So, we appreciate the opportunity here.

You know, Camping World Stadium, its location to I-4, to be able to drive in is very important. So, we certainly appreciate that opportunity.

Question: Can you speak just to the overall growth of the game, and just all the money raised, and all the great things that has been accomplished?

This will be our 11th year. Through the platform of the Cure Bowl, and Orlando Sports Foundation events, we've been able to raise \$6.35 million for cancer research. It's very important. Certainly, here for the community of Orlando, as the bulk of that stays right here with Dr. Annette Khaled, who does her research at the UCF Cancer Research Center.

So, we couldn't be more honored to be able to provide this for the community. And it's given us a great opportunity. As you can see why we do what we do.

You know, head coach Ricky Rahne, the son of a breast cancer survivor. These types of stories come up every year during Cure Bowl week.

Question: You've had a few extra days to get going, but how are ticket sales going? What's the information on that and are both teams confident they can sell their allotments.

Yeah, ticket sales are going really well, as you can imagine, from South Florida. You know, with the easy drive. You know, the athletic director at ODU, Wood Selig, did promise me that there are direct flights from Norfolk here to Orlando and they're going to be sending as many as they can.

Obviously, it's a tough, tough turnaround for us with 10 days. But we're looking forward to having an opportunity to break our best record ever, and that was in our second year when UCF played Arkansas State.

Question: What's the importance of the schedule in general, kind of being one of the first big games out there. You know to kind of get everyone fired up for the bowl season in general.

To address the comment about having the opportunity to be here at Camping World Stadium. This stadium is the only stadium in the country that has three bowl games in it. So, we're honored to be able to kick that off. Florida Citrus Sports will play the Pop Tarts Bowl and then the Cheez-It Citrus Bowl. But we have the opportunity to kick off bowl season here at Camping World Stadium for our community. So, we're honored to do that as well.

All right, guys, we really appreciate you. Thank you.