

ABC's *Good Morning America*

05/25/23

7:00:41 a.m. [TEASE]

10 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: New Overnight; DeSantis Joins the Race]

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Florida Governor Ron DeSantis officially joins the race for the White House. The campaign launch on Twitter with Elon Musk riddled with technical difficulties. We'll tell you what happened and what Trump and the other GOP candidates are saying.

(...)

7:07:46 a.m.

2 minutes and 44 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Ron DeSantis Announces Presidential Run; Florida Gov Launches Bid in Glitch-Marred Twitter Event]

STEPHANOPOULOS: We're going to get the latest now on the race for the White House. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis launched his run for the Republican presidential nomination last night on Twitter. It was an unusual kickoff marred by technical glitches. Chief Washington correspondent Jon Karl has the story. Good morning, Jon

JONATHAN KARL: Good morning, George. It wasn't the campaign launch that Ron DeSantis had hoped for, but the Florida governor is, at least for the moment, the most formidable Republican challenger to Donald Trump. Ultimately, Ron DeSantis made it official by releasing a flashy video.

GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS (R-FL): I'm Ron DeSantis, and I'm running for president to lead our great American comeback.

KARL: But his plan to kick things off with a conversation with billionaire Elon Musk on Twitter was a mess.

DAVID SACK: We are kind of melting the servers.

KARL: Riddled with technical difficulties, roundly mocked on conservative media, Fox News calling it a disaster. DeSantis claimed the problems were caused because the audience was so large. But by the time he started, the app showed there were less than 300,000 people listening in, a tiny fraction of Elon Musk's 140 million Twitter followers. Once the conversation started, DeSantis talked up his confrontational approach to culture issues and made a plea for support.

DESANTIS: We have a lot of work to do to ensure the country gets back on track. I ask

everybody listening to please join me on this mission.

KARL: Donald Trump mocked it all on his social media platform. His campaign said in a statement: Glitchy. Tech issues. Uncomfortable silences. A complete failure to launch. And that's just the candidate." Despite the rough start, DeSantis has advantages. The 44-year-old governor won reelection last year in a 19-point landslide and he has raised more money, by far, than any other Republican challenger to Trump. DeSantis said nothing critical of Trump as he launched his campaign, but the former President has been hitting him hard, and another Republican contender said DeSantis can't win by just trying to be like Trump.

NIKKI HALEY: He needs to be his own person. He needs to get out there and say what he believes, what he thinks. If he's just going to be an echo to Trump, people will just vote for Trump.

KARL: DeSantis's next move is a meeting behind closed doors here at the Four Seasons in Miami with some of the biggest money supporters and donors to his campaign where they will try to raise more money for a campaign, George, that already has a lot of it.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Then an aggressive campaign schedule, Jon?

KARL: Ah, well, it's not going to start until next week. The first public event, at least what they've told us, is going to be Tuesday of next week when he goes on a four-day campaign swing to Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina. Those critical early primary states.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Jon Karl, thanks very much.

(...)

8:04:03 a.m.

2 minutes and 11 seconds

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KARL: Good morning, George. It certainly wasn't the campaign launch that Ron DeSantis had hoped for, but at least for now, he remains the most contender — Republican contender to Donald Trump. Ultimately, Ron DeSantis made it official by releasing a flashy video.

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KARL: Donald Trump mocked it all on his social media platform. His campaign said in a statement: Glitchy. Tech issues. Uncomfortable silences. A complete failure to launch. And that's just the candidate." Despite the rough start, DeSantis has advantages. The 44-year-old governor won reelection last year in a 19-point landslide and he has raised more money, by far, than any other Republican challenger to Trump. On his first full day as a presidential candidate, DeSantis plans to meet here at the Four Seasons Hotel in Miami with a group of big money donors to his campaign, trying to raise more money for a well-funded campaign, but he does get out on the road next week, Michael, starting Tuesday a four-day campaign swing that begins in Iowa.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Alright, Jon, we appreciate you covering it for us. Thank you.