

CFP Semifinal at the Capital One Orange Bowl: Georgia vs Michigan

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Miami Gardens, Florida, USA

Hard Rock Stadium

Georgia Bulldogs Jamaree Salyer

Press Conference



PLAYOFF
SEMIFINAL



moving to guard, whether that be at the NFL level or even this season, but you've maintained that you're going to play tackle and you've played pretty well there. What has allowed you to sort of develop into an all-SEC level offensive tackle?

JAMAREE SALYER: Just work. Work every day. Obviously it's tough with not having the same 6-6 measurables as the next guy. It's a mindset thing. If you allow that to hold you back, then it will. If you allow that to slow you down, then it will. But if you go out there and you work hard every day and you take the mindset that I can do this and I will do this and nothing's going to stop me from doing it, it will happen for you, no matter what that is in life. I just take that approach with playing offensive tackle just like I take that same approach playing guard or center or whatever it is. Everything requires work. Everything requires strain and effort and perfecting your craft. I go every day trying to attack that goal and be the best that I can be.

Yeah, I think that's kind of helped me out just to propel me where other people would think I would fall.

Q. Do you guys talk amongst yourselves when you see UCLA just hours before the game pulling out due to COVID? As we get closer to the game, do you guys say, all right, we're going to lock in the hotel and limit the contact from the outside world?

JAMAREE SALYER: Yeah, as far as the UCLA thing, I think it was crazy. It was kind of one of those things that happens that puts everybody on notice, okay, you've got to be careful because people are losing the opportunity to play. So definitely being careful. But we trust the plan that Coach Smart has in place, that our training staff has in place. Like I said, they do a great job protecting us. Of course we had that conversation in house just within our players, just telling everybody to be safe, be careful, no matter what you do, where you go, if Coach Smart gives us the freedom to go out and do things, make sure you have your mask on, make sure you are respecting the social distancing, because we don't need to lose anybody. Like you said, it's really close to the game, and we've got to be careful. Being careful is the most important thing, being

Q. Let me be the first one to ask you the Aidan Hutchinson question, and not just him, but Ojabo, too. You've faced some great outside linebackers in the SEC every week. How do these guys compare, and how do you feel about the match-up? Something you're excited about?

JAMAREE SALYER: Yes, it's definitely very exciting, two great, very talented players. They present different match-ups. Each of them are very good at different things, but very talented players, and I'm excited for the match-up. Obviously heard both their names pretty much more about a month now, so I'm excited to be able to spot the ball and go play. It's exciting. I'm sure they're excited to play me as I am to play them. We've got great talent, they've got great talent, and we've both played great talent all year, so best on best, we're excited for it.

Q. As to COVID and keeping away from COVID question, I'm curious if you were boosted, and did the team kind of go back to 2020 rules like early December or something a few weeks ago, or what was that like?

JAMAREE SALYER: I mean, COVID is affecting everything. COVID is affecting everybody, and my heart goes out to all the families affected to it. We've got to be safe. We've got to be safe, got to make sure you're taking the necessary precautions to protect yourself, protect your loved ones, and that goes well outside this team into well beyond this country.

Yeah, it's really been tough, but we've managed it the best we can. Got some of the best athletic trainers in the country, our staff. They do a really great job making sure we're all safe and healthy. Yeah, it's been tough, but we're managing pretty well.

Q. There's been a lot of talk about you potentially



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healthy is the most important thing. We need all hands on deck. Yeah, it's definitely some conversation about it, but we trust the plan that we have in place.

Q. This season I know you guys are in the playoff and that's where you want to be, but kind of reflect back for a second. You guys lost players to injuries. Players and coaches have been gone because of off-field issues. The loss to Alabama. Has there been more leadership committee meetings than usual, and being the team leader as a spokesman which you've been throughout your career, what's been your message to the team as you're on the brink of wrapping it up with these playoffs?

JAMAREE SALYER: It's just honestly with me, I tell the guys, man, just live in the moment. Understand the magnitude of this moment. Understand the magnitude of every day, every rep, every practice rep, everything that you do matters, and don't ever take it for granted because once you start taking it for granted, that's when you start losing to your opponent, that's when you start losing to other teams across the country. I think that's kind of the message from the leadership group that's kind of helped us remain one of the top teams in the country is just take everything seriously. Don't take anything for granted because everything that you do is a step forward. It's a step forward, it's a competition, and you can't see the competitors all the time. That's one thing about it is you take a rep against Nolan Smith in practice, you can see Nolan. But this whole bowl practice, I haven't seen Aidan Hutchinson one time, but I have been taking reps against him every single day. So it's just that competition, competing against people that you can't see, it's super important. Having that mindset, it'll keep us one of the top teams and hopefully finish as one of the top teams at the end, so that's been my message to the team.

Q. How do you view going up against Hutchinson and Ojabo, and Kirby said that you guys kind of embrace the challenge. Do you look at it as a way to make a lot more money if you have a really good day given that NFL scouts will be watching these matchups?

JAMAREE SALYER: Obviously a lot of scouts are going to watch the match-ups. For me I'm a competitor. I like to compete. If they say a guy is the best, I want to play against the best. That's what you come to college football for. That's what you play in the SEC for, that's what you come to Georgia for, you play against the best every single day. At Georgia, you play against the best every single day. Every single Saturday in the SEC and then eventually you get to a point where you get to the end of the year and you play against another team's best from a different conference, so I'm excited for the competition aspect of it.

I know that everybody talks about the money and you can make so much money, but I want his best. I know he wants my best. So I'm excited for the match-up because he's a great player. So is a lot of their defensive players, not just him.

I think we're just excited for the match-up because we've got a lot of competitors on our team. We're just competitors. That's what we are, and that's what makes us great.

I am excited for that.

Q. I'm sure you probably saw the video of Hutchinson pointing at one of the Ohio State offensive linemen and then bull rushing their guy. What did you think of that, and if he starts to do that with you guys, how will you react?

JAMAREE SALYER: I mean, everybody has the way they play the game. I let my play do my talking for me. I'm not much of a talker on the field. I just play. If he wants to do that, that's his prerogative, that's how he plays, that's not me. That's not going to change the way I play. I don't let my emotions change the way I play. There's people that rise to occasion and I like to sink into my training, and my training is to let my pads do my talking for me. Everybody plays their own way. I don't knock the way he plays. Obviously it worked really well for him in that clip, and it was a great clip against a good player, 75 from Ohio State is a good player. That's his prerogative. I have mine. I am going to play the way that I choose to play and I feel I play the game very well, as well.

Yeah, that's his prerogative.

Q. How do you feel as opposed to the end of the regular season and Alabama? I know you battled that foot injury multiple times. How are you feeling right now? Put a percentage on it if you want.

JAMAREE SALYER: I feel good. I feel really good actually. Obviously we had a lot of time over the break, just we had about a week off like right after the SEC Championship to wrap up finals and stuff, and during that time we really hit rehab hard outside of studying for finals. Body feels really good. Practices, Coach Smart has really been managing the practices really well, giving us the chance to recover but also giving us a chance to work really hard, as well. My body feels really good, and I'm really excited for it. I'm excited. It feels nice down here. The weather is nice. It gives you a chance to loosen up the bones a little bit, loosen up the muscles, so it's great, get a good sweat in, really not necessarily feeling so stiff going out there every single day in the cool, cold weather. I'm

excited about it. I feel really good.

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