

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Monday, July 17, 2023
Nashville, Tennessee, USA

LSU Tigers Jayden Daniels

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have Jayden here. He will go straight to questions.

Q. Jayden, just kind of talk about your transition of your college career, you know, starting out playing at Arizona State, now at LSU. Just kind of the culture, the fan base, everything that LSU exemplifies and kind of what that transition has been like for you and what makes LSU so special to you now?

JAYDEN DANIELS: LSU is special to me, like you said, the fan base and everything. Just the state of Louisiana has taken me as one of their own. I kind of feel like I'm from Louisiana now in a way. Even though I'm from California, I'm from the West Coast, they took me in as their own, treated me -- respected me.

And just the transition coming from Arizona State to LSU is night and day just what the fans exemplify, the energy that they bring each and every week to our games and how much they care about us and how much they care about LSU football is second to none.

Q. Like you said, West Coast guy from Pac-12 country. What do you think on the field is the biggest difference in terms of the competition level, what you see every week? And in your opinion what are the biggest factors that go into being a successful quarterback in the SEC?

JAYDEN DANIELS: The biggest thing I see the difference from Pac-12 to SEC is the big boys up front, you know, with the O-line and how big they are.

You have guys like, for example, Mason Smith. That's a humongous human being that can move like that. You know, you are playing against those guys each and every week.

I say just to be a successful SEC quarterback you have to go in there and just really prepare -- prepare like a pro. If



not, you know, you might get exposed in this league because there are some great players out there playing against you.

Q. What was the difference between your first game and then the bowl game? You progressed so much. How did that happen for you? Then moving forward, what are you trying to do this season a little bit differently?

JAYDEN DANIELS: From my first game to the bowl game, I would just say being comfortable within the system. First game, first everything. First game with a new team, new coaches, so you didn't really know what to expect or where to go.

Fast-forward to the bowl game, you can see how much more comfortable everybody was with each other, how much comfortable the coaches were with the players and the players were with each other as a team and also with the coaches.

Moving forward to this year, what I hope to change is week one, start with a win. Last year we started with a loss. I want to start with a win this year.

Q. Jayden, Coach Kelly identified in spring that downfield passing was a big part of maybe unlocking another level to Coach Denbrock's offense. Do you think you progressed a lot in that way in the spring and the summer, and what do you think you can do that can take that off as the next level in the fall?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I mean, to answer your question, I feel like that's what we need to do is to take the offense to the next level. I feel like we can have a top offense in the country, you know, going out there, and we have the guys -- we have the talent out there, guys that are special, to really go out there and make those plays.

This summer we've just been working hard at it, working hard at our timing. Even when we do our player-led practices and stuff like that, you know, we're giving guys opportunities to go make plays. That's the biggest thing that I say that we could take that leap to make the offense



more explosive.

Q. Do you think your chances of a Heisman are greater this upcoming season?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I mean, I don't really look at stuff like that. I'm blessed and honored to be part of a prestigious award like that.

Hopefully when I win football games, hopefully my odds go up, but my main thing is really just focusing on helping the team win football games. If individual success comes with it, then it comes with it.

Q. Jayden, at what point -- a couple of questions. At what point did you feel comfortable running LSU's offense?

JAYDEN DANIELS: Against Tennessee. Even though we lost, but against Tennessee, I felt comfortable running the offense after that. We kind of just took off as an offense of what we were capable of doing and what we knew that we could do. That's getting explosive plays. Going out there and really just taking shots and giving those guys a chance to make plays. So I would say the Tennessee game.

Q. What happened in that Tennessee game, and how did you guys turn it around?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I mean, we started off wrong in the Tennessee game. Obviously opened the kick, fumbled. With a high-power offense like that with a great team on their high horse, they got on us early, and we just didn't score enough to keep up with them.

But after that, it just gave us insight and light to the situation that we knew we control how we wanted to finish our season. Limit the mistakes and go out there and make plays, we would put ourselves in the situation to be in the SEC Championship Game.

Q. What are the hardest things about being a newly-arrived quarterback from the transfer portal, and what are you working on this offseason, and what do you want to get better at?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I mean, one of the hardest things transferring to the SEC and being a new quarterback is you don't know what to expect. When you travel to road games, going to Auburn, going to Florida, very hostile environments, and you don't really know what to expect with the fan base and with the team and how those teams feed off the energy of their fans.

You know, they're very talented, and if you get down early,

you know, you might be in trouble.

Q. You were on the other end of a pretty viral moment in the SEC Championship Game when Jalen Carter picked you up. I'm curious what your viewpoint of that play was.

JAYDEN DANIELS: Jalen Carter is a great player. I mean, he got underneath me. I already had a bum ankle, so there wasn't really much I could do. He just lifted me up, and he just kept me in one hand. After that point it was just really nothing I could do with it.

I was just worried about my ankle at that point because it was hurting a lot, but, you know, he is a great player. He made a big-time play.

Q. Commissioner Sankey expressed some real concern today about the way players and officials in particular are treated as a result of gambling losses with the new gambling laws. As a player on that end, how ugly can it be?

JAYDEN DANIELS: It can be ugly. Obviously we're told that you can't gamble. Obviously I don't think you should. As a player you shouldn't want to gamble. Going in there about the NCAA, I personally don't gamble, and nobody on the LSU football team gambles on our team.

We respect each other, and we respect the team, and we don't want to go out there and give any insight to what could happen just to make a quick buck. You know, we love each other as a team. We want to see each other succeed at the end of the day.

Q. When Josh was in here, he kind of half joked about the pressure to continue the National Championship run there on campus. What do you think about that?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I mean, it's a blessing obviously what those two other teams did, with women's basketball and baseball. It's second to none. They can go out there and they both win championships. Hopefully we can follow up with one. But other than that, we have to take it day by day and really just enjoy the process and enjoy the season with each other.

Q. It appears that John Emery will be cleared to be back with you guys in the fall there. What things does he do that other guys can't do? What kind of makes him special as a playmaker?

JAYDEN DANIELS: I wouldn't say necessarily what other guys can do. John is just a special player. Obviously, he was highly recruited out of high school for a reason.

He is a very special player as far as when the ball is in his hands, he can make something happen out of nothing. But, you know, we need John, and hopefully if John comes back, he is in the right head space with everything and go out there and he is focused on football and he goes out there to have fun, which I know John will.

I know the type of person John is. I can't wait to see John get back out there on the field and really just enjoy his last year and make the plays with the phenomenal person he is.

Q. You and Coach Kelly came in at the same time. How much did it mean to you two to get that win over Alabama? What did that mean to the program, and how much fun has it been watching him have so much fun talking about it?

JAYDEN DANIELS: It's meant a lot obviously. He lost to Alabama in the National Championship game, so it meant a lot to him to get that win. It meant a lot to the state of Louisiana to get that win against Alabama at home for the first time in a while.

It's just been fun seeing Coach Kelly enjoy his time at LSU, because if your head coach is not enjoying it, then the players are going to look at it and not enjoy it also. So he is enjoying his time here. He is enjoying coaching us, and we enjoy being around him.

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