

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Ole Miss Rebels Cedric Johnson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We have Cedric here.

He is ready for questions.

Q. You were dealing with a bit of an injury last season. Would you say you're feeling 100% now?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Yes, 100%. I'm feeling good. Ready to get back out there. Ready to play the game I love.

Q. Can you tell us about your defensive coordinator, Pete Golding, your individual role in the entire defense.

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Pete, I like him a lot. He's funny. If you didn't know, he's a pretty funny guy. I really like him, how particular in detail he is in the defense. But he doesn't stray away from at the end of the day we just playing ball, play the game you love, play hard, play fast, play physical. That will take care of the majority of our problems, take care of the majority of things. That's the main thing.

My role, I feel like I'm going to be moving a lot more, might be dropping back some, coming off the edge like I usually do. It's going to be a lot more fun for me, just the D-line in general.

Q. The past couple years you have beaten Texas A&M. What is it like playing Jimbo Fisher's squad?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Those games are always fun to play in. A lot of rivalry-type situations, especially goes on Twitter. Those games are always crazy. I like playing against them, especially with Coach Durkin there now. I always loved him.

So it's just always fun, fun rivalry to play. I like playing there.

Q. Austin Keys transferring to Auburn. What can you tell us about the player that Auburn is getting?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: They're getting a great player. He's a good friend. We came in together. That's really all I can say. They're getting a great player. He moves well, he's fast, he's physical. They're going to have a good time with him.

Q. How much do you think the D-line for you guys is going to be a strike this season, yourself, J.J. are back from last season. How do you see your group progressing as a whole? Do you think that could be the strength of the team?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: I think it's going to be the strength of the defense. I personally believe that. We've grown a lot. We got a lot more depth. We got few great freshmen guys, all of them look great. Cham-bo, DeeJay Holmes, Myles coming in. We got a lot of great guys. Stephon Wynn, Isaac. We got a lot of great depth, a lot of guys being able to play. I just love the way we're looking right now.

Q. The transfer portal changes, you see guys going in, coming out. Do you feel it's harder to build a team chemistry with the guys coming in and out every year?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: I feel like it's easier building a team with transfers. I feel like transfers coming in, they know how college works, they know the system of how we do things. Usually system of practicing, playing, how everything moves. I feel like the only thing you just got to add in is meshing them within the brotherhood.

When you get a freshman, you got to get them to know the system, mesh them throughout our whole system, teaching them how hard we work, about how we go on top of meshing them into the brotherhood.

I feel like getting transfers in is a lot easier than a freshman.

Q. You're going to Auburn this year. You've had some close games, wild games with Auburn in the last couple years. Your thoughts going back and playing them again?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: It's going to be fun. I'm excited to go



back. It's going to be a big game. I got some friends, a lot of friends, that go to Auburn. It's going to be a big game for me, competitive game for me. I'm excited to play that.

Q. What do you feel like needs to happen to kind of have that bounce-back season, get back to double-digit wins again?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: I feel it's going to mean a lot to us. Me personally, it's going to mean a lot to me bouncing back from last year. I don't like to try to blame anything on my injury. I just left a lot out there on myself. I feel it's going to be a lot to me personally, and the team. It's just going to be a great look.

Q. What worked for you last year to get such big numbers that you had?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: I feel like the big thing would be Coach Joyner, him staying confident in me, staying positive throughout the whole process. Just his energy radiates throughout me and my team. I feel like he's a big component of that.

Q. I feel like people have a lot of ideas about what Lane Kiffin is like. What do you tell people about him from your experience playing for him?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: He's not what he seems. Like on Twitter, he seems like he's constantly talking, joking around 24/7. He's really a low-key guy, sits back. He doesn't even usually talk much. Compared to Twitter, you'd think he's a completely different person.

Q. Anybody's game that you emulate or people that you like to watch?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Yes, a few people. I like Von Miller. I like Joey Bosa. Bunch of guys really. I like both of the Bosa brothers. I like watching Sam Williams obviously just 'cause we play with each other.

I watch a lot of different people. I try to emulate, take things from everybody, so...

Q. Last season Quinshon had a breakout season as a freshman. Anyone on the defensive side of the ball you could see having a breakout season as a newcomer this year?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Fewer IDBs. I'm honestly excited about everybody. Monty, Jean-Baptiste, Ashante, Jared Ivey, J.J. Pegues, the guys on my back end, Trey Washington. Anybody on our defense I feel like could have a breakout season this year.

Q. Is there a reason the team had that slide at the end from the defensive perspective that you're going to try to prevent this season?

CEDRIC JOHNSON: I believe it was just staying in the right head space, just thinking we were too high up on things, thinking we were having such a good season. I don't think we ran into any super tough opponents until later in the season. I believe we just finally hit someone hard, didn't know how to shake back from it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much. Wish you the best this season.

CEDRIC JOHNSON: Thank you.

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