

# Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Dallas, Texas, USA

## Oklahoma Sooners Jackson Arnold

Press Conference



**Q. Going on the road in this conference, what kind of mentality do you and your teammates have to take, especially with all the close road losses you guys have had over the past year?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: For sure. Road games were a little difficult for us last year. Whether that was lack of focus or whatnot, whatever that was, we really hone in this year on -- you know, just focus on winning those games. Not just away games too, it's home games. Every single game we play, we've got to treat it the same. We can't just treat one game like it's Texas. We've got to treat every rivalry game like it's Texas and go out to the best of our ability.

**Q. You were just thrust into the starter going into the Arizona Bowl game. You only had two weeks to prepare. Can you talk about just what you noticed, just mainly about yourself between then and now? How different is Jackson Arnold today as a leader compared to then?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: For sure. After that Arizona game, there was a lot of maturing and a lot of growing up that I had to do. Stepping into that QB1 role, I had to be a real leader for us, for our team, and just stepping into that role, I know I need to mature as a person, as a player too.

And the person that I am now and the player that I am now has improved drastically from where I was in that bowl game.

**Q. First year starters in college football, there tend to be ups and downs. You're going to have great moments. You're going to have tough moments. You referenced it back in the great room, you were thrust into a situation where you had to start pretty young in high school. Did you learn anything from that that might help you just mentally work through sort of the peaks and valleys and how you might approach that as a first year starter in the SEC?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: I mean, just adversity is going to strike one way or another. Just knowing that I have to keep a level head. I have to just learn from these opportunities and not really beat myself down from it is probably the biggest learning point I could take from that.

**Q. Just how confident are you that this team is ready for the challenge that is an SEC schedule?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: I'm extremely confident in this team. I think I can speak for everybody on the team that we're all super amped up to go out and play this SEC schedule. It's a tough one for sure, but we love the challenge. We want the challenge. We wouldn't want it any other way.

**Q. Jackson, you spent some time at the Manning Academy not too long ago and got to enjoy some time with the elite quarterbacks in college football, some of them from the SEC. Can you tell us about some of the things you learned from there that's going to help prepare you for this upcoming season?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: Honestly, the Manning Passing Academy for us was a place for us to meet each other and get around each other and hang around. Maybe some dudes that knew each other already and hang out with each other. There wasn't a lot of trash talking going on. There wasn't a lot of ball talk. We were just hanging out with each other.

Speaking on that opportunity, it was great to meet those guys and just seeing how they operate, but like you said, competing against them in some of the things we had at night, throwing against them in competitions, it was good to see how I stacked up against other college QBs.

**Q. Jackson, it feels like all week we've heard about Auburn is one of the toughest places to play in the nation. Can you elaborate a little bit more on what Carson Beck told you about what Jordan-Hare is like as a place to play in?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: He was short but sweet. He thought the place was cursed, man. I think their game was like a one touchdown game. He said it could have gone either



way, but he said that place is extremely hard to play in.

Again, we love a challenge. We want the challenge.

**Q. You know the starting quarterback at Oklahoma program is with a rich tradition at the quarterback position, a lot of Heisman Trophy winners, and that kind of sets the expectation for that position at Oklahoma. How do you handle that pressure?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: For me, first thing is to stay off social media. That puts a lot of pressure. Also, just kind of ignore it too. Just block out the pressure.

I feel like there's only pressure if you bring that pressure onto yourself. Just kind of staying calm and collected and staying off social media has been the biggest way for me to deal with that pressure.

**Q. Have you gotten a chance to play the EA college football game, and what are your thoughts on your representation in it?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: We actually played on the plane ride here today, me and Danny did. Honestly, it's really surreal playing the game.

I grew up playing NCAA 14 with my friends and my cousins. Seeing I'm in the game and I'm able to play as my character now, it's really special.

**Q. After every spring game, Brent talks about the growth you guys have to make before training camp even starts. For you, what did that look like as far as looking back on your spring and attacking summer, how did that look as far as fall practice and things like that?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: I feel like the biggest thing for me after spring ball was attacking the mental side of football, whether that's looking at defenses or how Coach V looks at offenses, getting a defensive perspective of the game. But just really focusing on the mental part of football and just kind of learning different things that will help me ID coverages or help me make better reads for the season.

**Q. Coach Venables and your teammates have both mentioned about how important it is to stand well in the trenches in this SEC schedule. You lose obviously a lot of starting offensive linemen. How do you feel about your group after this spring going in and being able to handle those rigors of the SEC week to week?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: I feel great about that group. They've been busting their tail all spring and all summer.

It's a young group. It's a new group. We know we also brought in guys from other places that play a ton of ball. Branson is a great example. Played three years at SMU, starter there.

We don't have guys that have never played ball before. We brought in guys that are new to the OU culture, but I feel like they adapted really well, and I feel good about that group.

**Q. Just curious, what have you learned about yourself either as a leader or as a quarterback or just a person, whether it was sitting behind Dylan and learning to the success you had in high school and now dealing with the expectations here in the preseason? What have you learned about yourself as a person or a player?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: For me, I feel like I've learned to be resilient, especially after the Bowl game. I had that experience my freshman year of high school. It's different at the college level. There's a lot more eyes on me, a lot more negativity that can be thrown your way. Just being resilient and being able to overcome that adversity was huge for me in the Bowl game and will be this fall because we'll face adversity. Coach V says you just came out of a storm, going into a storm, or you're in a storm right now.

So adversity is coming your way, and being resilient and be able to fight that is something I learned about myself this spring.

**Q. Danny was talking a little bit earlier that your arm has increased a lot this past spring. With that added threat of your legs being a great scrambling quarterback, how is the RPO going to look for the Sooners this year? Can we expect a lot more from you guys in the run/pass option?**

JACKSON ARNOLD: RPO, it's really what the defense gives you. It's going to be week to week. We're still going to run our RPOs that we always ran, but at the end of the day, it's what the defense gives you. If they want to load the box or they want to fit guys into the box, we're going to throw the ball. That's just how we operate.

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