

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Dallas, Texas, USA

Missouri Tigers

Kristian Williams

Press Conference



Q. It's been since 2014 that Mizzou has played in College Station. What have you heard about Kyle Field and that atmosphere?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: I've heard it's 100,000 something people. That's a lot of people. We haven't really given too much thought about it. We're trying to accomplish what we've accomplished right now, and that's get through summer workouts, go to fall camp, and build camaraderie with one another.

Q. Kristian, I'm curious, what kind of bonus have maybe you, a guy like Johnny taken on trying to mentor all these transfers and young guys coming on the defensive line? What have you done to help them adapt to the culture? Even a guy like Will coming straight from the high school level in KC where he's a high recruit, how do you help him adjust to the Mizzou culture and be able to make sure that he can contribute next season?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: Not only try to enforce the standard on them, but make them feel more comfortable who they are as a person. You've got everybody on the team who are all leaders in their way, form, or fashion. My job is to figure it out and enhance it a little bit more so they can be able to do what they want to do.

Q. After a big season last year, a lot of folks were talking about Missouri as a contender. This year has it been difficult to ignore all of that and just have a normal off-season? Do you embrace the expectations? What's that been like?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: With social media and phones and technology, it's obviously difficult to be able to block anything out. But for the most part, we just try to stay present and lock in on what we've got to do and lock in on the adversities as a team we've got to go through.

Just being able to come out of that with our brotherhood

and our bond with one another. So we're not too focused on that.

Q. First year with Corey Batoon at the helm of this defense. How did spring go with Corey? How did things differ with him at the helm?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: He's fresh in, so just to get to know him as a person and for him to know me as a person, just took a lot of growing pains in that area for us to get to know one another and go right to the workouts, go right into the walkthroughs and know the playbook and stuff.

It's challenging for anybody. So just to be able to experience that with him and learn more from him and pick off his brain as much as I can.

He's a situational master. That's my big takeaway from him. He's a laid back guy, so he gets on you if he needs to. I'm just excited to see what the future may hold.

Q. There's a lot of conversation regarding the schedule this upcoming season, how it can kind of be seen as in Missouri's favor. Would you agree that the schedule this season is in you guys' favor?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: I wouldn't say that because every single game, it's NFL caliber players on each and every team. You have to bring your A game every game. I wouldn't say it's in our favor. We're just trying to prove something.

Each and every year we have something to prove. We're just trying to elevate the standard we have from last year. Last year is the past, and we accepted that, and we're just trying to move forward.

Q. Last year the game between Arkansas and Missouri got pretty chippy on the field. Off the field there's been questions whether or not it is a rivalry. What do you think is the future between Arkansas and Missouri?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: What do I think the future between us and Arkansas? Whatever it is, it's a rival for a reason. Who knows? You never know.



It's a competitive sport, at the end of the day. Emotions flare up. Guys compete with one another at the highest level. So you want to bring that out in somebody. You want to bring the best out of them. So who knows?

Q. It's been over a decade since Missouri and Oklahoma have seen each other, battled each other on the field. They have a long history of playing each other through the Big Eight and the Big 12. Has that been a discussion? Coach Drinkwitz, has he talked to you about that? Obviously can you tell it used to be kind of a heated rivalry back in the day for a little bit?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: I actually learned that through social media. Coach Drink, he never really touched on it. He just wanted us to be present and stay focused. The most important game is the next game, or in our case it's the next workout or the next day at fall camp.

He just wanted us to focus on what's now, and then when the time comes, just be prepared for it.

Q. As you saw guys like D. Rob and guys move forward to the NFL draft and go into the NFL, how do you feel like your role maybe shifts a little bit as a leader in this team?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: The role may have shifted. I would probably say -- I wouldn't say that the mission is different. At the end of the day, I have something to prove. I'll just probably say it's with a newer group of guys. So I have to get to know more people more.

It's not a problem for me. At the end of the day, I want to be able to go outside my comfort zone, and I want them to go outside their comfort zone.

For us to thrive how we want to thrive, you have to make those sacrifices.

Q. Curious on the interior of the defensive line, guys like Eddie, Sterling, Chris, transfers in too. How do you see you guys shaping up as far as you guys play mostly three, seeing yourself moving inside a little bit in terms of technique. How do you see you guys as an interior defensive line shaping up next season?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: As we call ourselves, trench mob, and also, in my opinion, we're big athletes. I feel we can do it all at any weight. Coach Batoon has a great scheme for us in multiple assets. He has multiple schemes we can go in and out of. He has multiple disguises. Just be on the lookout for many different looks.

Q. In October Auburn comes to visit Missouri. It's not a series that's been played all that often since Missouri joined the SEC. Your familiarity with the Auburn program? You know anybody on that team, anybody who you've played with in the past?

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS: I knew some guys like D.J. James and Robby Ashford. But also as of now, I know Asante, and he's up here now. We're not going to exchange words on what our game is going to be like. We'd just rather show each other.

That's the biggest thing. That's the person I know.

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