

# Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Dallas, Texas, USA

## Texas Longhorns

## Jahdae Barron

### Press Conference



JAHDAE BARRON: How is everybody doing today? I just want to thank everybody for being here and me being here. I'm blessed to be here on behalf of my team. I want to thank Sark and the media team for choosing me to talk on standpoint of the Burnt Orange University of Texas, so thank ya'll.

**Q. What is something you think your defensive coordinator a lot of people may not know or be aware of?**

JAHDAE BARRON: He's a genius. That man right there is a genius from the standpoint of us having a record of 5-7 and giving up those amount of points that year going from 8-4 and 12-2, I mean, like, if you could describe one person in one word I would say growth. That's somebody I can trust to make me a better person on and off the field as a man so I appreciate him.

**Q. Jahdae, I remember watching you walk off the field in New Orleans and you kind of did a turn-around and looked maybe this is my last time on a college field. What do you remember about that moment and what has that moment done for you as far as motivation this off-season?**

JAHDAE BARRON: That moment for me was a little bad for me. I was confused what was next for me on the journey but me being here and being blessed, I'm being where my feet is at. That loss and that feeling right there, people don't like feeling that.

In order to not feel that you have to take one day at a time and move with a mindset of not having regret. I'm glad we had that taste last year because now we have the opportunity to work every single day to not have that taste again. So, you know, everybody goes through something in life, that's how you choose and to figure out somebody, a man's character, and how you adapt in a situation like that. And as a team, a collective team, we're going to adapt very well to that situation.

**Q. I'm curious, how many times this off-season have you gotten the question, "is Texas ready for the SEC" and how do you think about that question?**

JAHDAE BARRON: That's kind of been the main question I think I've seen on Twitter and things like that. But at the end of the day, football is football. You know, the grass and the yardage, it's not going to change, you know, the field is still the same length, two end zones. So at the end of the day we're on the standpoint of where, you know, we respect our opponents but we don't fear them. And at the end of the day we're going to get their best shot and we have to make sure we give them our best shot. It's going to be an amazing season, it's going to be a long season but it's going to be an amazing season and we are most definitely up and ready for the challenge.

**Q. Bringing up another tough game from last year that final drive against Oklahoma in the Cotton Bowl, how tough was it trying to get that one stop you guys needed, that one play you guys needed and how much did that drive and propel you for the second half of the season and what you were able to do?**

JAHDAE BARRON: That drive right there alone taught us to -- something so small can change the trajectory of the game, and it was communication. Not having communication is what led up to that play and us losing that game.

With that being said, knowing how important communication is on the back end and being well connected and everybody being on the same page with each other, it means a lot, it means everything with the defense.

**Q. Texas has had a pretty good run of running backs, impressive running backs coming through and there is some excitement that CJ Baxter can be another one of those guys. From your perspective, have you seen him grow this off-season?**

JAHDAE BARRON: Like before I -- I love that question. Before I hit on Cedric and those guys, it all starts with the

program, Sark hiring Coach Choice, a wonderful person and a wonderful man and he helps everybody be a better man individually and I know if he's doing that for me, and I'm not even in his room, I know he's doing it for the running back room. But to your question, he got to learn under Jonathan Brooks, a great running back and he's still learning from Coach Choice, and from those guys in the room.

**Q. There was an expectation that you may leave last year, what was the conversation you had with your family to come back to Texas? What was your impression of your ranking on that College Football '25 game?**

JAHDAE BARRON: We will go from the game and then we will go to reality and things like that. For the game, I haven't even played it yet. I just got the code last night. I'm going to download it after this wonderful SEC Media Day with you guys. I'm going to go home and download it. But the rating, it is what it is at the end of the day, it's a rating.

But with me coming back, there was so much emotion and things like that, I had to sit there and pray and then talk with my family and I got advice from Coach Sark and Michael Huff, Quandre Diggs, things like that, vets like that. I just wanted to hear their feedback and I put it in my big jar of my own and figure out what was my best opportunity. And me praying is what really helped and dove into that but it was a lot that came with it. But at the end of the day, Sark always tells me be where your feet's at and since I made that decision to come back I'm locked in and ready for the season.

**Q. I don't know how familiar you are with the Texas, Texas A&M rivalry in general, but how excited are you to go to Kyle Field and be the first team to renew this rivalry in?**

JAHDAE BARRON: It's going to be amazing. All the games are going to be amazing. I'm not just looking forward to that game but every single game. That's why I came back to play one more season in this burnt orange for this great university. But that game right there is going to be a great one from the standpoint of the UT community and how much it means to them and over the years from the past vets like, Coach Blake Gideon and knowing what he did in the burnt orange and relaying the message to the younger guys. That's never been part of this culture, and bringing them along that these games serious and things we have to live for and you can't take them for granted.

**Q. Can you tell the story of (Away from mic.)**

JAHDAE BARRON: Starting off, to wear 23 is to honor a friend that passed away, Tardrick Fowler. We called him Trollie. He passed away. From Austin, Texas. But that was something to do for him and I felt like me coming back and things like that, it felt like a point where I did a lot to honor him, to honor 23, and stuff like that. And 7 is something I always wanted to do. I had to ask Huff and Coach Sark for their permission and they granted that permission and let me wear 7. But being able to wear 7, it means a lot to me watching Michael Huff's highlights and things like that. I was so young, but being able to watch the highlights and look at him and wanting to do better than him in that number. When he gave me the number I told him I wanted to do better and I told him I am always striving for greatness and it's so hard to do better in a number that somebody was so great in, but I know it's going to push me to be my best self on and off the field.

**Q. How you doing?**

JAHDAE BARRON: Love your suit.

**Q. Matches your shoes today.**

JAHDAE BARRON: Crazy.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about the secondary. You have a fellow Austinite coming in, Andrew Mukuba. How has it been with him? And your role is going to shift. How excited are you to show your versatility, in the nickel and out wide in the corner?**

JAHDAE BARRON: Andrew and me go way back with Michael Taft. We started training over the years, and over the years seeing the growth of those two people on and off the field, they pushed me to be the best I can be. Taft looks up to me but I look up to Taft at the end of the day. He went through so much adversity being a walk-on and then to scholarship and if he can do that, I can do more. Drew, always I tried to get Drew to come to Texas from day one, I didn't want him to go to Clemson. But it was his decision and I'm proud that he's here now and he's family now.

For the defensive group for me being versatile that's a plus for the team, but I want to hit on, like, the person Sark is and the coach he is. The way he recruits and stuff like that, you can talk about recruiting but the way he produces, he obviously produced me to be a better person, and a better player, on the field and off the field. Yeah, I'm versatile but everybody in that staff, I can name five safeties that can play nickel right now and they get reps at nickel at practice and I can name four to five corners that get reps at nickel. And they produce talent at the University of Texas. They produce talent. You can see it

over the years and stuff like that.

**Q. Would you mind ranking the nickel corner back and safety position, your preference? Has Coach discussed when you're playing in the SEC the defense has to do certain things?**

JAHDAE BARRON: Uh-huh. I mean, I feel at those three positions those are all important positions and things like that. You know, at the nickel it's so much that can go on but I feel like at the nickel you're kind of more in the game. At corner you tend -- as a corner, people tend to get -- they can lull you to sleep, you know? Coach Joseph used to tell me when I played primary corner my sophomore year, he used to tell me you can only change the game five plays in the game and you have to stay awake for those five plays so it's always different. At nickel you're in there, you're in the trenches. I can be in the run game, I can be a perimeter guy, I can be in the slot guarding one of their best receivers. It's all different things. I can be boundary safety and coming in for the gap and things like that, but boundary safeties, they play the curl flats and things like that. At the end of the day they're all good positions for me and anybody on the defense that we have right now and everybody is capable to play everything.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, we have to go.

JAHDAE BARRON: Thank you guys.

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