

# Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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**LSU Tigers**

**Garrett Nussmeier**

Press Conference



**personally as a player. Obviously you have big goals this year as a team but you as a quarterback.**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: For one, just having last year to be able to go back on now and watch, study. This entire offseason has been about that for me, just watching all parts of the game, seeing the areas where I need to be critical on myself on and improve at, whether it's taking care of the football or using my legs more in situations that I need to.

But it's also been about seeing the things I did well also. Having confidence in that and confidence this is what I was able to do in year one. And now it's just all I've got to do is raise the floor.

And I think that obviously my goals are team goals. I think me being the best version of myself will hopefully lead us into the team goals.

**Q. You said a couple weeks ago you're not Joe, you're not Jayden, I'm me. How important is individuality to you, especially letting people know the kind of quarterback you are?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: It's huge to me. I think obviously with the track record that LSU quarterbacks have in the past, it's not a thing of disrespect. I have a lot of respect for Jayden, a lot of respect for Joe and what they were able to accomplish in their second years, and also respectively in their first years.

But as I said before I'm me, at the end of the day I'm Garrett Nussmeier. I'm a son of Christ. I'm a follower of God. That's who I am. That's who God made me be. And I'm worried about improving myself, being the best I can be to lead us where we want to go.

**Q. Curious your thoughts on Marcel Reed. You worked with him at the Manning Passing Academy, and did you also talk about the game last year?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: Not too much. I may have made a couple of jokes in there, like I gave it to him, or something like that. I was, like, you're welcome, or

**Q. What do you like to tell people about this LSU team and the wide receivers and also about the running game this year that might be different?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: Yeah, well, for one, just in general, about the team, I think it's the closest team I've ever been on at LSU, as far as the brotherhood and the camaraderie within the locker room.

As far as the receiver room, I don't think that we have a receiver that runs over a 4.4. That's exciting. A lot of versatility and a lot of speed.

The running game, I think, has been a big emphasis for us, and improving in that area. And I think you'll see a lot of versatility just as far as getting guys the ball in different ways.

**Q. You guys added both Nic Anderson and Bauer Sharp from Oklahoma. What do both of those guys add to your offense?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: Both of those guys are unbelievable players. So I'll say for one, Bauer has kind of added another level of backbone to our offense and that type of mindset he has. He's ready to take somebody's face off. And he can make plays and he's electric with the ball in his hand.

Nic, on the other hand, is around the same way. He's very electric, very, very good football player, and makes plays on the ball in the air that are unbelievable. For him and me it's about getting the chemistry down and the timing and getting on the same page on things. And that's what the summer has been for and spring ball.

Very excited for Nic, and looking forward to what he's going to be able to put out this year.

**Q. You're going into your full second season as a starter. Talk how much you've learned and developed**

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something, and we had a laugh.

He's a good football player, obviously. He can make plays with his feet and obviously with his arm. Very excited with him. He's a great dude, great person. Looking forward to watching him this year.

**Q. What excites you the most about getting another opportunity to play in Tuscaloosa, but this time as the starting quarterback?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: Obviously Bryant-Denny, I have memories of, when I was a kid, being around that building and that stadium. My dad was there. Some of my greatest experiences of my childhood were while we were with Alabama.

So there's a lot of, I guess, backhanded love. It's a hatred, but it will always hold a special place in my heart.

Anytime I get an opportunity to go back to a place I lived and play on that field -- it was the same when I was able to go back to Gainesville last year and play in the Swamp. I have memories playing there. I have memories training on the stadium field and things like that.

So it's really cool. Something that helped me a lot when I was younger is having those experiences and no moment being too big because I was blessed enough to be around the game and things like that.

Obviously very much looking forward to going back Tuscaloosa this year.

**Q. The South Carolina/LSU game last year, a lot of close plays, flags people still question. What do you remember about the game and the hit on you that wiped a pick-6, what do you remember about that play?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: That happened for sure, but I also remember getting the ball back on the 50 and taking it down to score and to win the football game. At the end of the day the LSU Tigers won.

So obviously that was a great environment, really cool experience. It was loud. It was electric. It was really cool. So a great memory for me. My first road win as a starter, first road win. So exciting.

Yeah, the hit happened. It is what it is.

**Q. Your season-openers being battled, the battle of the Tigers, the battle for the real Death Valley, and it's even thrown in now with you personally about you**

**versus Cade Klubnik that both of you are listed, the top of the All-American list, though. But what's your thoughts on that game?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: I mean, obviously for one, at the end of the day, it's the LSU Tigers versus the Clemson Tigers, that's what I'm focused on. And there's no me versus Cade or anything like that.

Cade is an unbelievable football player. He's a very special talent, and Clemson is a very good football team. That stadium is a very, very awesome environment as well.

I'd say it's more of a welcoming of that opportunity to be able to go into a place like that on prime-time television at 7:00 and just put it all out there.

I think there's been an emphasis for us as a team, a total switch of mindset to go 1-0 and to focus on that. There's no hiding from the fact we've lost the last five openers. That's something that we've acknowledged and we've accepted. And I think we've changed the way we think in order to make that correction.

**Q. You roomed with Arch at the MPA. Just from what you know about him personally, what are your thoughts about him taking over as the QB1? And in general the quarterback class here in the SEC this year -- Arch, you LaNorris, several others, long list -- what do you think of the class in general?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: I love Arch. He's a great dude, great player. I'm excited for him. Went through a similar experience I had to go through in waiting for your time and waiting for your opportunity. I think that he's very prepared, obviously comes from a very prestigious family who understands the game very well. More than most, obviously.

But I'm very excited for him. I think he's going to do very well. His mindset is great. He doesn't feel like he's earned anything, even though I believe he already has because of the type of player he is. So I'm excited to watch him go prove it. And I'm really rooting for him.

**Q. Along those same lines with LaNorris Sellers, obviously you've seen him in SEC play and Manning Passing Academy. What is your evaluation of his talent as a fellow SEC quarterback?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: He's an unbelievable player. His ability to extend plays and make plays outside the pocket is special. And also I think some people don't realize how good of a passer he is as well. He's a pure thrower of the football. He can rip it.



He's a great dude as well. Getting to spend time with him as well at the Manning camp, get to know him as well. Another player I'm excited to watch this year. Hope he has a great season.

**Q. Successful first season as an LSU starter. What have you been focusing on as far as improving your game this offseason?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: One, there's no hiding from the turnovers. I think it's more of an understanding of, you know, the way I am as a player, as an anticipation player, there's going to be some interceptions. The ones I need to eliminate are the ones that don't need to happen, the ones where I'm trying to do too much, the ones I'm trying to make a play when I don't need to.

I think it ties into my growth as well, and I've really bought into trying to change my body makeup and being able to be more durable, to be able to run, to be able to make plays with my feet as well.

I think there are times last year where I may have made a mistake, that if I would have put my head down, gone and got back to the line of scrimmage, or went ran for three yards and slid, would have been a different outcome. All tied in together.

There are also many ways I'm trying to grow as well and be better as a player. As I said before, it's more about becoming more well rounded and raising the floor.

**Q. Chris Hilton, you guys both came in together, both in your fifth years, but this is the first year you finally have a fully healthy Chris Hilton. What should we expect out of you guys this year?**

GARRETT NUSSMEIER: Last year, if you would have asked me the same question, everybody was raving about how good a player Chris was. The injury that caused him to not be able to show everybody kind of was a setback for him. I'm super proud of him the way he attacked his rehab, getting back. I think in the end of the year you saw the Chris Hilton we were talking about.

Chris is a special player. His speed, on top of his quickness and his catch-and-run ability on top of his ability to go make plays on the football field is special.

Obviously I came in with Chris out of high school. He's somebody that I'll always have a good relationship with, always rooting for him, but I think what you're going to see this year is more of a complete Chris Hilton. And he's really, really just bought into continuing to get better, to

continuing to build off the confidence that he gained at the end of the season last year.

I think Chris really, if you look at all the healthy games Chris has played, my first start in the ReliaQuest Bowl in 2023 or, I guess, 2024, and then you look at the last three games the last season, even the bowl game this year, Chris was able to make plays vertically every single time, not only vertically but also intermediate and even in the quick game as well. I think he's really grown as a complete and total receiver. Very excited for him as well.

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