

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Tennessee Volunteers

Bryson Eason

Press Conference



opportunity to still be able to go to the College Football Playoffs and learn from a lot of our mistakes throughout the year.

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Bryson Eason.

Q. Is this a rite of passage? Can you tell the season is coming along when something like this comes along, this event?

BRYSON EASON: Yes, very surreal. Very blessed to be in this opportunity.

Q. How does it feel to be asked, what does it mean to be asked to represent your school at this?

BRYSON EASON: Man, it means everything to just know that those guys believe in me to represent them well and put on for the Power T and put on for the name on the back of my jersey, it means a lot and I appreciate them.

Q. How has the team kind of come together after Nico left in the spring? And what's that been transition like?

BRYSON EASON: It's just been us, just focused on everybody that is in the building. That's really what only matters at the end of the day. Just focusing on us and building as a team and just taking steps every day to be better as a team and as one.

Q. (Inaudible)?

BRYSON EASON: Just hanging with guys outside the building, getting extra work in, watching film together, just little things to just build piece by piece to be better as a unit and as a team.

Q. What were the overall feelings from last year, what do you take from that season?

BRYSON EASON: I feel like last year was a great experience for me and a lot of my other guys to just go through the ups and downs of the whole season. It didn't turn out the way we wanted it to but it was a great

Q. What do you know about Aguilar? And what's been his interaction with the team, just coming in -- I guess he came in late summer, right?

BRYSON EASON: Just trying to step in and be a leader. Gaining guys' trust around the building. To show he's here for the team no matter what happens with whatever. And just be a good guy and be one of those dudes to just be there for the younger guys and help them along as they get through this college journey, start their college journey.

Q. This is a time of so much change in college sports now. Talking about changing the SEC schedule, College Football Playoff seeding. What are conversations between you and your teammates like as you navigate a constantly changing environment?

BRYSON EASON: You just gotta adjust to it. It's like life, you know what I'm saying? You've got to adjust whatever comes your way. We discuss it and what not, but that's not really the main task ahead. We just like focusing on balling, getting better in certain aspects.

Q. What did the defense do well last year and you want to continue, and what are some of the things you want to improve on the total defense and for yourself?

BRYSON EASON: Some things I feel like the defense did well last year was stop the run and affect the quarterback with, whether that was with a four-man rush or a blitz.

But some things I want to get better at is just rushing the quarterback, disrupting the quarterback, and just getting to him overall, and just bringing guys along with me to do the same thing.

Q. When you get questions about Coach Heupel, what do folks seem to ask you about?

BRYSON EASON: What kind of person is he, how is he. In my perspective of Coach Heupel, he's been a real



genuine person who pours into his players and programs and is real. Whatever he says, he's really going to do. It's not just lip servicing.

He's standing for everything he's talked about since I've been there. He's doing a great job with the coaching staff to turn it around and build a real brotherhood along the team.

Q. With regard to Coach Heupel, has this been a different offseason. You make the playoff first time ever as a program and obviously the news this spring. What's the offseason been like? Has it been weird at all?

BRYSON EASON: I wouldn't say it's weird. I would say it's very like not -- what's the word I want to use -- just kind of random, you know what I'm saying? To lose your main guy after the season we had.

Like I said earlier, you've just got to adjust to everything in life that comes your way. This is one of those situations where us as a team and as a program have to adjust. I think we're just going to do just fine.

Q. It's been since 2001 since Tennessee has gone into Bryant-Denny Stadium and beaten Alabama. Obviously last two times you got them in your place and you came out victorious. What's it going to take to go into Bryant-Denny and win in that atmosphere?

BRYSON EASON: It's going to take everybody on this team to discipline and know what you have to do and know your assignments so we can go out there play with our hats on fire, just attack those guys the best way we can to come out on top.

Q. You had a chance to reflect on the Ohio State game and traveling up north and that outcome. What did you learn, and what would you like to tell the younger players, you're trying to reach the playoffs again?

BRYSON EASON: Last year was last year. So that's kind of just out of the equation. We can't keep reflecting on that comparing whatever we're trying to do now to what we did last year. We have to let that go and move on.

Obviously we didn't get the outcome we wanted. It's really nothing to just sit there and dwell on, if you know what I mean, because we didn't end up victorious. So just keep moving forward, keep working. The mission we have at hand, let's focus on that.

Q. Is there a particular road SEC opponent and place you like to play or a place that's really impressed you?

BRYSON EASON: A place that really impressed me was Alabama. I didn't know that the stadium was that big, had the four big screens on each side. I thought that was really cool. It gets really loud in there. Alabama was really impressive to me.

Q. Does Tennessee cigar smoke better than an opponent's cigar smoke?

BRYSON EASON: Yes, sir it does, it's the smell of victory, that's what I would call it. The smell of victory.

Q. You mentioned something about Joey Aguilar. What do you like to tell people about him off the field or on the field, some things?

BRYSON EASON: Off the field, I would say he's a very down-to-earth person, you know what I'm saying? Nothing cocky about him, nothing arrogant about him, just a real down-to-earth human, who is willing to come into a program and help them out.

On the field-wise, I feel like he's a worker, you know what I'm saying? Comes to work every day, has a mission, ready to get better in every aspect he can and wants to bring along guys with him, so everybody can elevate and get better. I feel like overall he's just a great dude.

Q. Tennessee is such a storied and long program, produced so many players, are there any older Volunteers you've gotten to know that you've developed friendships with?

BRYSON EASON: Yes, of course guys like Matthew Butler, BY, Byron Young, a lot of older guys that was in the D line room who just poured into us when I was a sophomore or freshman, showed us how to go about our business and take care of our business.

So a lot of the guys in the D line room, in the O line room as well. I have a Memphis native named Jerome Carvin, who pulled me under his wing when I was on the younger side, just showed me the steps on how to go and how to work and how to get through college ball and how to be productive as well to make an impact on the team.

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