

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Kentucky Wildcats

Josh Kattus

Press Conference



JOSH KATTUS: I wanted to say I am honored and feel very blessed to be here. This is something I've always wanted to do ever since I was a freshman getting to see some of the older guys. So just really excited to be here and answer some of your guys' questions.

Q. You just mentioned it's meaningful to be here. How did you find out? What was the conversation like with Coach when you found out you were going to media days?

JOSH KATTUS: Coach and Susan out here obviously pulled me aside and just told me that I had been chosen to get to come to media days. And I instantly, called my mom and told her and they were so pumped.

So super blessed and very thankful for Coach Stoops and Susan. They do a lot for UK. Very thankful for them.

Q. Josh, what can you tell us about the quarterback situation at Kentucky this year?

JOSH KATTUS: I think we all around have a great quarterback room. We've got two guys kind of battling out right now, Zach Calzada and Cutter Boley. They both possess strong quarterback traits. They're leaders. They have great arms. And they're very smart. Really excited to see that quarterback battle and what shakes out this fall.

Q. You mentioned the fact you wanted to be here since your freshman year. When you reflect upon the experience you had at Kentucky, how has both your game evolved and how have you changed as a person over your time in college?

JOSH KATTUS: That's a great question. I think I've changed an incredible amount since I've been here maturity-wise. I came from a great program, great school. They taught me a lot of stuff.

But getting to play under Coach Stoops, he doesn't always

develop you as a football player, but he develops you as a young man and looks forward to sending you off into your future career.

They've done a great job. I think I've gotten better in every aspect as a player. And they obviously challenge you to be the best man you can be.

Thankful that I'm in a leadership position now. And when I look back at my Kentucky experience and career, I'm just super blessed to be able to wear the blue and white.

Q. You have participated in various community activities such as going to children's hospitals and helping with humane societies. What does it mean to you to contribute not only on the field but off the field for the community of Lexington?

JOSH KATTUS: It means so much to me. In Lexington, they take care of their athletes. Everything thrives around the University of Kentucky.

So with that, I feel obligated to do so. Lexington means so much to me. It has a special place in my heart. It's like a home to me. So anything I can do to give back to the city of Lexington, I'll do.

Like you said, whether it's with the children's hospital or doing Dancing With The Stars, which is raising money for charities that they have selected, I love to do that stuff. I love to give back. I'm super thankful for Lexington and all the Kentucky fans.

Q. Is there a friendly rivalry and a competition, you being from Cincinnati, and Willie Rodriguez being on the south side of Cincinnati, from Northern Kentucky?

JOSH KATTUS: Crazy thing is we actually just moved to Northern Kentucky. So I'm a Kentucky citizen now.

No, but Willie and I are actually roommates. We're really good friends. We're going to compete. We're going to compete on the field and be best friends off the field.

I think he's super talented. I think we've got a lot of tight



ends that are really talented in our room. Our coaches have done a great job of bringing in really great players this offseason.

So I think obviously we want to compete. That's the name of the game. That's what it is in the SEC. But we're really excited and we're still best friends.

Q. Up until this past year, you and your teammates had known nothing but success at Kentucky winning seasons, bowl games, maybe not as many wins as you like, but still. What was it like suffering through that last year, the offseason, and then trying to learn lessons that you can apply this season to make sure it doesn't happen again?

JOSH KATTUS: I think we all here can agree that this last year didn't go as planned. But ultimately, for the guys that were here last year, this is a learning experience. We've got to learn from what kind of went wrong last year.

I think there was a lot of good to build off. That's what's great about football and the transfer portal. We brought in a bunch of new guys that are just looking to go 1-0 when it comes to week one.

That's what we're focused on. We're focused on getting better. We're focused on going into this fall camp and competing. And we're trying to move past last year on to this year.

Q. Alex was in here recently. He mentioned the steps Zach Calzada has taken to ingratiate himself with the team and win over the locker room. What are some things that a new teammate, especially a quarterback, needs to do in the offseason in order to win his teammates' respect?

JOSH KATTUS: It's small things, it's being open to getting to know everyone. It's sitting down at the lunch table, putting your phone down and having genuine conversation. It's putting in extra work, whether that's on Saturdays.

I'd say that's something we've done really good. We only get so much time to work with the coaches. It's in the leaders' hands to go do that extra work. So he stepped up as one of the quarterbacks and has done that.

I think when I get back, I've got to stay for the leadership council tomorrow. But then on Saturday we're going to have a voluntary 7-on-7 with just the players, no coaches.

But that's what it takes. That's what we respect, those players that will come in, that are willing to work, that will embody our core values, which are attitude, toughness,

discipline and pride. And really get to know everyone.

He's done great. He's a great guy. I'm good friends with him off the field. So he's done a lot of great things.

Q. You had the touchdown to win against Ole Miss. How do you build off a win like that to help continue to have a more successful year next year?

JOSH KATTUS: I think that game just kind of shows what the margins are like in an SEC game. One small mistake, one fumble, one dropped pass can lead to a win or a loss. And that's something we can learn from, that we've got to be intentional about every snap. Every single play, we've got to have 11 guys on the same page. So that's what we learned from, the guys that got to experience that.

Then we have a lot of experienced players coming in that have played a lot of snaps. They know that as well. They're embracing that they get to play in one of the best conferences in the country.

So, yeah, we're really excited about it. And I learned from it, and so did some of my teammates.

Q. UK hit the transfer portal pretty hard as every team does nowadays. Is there anybody on day one that you think that's really going to stand out to fans and come in and make an impact?

JOSH KATTUS: I think a lot of the guys they brought in and a lot of guys that are returning, they've shown some great things this spring and the summer.

Two guys that I can think of maybe on the top of my head would be Gusta from Washington State. He was in the backfield a lot during the spring. He's a stud. He's a really good player and great guy off the field, great locker room guy.

Another guy, Kendrick Law from Alabama, another stud. He's really strong in the weight room. Probably lifts just as much as most offensive linemen. He's really fast, makes plays when the ball is in the air.

Those are just two of many guys that we brought in that I think fans are going to be excited to see come this fall.

Q. How has the dynamic changed since your little brother came into the position group?

JOSH KATTUS: I wouldn't say anything has changed because I do take a leadership role in that room. But I just want to be a model for him throughout his college career.



As the older brother, you want to pave the way for your younger siblings. That's just all I'm doing. I'm here as a resource. Being a college athlete can be challenging, whether that's with school, social life or football. I just want to be a resource with him.

I don't think much has changed. I'm going to always be there for him. I'm just blessed to get to play with him.

Q. What's the role of the tight end in the Mark Stoops offense?

JOSH KATTUS: I think it hasn't changed. I think we have to be able to block, be able to catch when the ball is thrown to us. I think the tight end room looks really complete. I think we've been showing that we are able to catch and block.

That's what it is. Tight end has to be nitty-gritty in the SEC. Everything starts with the run game. We're very involved with that. We're also very involved in the passing game. We're going to play a big role.

Q. Speaking of the offense, you actually have an offensive coordinator for a second consecutive year. What's that been like for you guys to develop -- I know you've got new faces, a lot of guys back on the offense under Hamdan's offense?

JOSH KATTUS: I love it. I've gone through three head coaches in high school, three offensive coordinators in college. It's nothing new to me. It's nice to have that familiar face and offense and have that continuity.

Obviously, as you said, there's 50 newcomers, so they're going to have to learn the offense.

But we're a player-led team, and that's what Coach Stoops wants and that's what Coach Hamdan challenges some of the offensive leaders to do, to make sure some of these new guys pick it up fast, play fast and help us win games. It's really nice. I love Coach Hamdan. I like him on and off the field. I like playing for him. I think he's a brilliant play-caller.

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