

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Arkansas Razorbacks

Xavian Sorey Jr.

Press Conference



XAVIAN SOREY JR: Xavian Sorey, and I'm happy to be here. Let's get it going.

Q. I know downstairs we talked about your time at Georgia. Obviously you said the biggest thing you learned was winning. From a player's perspective, you played on some talented defenses. What teammate left the biggest impact on you as a player?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: For both schools I've been at? I would say Landon Jackson. Landon and just seeing what he was able to do last year, last season, and the type of player he is, the type of person he is, it definitely left a big impact on me.

Q. We've had a couple of your teammates in here already. They had nice things to say about Coach Travis Williams. They cited the energy that he brings every single day. What's it like playing for him?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: It's fun. It's very fun. A lot of energy. A lot of energy. He's just one of those guys where his switch is always on, no matter what. Coach T-Will is always going to be Coach T-Will, and he is going to have his players ready to play, no matter what.

Q. Obviously with him being the returning starting quarterback, there's a lot of pressure on Taylen to be the leader for the team. From your perspective, what has he been doing well as a leader?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Just taking it day by day and putting one foot in front of the other and not looking too far ahead. I think that's one of the biggest things with Taylen, is that he's a humble guy, real humble.

Like, I know he's not going to look too far ahead and he's going to do all the right things he has to do to become the player he wants to become and to help the program out.

Q. Within the locker room, what does a good leader

look like?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: In the locker room, just being a good teammate. Being helpful to the younger players in the locker room and things like that. I just say being very helpful.

You don't always have to be vocal or anything. As long as you're doing the right thing, I think you're a good teammate if you're doing the right thing.

Q. One of your teammates that was already in here was Cameron Ball. What can you say about playing with him and what he brings to the table.

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Cam, that's my guy. I've got a lot of respect for Cam. You all know Cam been part of Arkansas for five years. Never transferred. He committed to Arkansas out of high school. He's still committed to this day. I have a lot of respect.

I'm very excited for Cam and what he's going to do this season. I can't wait. I'm itching to get out there on the field with Cam and start having fun again, just playing football.

Q. Can you talk us through what it's like to play for Coach Pittman? Obviously a guy that has ties to the former school like you do as well. What's it like to have played for him so far?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: It's been good to play for Coach Pitt. Coach Pitt got a lot of energy too. I don't know if you know that, but Coach Pitt, he has a lot of energy and he knows how to get his players up and going. I've got a lot of respect for Coach Pitt as well. I'm excited for him.

As far as the team, we want to play for Coach Pitt. We are happy with our coach, and we want to fight for our coach. That's one of the biggest things, going out there, fighting for our coach. We feel like if anybody disrespects Coach Pitt, they're disrespecting us. Ultimately, they is. That's our coach.

Q. What was your moment when you were little or coming into like end of your high school career where

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you realized this is what I want to do when I go to college, I want to play at the highest level? Did you have that breakthrough moment?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Since middle school I always knew I wanted to play in the SEC. I used to like schools like Florida, I'm a Florida boy, so schools like Florida, that's the only SEC school in the state of Florida. Of course I went for them very hard. I always dreamed of playing there. All my family went for Florida, either Florida State, things like that.

Football is big in my family. Football season comes on, whether it's the Super Bowl or national championship or whatever, we all are somewhere. Somebody in our family is cooking, grilling, got TVs everywhere. We're enjoying ourselves watching the game. It's definitely a big deal for me to play at the highest level of football.

Q. Going back to high school, can you talk about the nickname the Barber? Where did it come from? I haven't heard it used in a little bit. Hopefully it's still being used. Can you take us through the story of that?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: I used to cut hair in high school. I was just telling the last interview that I did, it was, like, are you a barber? I was, like, I know how to cut hair, but I do not like cutting hair. That's not my thing. I don't like cutting.

I kind of got that name, I played basketball. Before the basketball games I used to cut all my teammates' and the players in there before the game, get them fresh. That's where I got the Barber name from.

Q. If teammates come to you, they want a free haircut, you're not going to give it to them?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: I'm going to think about it. I'm going to think long and hard about it.

Q. You've got another nickname, Slide. I don't know where that comes from.

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Man, that came from like pee wee, pee wee football, when I was like 6 or 7. A couple of my teammates -- I honestly don't know where they got it from. After pee wee, middle school, they kept calling me Slide, and all throughout high school they called me Slide. I kind of took it, too. I actually like it.

And I ran track as well. I won state in track. So that was one of the biggest things that -- I think that's where that name started, actually. I take that back. From track. From track and field.

Q. What did you win state in?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Triple jump. It was triple jump.

Q. So you've been at two different schools, of course. What's been like things -- if you were explaining to somebody this is what makes Arkansas different. Just based on your experiences, what is it?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: I don't really like to compare any schools. But Arkansas is just -- once you go to Arkansas, you see for yourself, you've just got to go see for yourself. It's not a place you can look up or try to Google pictures of to see if you will like it. You've got to actually go to the state of Arkansas, go see it for yourself.

The people there are unbelievable. Nice people, and the fan base is a strong, strong fan base. And it's a great place.

Q. You're up there representing the linebacker group. What can you say about what else Arkansas will have at the position this season? And is there anyone in particular who's really impressed you with the work they put in this offseason?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Really the whole room is working, the whole room is working.

Q. Tell us about the rest of the room and if there's someone in particular who has impressed you.

XAVIAN SOREY JR: We've got guys like Tavion Wallace, Trent, Drew. Trent and Drew both just got with us after spring, but those guys -- Trent is like, he's a good football player. Very, very smart, and played a lot of football.

Drew, he's a smart player, too. Very athletic. Definitely going to be able to help us. And players like Tavion and -- I'm trying to think of some more -- Wyatt Simmons, players like that, they're working.

How do I say it? They're giving themselves the opportunity to play. And Coach T-Will will preach in our room, we do not have starters; we have standards. When Trent and all those guys came, Drew, he went in front of the room said, straight up, don't come here and look at the guys that played last year, started and think that you can't play over them. Go take their spot.

So that's kind of our mentality in the linebacker room; we're working. It's competition. It's definitely competition.

Q. I think every coach who has been through here has

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been asked about the revenue sharing and NIL. I want your perspective on that, the portal. What would you say are some like misconceptions in terms of the negative connotations that come with that? And if you have any personal stories about how it's positively affected you, could you please share that as well?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: When I first arose in college, NIL wasn't a thing. I kind of seen it before. Now, of course, now NIL is a thing. Some days I love it. Some days I hate it. Honestly, some days I love it. Some days I hate it.

Q. You talked about playing other sports, like basketball and track. How did that shape your athletic journey, and do you still play other sports with your teammates in the free time you have?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: Just being able to be versatile and do things like blitz and things like that. Sometimes I may use a basketball move on a guard or give him a little head fake, a little jab, a little crossover or something like that. It definitely helped me be versatile playing multiple sports.

Q. What do you do in your free time with your friends? Do you go play pick-up basketball just for fun?

XAVIAN SOREY JR: If anything, we'll shoot around, maybe 3-point shootouts. I haven't played actual basketball or a game in some years. It's been some years since I've actually played a game of basketball.

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