

# College Football Playoff

## Media Conference

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Grapevine, Texas, USA

### Ohio State Buckeyes

### Marcus Williamson

CFP Media Conference



COLLEGE FOOTBALL  
**PLAYOFF**

**Q. Marcus, it's been an inconsistent year for the secondary, and I know a lot of that had to do with not having a normal off-season, not having the normal number of games. How have you seen this group evolve and specifically your play in the slot? How do you feel you've evolved as a player in that position?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: I would say, like you said, it's been a weird year. But as a group and as a collective, we've really grown from -- just as a unit entirely, coach to player, player to player, and I think it just really has to come down to trust, trusting each other out there, knowing your teammate and your brother is going to be there to help you.

And when you have such great players all around you, it really helps to just play comfortable and play free, and I think that's really helped us as a secondary and for myself personally this year.

**Q. What do you see in practice from Sevyn Banks that has improved throughout the year, because he seemed like he was playing a little timid at the beginning of the year and not coming out and making plays, but now he seems to be finding his groove and getting into some guys out there on the corner? What have you seen from him in the last few games that make you think he's ready for a national title game?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: First off, Sevyn is just an amazing athlete, great person, smart player, and this being his first year completely starting, I think he's just reached a new comfort level and been able to trust his training, trust his body, his technique, and now you get to see the results on the playing field.

So we're excited to see Sevyn on Monday make some plays and help bring a ring home.

**Q. What's it like preparing for these wide receivers with DeVonta Smith winning the Heisman and then the**

**potential that Jaylen Waddle could be back, too?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: It's extensive, preparing for these guys. Of course DeVonta just won the Heisman the other night, and just all around they're great players. Any time you're in the National Championship, there won't be bad players on the field.

Being able to get on the film, prepare for what we think they're going to do, it's been fun, as well. So just really excited to get out there and compete as a secondary against their group. Just ready to win.

**Q. Kind of along the same lines, how much do you guys relish this opportunity? You've taken some criticism as a unit, and now you're going to play the best. How much do you relish that? And just as a follow-up, what's your status for next year? You're a senior, but obviously you can come back if you want.**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: I guess to start off, I do plan on coming back next year. And then just as a unit, like you say, any time you have a group of competitors like I feel we are as a secondary, you do look forward to these opportunities. You're on the biggest stage in college football and I think we've grown a lot as a unit, and so to just go out there and show how much we've worked all throughout the year and to hopefully let the results be a win on Monday, you can't ask for more.

So we're really excited, like I said earlier, to have this opportunity to play against such a great unit that they have over there on the other side of the ball and to go show what we can do as Buckeyes.

**Q. What have you seen from Lathan Ransom over the last month or so that has allowed him to take on this new role?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: First off, Lathan, like Sevyn Banks, he's such a great athlete. He's played and practiced at a lot of different spots throughout the year and he's really found a comfort level in his role now. He's just such a smart player to be so young. He asks a ton of questions. He's always trying to figure out more, how can I better myself here, how can I better myself there, and he's



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really just raised his value and helped us, especially during his first year in such a crazy year.

To do what he's done is truly remarkable. Really excited for Lathan to see what I know he can do on Monday and just help the team and help the unit. That's it.

**Q. How great has it been all the way to the National Championship game amidst the adjustments made to college football this season due to COVID?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: Yeah, not just college football, all the changes of course, our season getting taken and brought back and all the craziness that we're all familiar with.

But this year as a whole has just been wild. To finally reach this point to where we're playing for it all, you can't write a better story than that.

So I think it brings a new level of excitement to our team, just knowing how much we've been through as a whole. I'm sure to the outside world maybe we won't know how much has really gone on in these walls, but we're all extremely excited to have something to show for all the perseverance that we've showed throughout the year.

Just really ready to get this thing rocking in Miami and come back with a ring.

**Q. A little bit of a different role for you in some ways in the Sugar Bowl with the safety time that you were getting. I'm just curious what did you like about that? Is there a way that you think that fits your skill set? And why do you think that was a good match-up for you?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: I would just say Coach Coombs and our defensive staff, they came up with a great game plan for Clemson. It was a role that I tend to practice in at times. I kind of bounce around in practice, just making sure I'm knowing all the spots.

I think that's something that we cherish as a unit is everybody knowing every spot. And for this game plan, that just happened to be what was my best role personally for the team, and I think it worked out well collectively.

**Q. Just want to know if you could tell us about your decision to return for next season, kind of what factored into that?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: I'm still enjoying being a Buckeye, man. This year has been just crazy. I know we've had a shortened season. We've lost games here or

there, and I'm just ready to come back and help our unit get to the standard that we know we hold ourselves to and that we should be.

Like I say, I'm too happy to be a Buckeye, man. I'm not ready to leave yet. Still got unfinished business.

**Q. You kind of touched on this, but everything you guys have been through this year, how much have you had to check on your teammates' just kind of mental health and your own mental health with the different challenges and the stopping and the starting, just to get to this point to play a championship?**

MARCUS WILLIAMSON: You know, these players on this team, myself included, have just been through so much this year, not seeing our families, many of us not being able to see our girlfriends, and just to be in this bubble and to just be around each other, it's been tough.

And to go through all that since June and then to have our season ripped away, there was a lot of grieving going on around these walls and these hallways.

To have it come back and to show up to work every day, putting in the hours that we do, it can be rough on your health and on your mental health. So having those brothers right there next to you and you know they're going through the same thing, I think it's helped a lot of guys, and I know personally it's helped me this year. It hasn't been easy personally and across the board.

Like I said, being able to have that brother that you can lean on to get through these tough times during this year has been great, and now that we're towards the end and have something to show for it, I think it made it all worth it. That's really all I've got.

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