

# Pac-12 Conference Football Media Day

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

**Oregon State Beavers**

**Anthony Gould**

**Kitan Oladapo**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: You guys have been around this program for a long time. When you look at where it was, we're talking that first year, Kitan, what has been the change, if you can identify something? Where is the next step for this team?

KITAN OLADAPO: The change is definitely in the leadership of the team. We didn't have leaders my freshman year. Didn't have much accountability. It's definitely the culture that we built, player ran, holding guys accountable, getting better. Not just doing the bare minimum of putting in extra work, film, workouts. The next step. We went to a bowl game, won a bowl game. I think the next step is win the Pac-12 championship.

**Q. For you how has it been?**

ANTHONY GOULD: A long journey. He was here a year before me. He's had it a little tougher than I have. It's been amazing. Guys are really bought in now. That's great to see in a program. We're very player-led. I feel like with all good teams, teams that contend for titles, they have to be player-led.

Seeing guys brought into the program, what Coach Smith is building, the whole staff, it's amazing to see. Just to think about where we were a couple years ago to now, the standard has changed. We know what the standard is now. We need to continue to raise the standard from there, just live it day in and day out.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. How has DJ come in and enhanced the offense? How has he held the defense accountable with his play?**

ANTHONY GOULD: I mean, he comes in and he works. He's not a very loud or talkative guy. He puts his head

down and he works.

I think at the quarterback position, it's a good thing to see, especially with the transfer. We have guys in the room. It's been a smooth transition for him. He's going to elevate this offense in many ways. He's a big boy. He's going to be hard to tackle and bring down.

I think what he'll be able to do outside of the pocket will translate a lot more. There's no egos in that room, which is a great thing to see. He comes in and he works. He's going to help bring this offense to another level.

KITAN OLADAPO: He does a great job of holding guys accountable, really setting an example for Ben and Aidan, experience out there. He's always getting extra work in after lifts. It's always great to see that. When you see your quarterback putting in extra work, it makes me want to put in extra work. I think he's leading in example and makes me excited for the fall.

**Q. Reflect on Jonathan Smith, seeing what he's been able to instill. I think you said you wanted a better season than he had when they won the Fiesta Bowl. How would you describe from a player inside this program what it's like to have him leading it?**

KITAN OLADAPO: I think it's great. Coming in with Coach Smith in 2018, all the other coaches, I take a lot of pride, especially being from Oregon, and Coach Bray and Coach Cookus and Coach Smith all played together. It's always funny, tease him about them playing in their old days.

Yeah, I would love to have a better season than him because he has the best season in Oregon State history. I think we call him a players coach, he's been in our shoes, knows what we've been through. I think he accommodates really great for us and pushes us to be great.

**Q. Anthony, you talk about your mom. You claim Kansas as your hometown. You moved around. Mom was in the military. How has her impact imprinted you as a leader now?**

ANTHONY GOULD: I mean, she has helped me a ton. I



love that lady to death, man.

It's cool to see. Having a mother in the military, who worked in corrections in the military, she didn't really play around growing up. It helped instill discipline and hard work in me. I think that's one of the biggest things that I can translate into my game.

Even just life, too. She's always been there for me. Whether she's had things going on or not. I'm forever going to be thankful for that and forever going to be indebted to her for that.

Yeah, helped me build me into the man I am today just from being a military, I'm not sure if you've been around it, but being a military kid, being around it, yeah, it definitely instills some good characteristics in you, for sure.

**Q. Is there a piece of advice that she gave you that sticks with you?**

ANTHONY GOULD: Oh, yeah, just work hard and aim for the stars. You can accomplish anything you want in this world if you put your mind to it and you work for it.

The road has not always been easy. I didn't catch a ball my first two years at Oregon State. It hasn't been the easiest path. Keeping your head down and working no matter what, just showing it's going to pay off at some point. With her words of encouragement, her being there the whole time, it really has helped me. I'm just glad that I can show her the player I've turned into today but also the man that she's helped me be.

**Q. You started as a walk-on. Early on when you were on scout team, trying to find your way, did you ever think of this, representing your team at Media Day, being a goal? When you found out you were coming, what was your reaction?**

KITAN OLADAPO: No, definitely freshman year I didn't think I'd ever be representing the team at Media Day. I remember Avery going. I was like, Oh, it would be pretty cool.

Coach Smith pulled me aside and asked me if I wanted to do it. I said of course. I feel it's a great honor to represent the team and represent Oregon State.

**Q. How has the experience been? Has it lived up to what you thought?**

KITAN OLADAPO: Yeah, it's been fun. I called Alex last year. He had fun in L.A. It's been pretty fun out here in Vegas, taking pictures, gaming a little bit. No, it's been

really fun, yeah.

**Q. You reference one of your goals in life is to co-host on television. Is that part of your world that you want a career in?**

ANTHONY GOULD: Definitely. I have some interest in it. Yeah, did you see in the notes I put that in there? You going to let me host the show one time?

**Q. I don't really have the authority to do this, but I have a mic. Anyone who shouts out their mom on the way you did, you are 100% going to host this show. We'll work things out on the back end with the details. Amen, you can host the show.**

ANTHONY GOULD: Thank you. It's something I've been interested in. Trying something new out. It looks fun. You guys look like you enjoy yourselves up here. Being able to talk athletes, football, talk ball, you can't beat it.

**Q. You had every opportunity to play in the Pac-12 championship. Oregon State has not been in that conversation in a long time. What's the conversation like in the facility, player-run practices, around the reality of the growth of this team?**

ANTHONY GOULD: I think everyone has the same goal in mind. When you're all on the same page, we need to put the work in, we know we're not guaranteed anything.

We had a good season last year, but that does not mean we're guaranteed to win 10, 11 games this year.

The standard is our standard from now on. We know what our floor is. It's only up from here. Everyone has bought in. We all tell each other, Yeah, we're competing now, but we're going to be competing for each other in two months.

It's a grind now, but you want to go through those moments like that with your brothers just to make sure that everyone is bought in, everyone is on the same page, that you're chasing a title at the end of the day.

Everyone really has been emphasizing expanding their game. It's pretty cool to see.

**Q. Every locker room says we want to run the table. When you guys say that, how does it feel for you?**

KITAN OLADAPO: It feels crazy to me. I'm not going to lie. I think we all just really trying to get individually better on both sides of the ball. We're trying to emphasize if we are all individually better we're going to get better as a team.

We're really emphasizing execution, consistency. We want to play our best every game. We think when we play at our best, no one in the conference can mess with us. We're trying to execute, go out there and play great ball.

**Q. Anthony, there's been a ton of great wide receivers to play at Oregon State. What is one that maybe you in particular look up to? Kitan, there's been a lot of great DBs at Oregon State. Who have you looked up to?**

ANTHONY GOULD: I would say the one I looked up to the most is Brandin Cooks. Him and Isaiah Hodgins. I try to put a little bit of both their game into mine. Just the way Hodg can move at 6'4", 210, not a lot of people that can move like that.

Brandin Cooks, he's an explosive player. That's how I like to envision myself. Every time I touch the ball, I'm a threat to score. Punt return, handoff, I'm that confident in myself if you give me the ball, I'm going to do something with it.

Trying to see a little bit of my game in those guys, study their film, see how they react to certain situations, it's helped me a lot.

KITAN OLADAPO: For me, I would probably say Jordan Poyer being from Oregon, playing on the Bills, being an All-Pro. Definitely like his tape. Just the all-around safety, blitz, cover, be in the box, the post.

I also love Reggie Tongue, Makiya Tongue's father. I was looking one day, he's all over the stat book. I'd love to chase some of his stats, for sure.

**Q. Coach Smith mentioned the facility upgrades. How excited are you to be at a place that's investing in those facilities?**

ANTHONY GOULD: Yeah, it's going to be fun. I'm not sure if you guys caught a couple games last year in there. It was rocking in there with only half a stadium. Yeah, it's going to be fun when that new stadium is opened up.

I think it's going to be finished in a couple weeks. It will be nice to go in there and check that out. I'm excited to have a full packed house at Reser Stadium, show people what it's like playing at Oregon State.

**Q. Ever ask the students what it's like to be in the student section? What have the students said?**

KITAN OLADAPO: Some of my friends, I've given them tickets, they snuck into the student section. They said it's pretty fun, pretty lit. Even the USC game on third down,

some of the loudest I've ever been in.

Excited for the stadium to be built. At first we just saw it get torn down, we couldn't use half the parking lot, had to walk across the stadium. Definitely tired of the walk. They're painting all the parking lot spots right now. They put up the Reser Stadium on the back. It looks great. Definitely excited.

**Q. Kitan, when you see the offense run the ball the way they do, the whole mentality of the offense, what are you guys saying on the sideline as that's happening? Does it feed your physicality when you see that side be so physical?**

KITAN OLADAPO: Yeah, we love when the offense makes plays. We all get highbrow watching when we're not getting coaching points.

If it works, just keep running it. If it's not broke, don't fix it. Definitely getting hyped up there watching all our running backs go crazy. Definitely excited for them to get back after it.

Watching the offense tearing down the field, it's a great feeling because we just got to get a stop.

**Q. You are the voices of the program right now in setting the tone, is there a player for each of you that's maybe under the radar or a new guy who you're really excited, who popped in the spring and the summer?**

ANTHONY GOULD: He's not really under the radar, but Silas Bolden. That is the one who I think is really going to take his game to the next level and show people that he's a real dude. He had glimpses last year and flashes last year, but I think this is the year where he takes it over the top.

**Q. What have you seen from him?**

ANTHONY GOULD: He's explosive. He had probably one of the greatest catches I have ever seen against Arizona State, it just didn't count. To be able to have the body control to fully extend out and catch it one hand, it's ridiculous.

He's going to be a play-maker. Expect him to give me a run for some All-Conference in that return game.

KITAN OLADAPO: I have a couple guys. Definitely Easton Mascarenas, our starting linebacker, breakout season last year. He's about to be a junior. He's going to be a great season.

Ryan Cooper as well is going to take the next step. Had a



great season last year. As well as Jaden Robinson. Can't wait for Alton Julian to get back out there with me, get him back healthy.

Those are guys I'm looking forward to playing with.

**Q. Can you describe Pac-12 football? How would you describe playing in the league?**

ANTHONY GOULD: I mean, it's a blessing. You dream of playing football at the highest level against the best competition. If that's not what you want to do, then you shouldn't be playing football.

It's awesome to see there's going to be a challenge week in and week out. I think that only makes us better as a team. That's how championship teams are built. You have to play good competition. I'm excited for it personally.

KITAN OLADAPO: Yeah, I love all the competition. I love all the QBs coming back, going out there and competing against the best. Having like six teams finish in the top 25, that was great for our conference. We definitely love the competition, going against the best. Hopefully we'll be at the end of it at the end of the season. But definitely excited.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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