

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Monday, July 17, 2023
Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Missouri Tigers Darius Robinson

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Darius is ready for your questions, so we'll open it up.

Q. First of all, let's talk about the shoes and have you injured anyone with them yet since you've been here?

DARIUS ROBINSON: I got the shoes at Alexander McQueen's, Spikes, and I got them off Nordstrom. It was a nice sale, so I had to get them. And, no, I haven't injured anybody yet.

Q. You are representing the University of Missouri as you are trying to get things rolling and get off the .500 mark and take the next step. What are your thoughts going into the season trying to get Missouri to the next level?

DARIUS ROBINSON: First, it's an awesome opportunity to be here. I keep telling Coach Drink how thankful I am for him to select me to represent our team.

To get off this .500 point we've been at is going to come to execution. Coach Drink has done this offseason a good job of talking about it and understanding that through our workouts what we do now is going to translate to the games.

And I think that's what it's going to come down to, because when you watch the tape of our games, there's a lot of games that are one- or two-point decisions or one or two plays, so we have to execute better to win more games.

Q. Everyone is expecting you and Jayden to obviously anchor that defensive line next year. Can you speak a little bit to some of the other spots that have opened up, any stand-out guys you've seen in the spring or in summer you're excited about?

DARIUS ROBINSON: Yeah, there's three guys that come to my head before I came here. One is Jaylon Carlies, who I think is one of the best players on our team. He is a



strong safety, and he just makes a lot of plays for our defense.

Next is Johnny Walker, No. 15. He is going to have a huge role for our team this season. He has sat behind a lot of good players and it's really time for him to go show what he has.

Then on the offensive side Mookie Cooper, No. 5. I think he is going to have a great year. He has worked extremely hard. He is always working on his body and getting better for our program.

Q. Of course, last year you guys had a massive turnaround year under Blake Baker when the defense, namely the run defense turned around overnight. I was going to ask, what really led to that and what can you improve on -- as good as you were last year defensively, what can you do better here in 2023?

DARIUS ROBINSON: The main change was confidence. Everybody was playing more confident and just the system is very free. He allows you to make plays, and you are never really wrong in our system, so it's just working really hard.

This year it's about being competitive and wanting to get better, and I think our team is made up of a lot of guys that just want to get after each other. Like in our workouts, we're very competitive. I think that's just going to stop us from not being complacent.

Q. As good as the defense was last year, the offense has experienced some growing pains and losing a player like Dominic Lovett to Georgia, but just talk about offensively what it's going to take to take the next level with that. Obviously quarterback is up in the air right now, but Cody Schrader at running back. You got Nathan Peat, and you've got some young guys coming in there too. Just getting that offense to being more consistent really, what's that going to take?

DARIUS ROBINSON: You know, I play D-line, so I don't have no say in the offense, but I will say that they've worked really hard this offseason. They're always doing



extra work. Especially the O-line and Javon, who is here today, has really been a leader of that group just getting everybody to work hard.

At the end of the day we have to score points to win the game, but I'm not in a place to say what it takes for our offense. But I think they're going to have a big year for us just because of the consistency and the hard work that we've been putting in.

Q. We saw obviously last year in that Georgia game sort of the way they wore you guys down at the end of that game. What do you guys have to do as a defensive line to make sure that you can stop the run for 60 minutes against a championship team like that?

DARIUS ROBINSON: I would say, first, that we lost the Georgia game, and Georgia did not beat us. Like I said, it's up to us to be better and to finish.

Like I said, the main thing is executing because they did not beat us. We lost that game.

Q. Darius, playing in the SEC, of course, you go against all sorts of offensive linemen. I asked your former teammate Isaiah McGuire this a few months back at the Senior Bowl. Who is the best player you went up against in your college career on an offensive line?

DARIUS ROBINSON: First I will say Javon Foster because I've got to see Javon every single day.

From another team I would probably say -- I have the same answer as Isaiah. Landon Dickerson on the Eagles. He has really strong hands and grip strength. Yeah, he is by far the best.

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