

# Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

## Kentucky Wildcats

### J.J. Weaver

#### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We have J.J. Weaver of Kentucky.

Talk about the excitement coming into the season and what it's like to play for Coach Stoops.

J.J. WEAVER: At University of Kentucky, we're really big on player-led team. Coach Stoops really help us being consistent a lot. So just being consistent with every rep we do on and off the field, being a leader, being a good, positive role model to the community, stuff like that.

For me, me coming back, I was really big on coming back, being healthy, have a healthy season, get closer to God, my mental health. Losing my father really put a toll on my body.

Working out two times a day, eating six meals a day. Right now I'm at 255. I gained 15 pounds since I came back. Just being consistent.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. You talked about your personal strides you've taken. As a defense, what steps do you guys need to take in order to be contenders in the East this year?**

J.J. WEAVER: Being consistent, I'm going back to that, being consistent with making tackles, don't miss no assignment, know every assignment. But coach Brad White, defensive coordinator, he did a good job with that, game planning, really simple and easy for us. Our defense is not that hard to understand and read.

But, yeah, just being consistent, making tackles, being dominant up front. It really start with D-line up front. We start being dominant and physical, we win 90% of the games. Our defense been top five since I been in the UK, so...

**Q. You spoke about it a little bit, Coach Stoops, letting you guys lead at players. Walk me through what that**

**looks like in a practice.**

J.J. WEAVER: So basically, like, with me, I'll say I'll call a defensive meeting. No coaches, no staff or nothing, just all players. Just me talking about football, life, what we going to do in practice today.

Then scratch, we can make our own scratch up getting ready for a practice. Coach is really laid back. He don't really be on us like that. He be on us once we messed up or anything like that.

**Q. Justin Rogers has transferred to Auburn. Your relationship with Justin, what kind of player is Auburn getting?**

J.J. WEAVER: I'm going to miss that man. He's my brother. He's a dog. It really hurt me that he left us. Everybody have they own goals and stuff like that.

He's a dog. Great dog. Short, fast. Great with his hands. Dominant up front, for sure.

**Q. From other interviews today it seems like y'all's team is very player-oriented. You being here representing your school, what type of leadership do you want to instill in your fellow teammates when you move on?**

J.J. WEAVER: Being good to the community. We good with community work, bringing all community together with us. So just be positive, everybody keep doing that, working at the community at UK. Just keep working hard. We trying to get back to the grind, dirty football of the UK, BBN, Big Blue Wall, stuff like that. Just being physical up front.

**Q. Talking to Octavious, he listed some leaders, and you. He also listed Devin Leary. What have you seen from him?**

J.J. WEAVER: Man, that's my twin. We call each other twin. We wear the same jersey, No. 13.

With him, he came in as a powerful leader. We just lost



our quarterback, Will Levis, so that spot was already opened up. In the spring, Devin really opened up a lot. I really didn't expect him to be a talker like he is, but he's a talker. Like, he going to tell you what he like, what he don't like.

Then his game going to speak for itself, literally. The balls he makes in practice is unbelievable. The small, tight windows, he throw in there. How big I am, he can throw it over my head. He's fast. I never knew he was that fast either. He's an athletic dude.

**Q. What have you seen in your battles with Tennessee?**

J.J. WEAVER: I don't know, man. They got us this year. I'll talk on this year coming up. We going to be ready and physical for them boys, for sure.

**Q. You said the words 'dirty football'. What does that look like for Kentucky?**

J.J. WEAVER: Man, just finish the play. Even when the whistle blow, keep going, driving, putting your hands on somebody, tackle whoever got the ball. Just being that force, bringing back that powerful UK.

**Q. Have there been any other guys on offense besides Devin that have impressed you going up against them?**

J.J. WEAVER: The whole offense. The whole front. The whole offensive line. Devin, great guy. Ray Davis, transfer from Vanderbilt, running back, a great athlete. You know, the receivers. We still got Barion Brown. That's my dog. Dane Key, Tavvion Robinson. We got one of the best skills UK ever had, so...

**Q. Florida had the upper hand in the Florida-Kentucky series for a long time. What would it mean to beat Florida for a third straight year?**

J.J. WEAVER: It would be good. We getting to our goals, accomplished the goals we always set every other year.

Beating Florida, we're going to feel accomplished to the goals we set to ourselves, so...

**Q. What would a successful season look like to you?**

J.J. WEAVER: Going to a straight eighth bowl game. We've been to seven bowl games straight. If we go to eight bowl games straight, it's a success for us.

**Q. What signs have you seen this off-season or**

**evidence that you will take kind of a step forward and get back to a few years ago, double-digit wins?**

J.J. WEAVER: Being consistent, going back to that. Being consistent with everything we do. We can't take no days off, no relax day. We just got to be consistent, hit everything hard.

**Q. Curious about Barion Brown. How on earth do you tackle that dude in practice?**

J.J. WEAVER: Man, he got me a couple times (smiling).

You can't. He's so fast, unshakeable. You can't really in space, it's over. Once he get in space, it's to the house. Everybody seen it this year, so...

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much. Great job.

J.J. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

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