

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Hoover, Alabama, USA

Alabama Crimson Tide

John Metchie

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: What are you looking forward to in the 2021 season?

JOHN METCHIE: I'm excited to go to work with the guys. I think we're all excited to go to work in this camp, get ready, and excited to take the field this 2021 football season.

Q. You guys added Jameson Williams this off-season. What stands out to you about him so far?

JOHN METCHIE: I think Jamo is a really great addition to our offense. I think he's going to add a lot of speed to our offense, and I think he's going to help make us more dynamic.

Q. What are your impressions of the secondary this year? There's been a lot made of there's more experience coming back on defense this year. Last year was more offensive experience. Your impressions so far of the secondary?

JOHN METCHIE: Yeah, I definitely think our secondary is a lot more experienced this year. I think our secondary will be really strong, and I think our defense as a whole will be really strong.

Q. You have Bill O'Brien has the offensive coordinator now. What do you think he's going to bring to continue to help that offense elevate more like Sarkisian was able to do?

JOHN METCHIE: I think Coach Sark did a great job. I think we're all excited for Coach O'Brien. Everyone kind of knows who he is and what he does, so I'm excited to have his mind collaborate with the Alabama offense.

Q. What have you seen from Bryce Young from a leadership standpoint? There's been a lot of conversation too about his NIL earnings. What do you feel about that as well?

JOHN METCHIE: I think on that subject is more personal. I think he would be somebody better to ask than me.

But I think he's definitely coming along in a leadership role, definitely stepping up to it. I'm definitely excited for his opportunity, and he's definitely doing a really good job of it.

Q. About your offense in the spring, a lot of turnover in personnel. What did you see from the offense in the spring? What do you think your strengths are going to be?

JOHN METCHIE: I think we saw a lot of good opportunity and a lot of young guys. I think we saw a lot of potential in a lot of young guys and a lot of young guys that can step up and help.

So we're definitely excited about that.

Q. During the seven-on-seven workouts throughout the summer that you guys have done informally, can you talk about just name me a few of the young receivers that stood out to you?

JOHN METCHIE: A lot of the receivers that stood out. I think all the guys in the freshman class are doing really good. Agiye, Baker is doing really good, Slade, even the older guys. I think just as a team everybody is coming along.

Q. You've seen a lot of turnover in the wide receiver room, four first round picks in the last two years. Do you feel like the guy this year heading into this season? Are you embracing that role? And where do you kind of want to see your leadership grow?

JOHN METCHIE: I think it's a role I'm embracing, having learned from all the guys before me. I'm definitely excited about it. I'm looking forward to being able to teach the young guys things and definitely lead the receiver room. So I'm definitely looking forward to that.

Q. There's a few Canadians in the SEC, including a player at Mississippi State. As a Canadian citizen

playing here in the U.S. for a while now, what disadvantages, if any, do you face compared to American teammates? How have COVID restrictions impacted being able to go home and see your family?

JOHN METCHIE: There's definitely a couple. I think being Canadian definitely makes things harder here and there with a lot of paperwork and things like that. With COVID it's been kind of tough for not being able to see family for quite some time or having them come to games and things like that.

I think it's important to keep in mind it's something that everybody's dealing with. Everybody has something to deal with in the COVID situation. So it's kind of just remaining focused and -- just remaining focused.

Q. I want to ask you about a guy in our coverage area, Kristian Story, he's a defensive back there. Just have do you see from him on the other side and the potential he has going forward?

JOHN METCHIE: I definitely think Kristian Story has a lot of potential. He's definitely coming along just playbook-wise, physicality-wise, and things being in the program does for you. I'm definitely excited for him as well.

Q. To follow up on a question you got earlier, what was your initial reaction when you found out Bill O'Brien was hired? What does it say about Coach Saban and the Alabama program they're able to add Bill O'Brien and Doug Marrone, two guys who were NFL head coaches a year ago?

JOHN METCHIE: I was excited when I heard. I'm just excited to work with him. I think it would be a great opportunity for me to learn a lot, and I think it says a lot about the program at Alabama, the fact that you can have two head coaches on your staff. I think it just says a lot to the kind of coaching you're going to get and the type of team you're going to have.

Q. Just to follow up on a previous question, when's the last time that you have seen your family in person?

JOHN METCHIE: Oh, man, it might be around two-ish years. It's been quite a while, yeah.

Q. How did you guys celebrate the National Championship?

JOHN METCHIE: They weren't really there for it. I think one of my brothers got there for it, but it was kind of just being on the phone with them. Of course they were happy for me, and I was happy, so we've kind of just been

handling it as best as we could.

Q. How has social media, how much pressure have you felt with social media to grow your audience and grow your brand because of NIL? And has your Canadian citizenship affected your potential earnings with NIL at all?

JOHN METCHIE: There were a lot of questions about that with my Canadian citizenship affecting it, but Alabama has done a great job of getting me the help I needed to figure it out. As far as social media, I don't really feel any pressures from it just because I'm aware that, as long as I continue to make production on the field and do what I'm supposed to do on the field, opportunities off the field will definitely be there.

Q. You've played in plenty of big games, I know, but what do you anticipate with the atmosphere in The Swamp September 18th, and what kind of measuring stick game could that be early in the season for you guys?

JOHN METCHIE: I think it will be exciting. I'm really excited for that, especially knowing that we're going to be playing a good team and we're going to be in a great atmosphere. I think that would definitely be exciting. Like you said, early on in the season, I think it will be a good challenge for us.

Q. I think the last three Alabama quarterbacks have all been first-round draft picks. I know Bryce hadn't taken a snap yet, but what's impressed you about him? Where do you think he fits in? How good do you think he can be?

JOHN METCHIE: Bryce has endless potential. I'm excited to see him play. I think just working with him and knowing him as a friend, I'm really excited for him to get his shot.

Q. What's the biggest thing that Devonta Smith taught you?

JOHN METCHIE: I think the biggest thing I learned from him was work ethic. Just being able to work day in and day out and bring your best self day in and day out.

Q. Last year you kind of had your breakout game against Texas A&M. What was different in that game than your previous 14 games, do you feel?

JOHN METCHIE: I think that was our second game. I think just being able to be on the field more, just getting more time on the field, and the ability and time to actually showcase my talents and things like that.

So I think that was definitely just it.

Q. How tough is it when you haven't been able to see your family? You can't remember the last time, you said about two years with not even the exact time. Besides your family, you created a lot of Alabama fans in Canada, do you think?

JOHN METCHIE: Yeah, I definitely think so. It has been tough, but I definitely always remind myself that even since high school, going to a boarding school, I'm definitely making the sacrifice and working here to make a sacrifice for my family, and hopefully one day it could pay off for them.

Q. You probably haven't done a ton of looking at Miami yet in week 1, but I'm curious, what are your initial thoughts of the 'Canes?

JOHN METCHIE: I definitely took a peek at them. I'm excited to play them first of all as the first game. I know they're going to be really good, especially their quarterback, their leading safety. I know they'll have a good defense. They always have some exotic calls on defense, so I'm definitely excited to play that.

Q. I know there's been a lot of discussion among players and coaches about whether to get the vaccine, not to get the vaccine. As somebody who hasn't seen their family for a couple of years because of the pandemic, what's your philosophy on getting the vaccine or not getting it?

JOHN METCHIE: I think everybody just has to make the best decision for themselves. I think at Alabama our coaches and our staff has done a great job of kind of just informing us, bringing people in to talk to us and make us aware, and I think at the end of the day everybody just has to make the best decision they think is best for themselves and their family.

Personally, I know that most of our team and our staff is vaccinated, so yeah.

Q. When you came to Alabama, already several National Championships under Nick Saban, I'm wondering, taking everyone's best shot and trying to sustain the level that Alabama football has been on, how does that happen? How are you guys able to be up there challenging every year?

JOHN METCHIE: It definitely happens behind the scenes. It definitely happens because of all the work we put in, how committed we are and the sacrifices we make in the

off-season. I think that's why the results continue to look the same. I definitely think it's because of the atmosphere and the culture and just the standard of the guys buying in.

Q. I wanted to ask you, John, real quickly. Your position coach, Holmon Wiggins, is the last holdover from the offensive staff. Tell everyone about how he is in the room with you guys, and how does he improve your game and how he teaches the wide receiver position?

JOHN METCHIE: Coach Wiggins is special. Coach Wiggins is definitely special. I think, as a competitor and a true competitor of the sport, a person who wants to study the sport, be a student and get better, you really couldn't ask for a better coach.

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