

BSB Interview Issue: Cardale Jones Leading NIL Efforts After Playing Career



This is an excerpt of a story from the July print edition of the Interview Issue at Buckeye Sports Bulletin. For four free issues of the print edition, no card required, sign up at the link here: <http://www.buckeyesports.com/subscribe-4issue-trial/>

Cardale Jones will be forever immortalized in Buckeye lore for being the man under center during the team's immaculate three-game run to the first-ever College Football Playoff national championship in 2014.

Jones started the year as the team's third-string quarterback, but a season-ending injury to Braxton Miller before the campaign started and another to J.T. Barrett during the Michigan game put Jones in position to step up and lead Ohio State to a 59-0 win over No. 11 Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship Game.

From there, an upset 42-35 victory over No. 1 Alabama in the CFP semifinals and a dominant 42-20 win over No. 3 Oregon in the title game gave the Buckeyes the crown. Jones became part of a season-long quarterback battle with Barrett in 2015 before leaving for the 2016 NFL draft, where he was selected in the fourth round by the Buffalo Bills and played in one career NFL game. He spent the 2020 XFL season with the DC Defenders before COVID-19 cut the league's inaugural campaign short.

Jones has since been working to grow Ohio State football and athletics through his work with The Foundation, one of the school's top name, image and likeness collectives, which he cofounded with longtime Buckeye donor and real estate developer Brian Schottenstein.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin spoke with Jones for the annual interview issue and in the three-page interview, Jones discussed his playing career in college and the professionals as well as his work in the NIL space for Ohio State. Here is a sampling of those questions:

BSB: Going back to your recruitment specifically, Luke Fickell was still the interim head coach when you committed in 2011. Was there ever any hesitancy for you in committing when the program was in a state of uncertainty?

Jones: "Yes and no. It was just not knowing what the following season would entail for the coaching staff and the guys I had built a relationship with on that staff for the 2 1/2 years to that point. Coach Nick

Siciliano, the quarterbacks coach at the time, was a guy that I became very fond of as a coach. Coach Tressel, clearly, as the head coach, his departure did have an effect on the recruiting side of things.

"I softly started to entertain the other offers that I had and have a conversation with them. I didn't know what state the football program would be in. This was before the bowl ban and the scholarship limitations and stuff like that. But it clearly didn't make a big enough impact to where I chose somewhere else."

BSB: You had multiple key first-down runs in both the Alabama and Oregon games in that year's College Football Playoff. Do you think you caught both those teams off-guard with your legs?

Jones: "I think so. I think I caught them off-guard with everything. There wasn't any significant film on me up until that point, so both teams were going out thinking, 'Bigger guy, probably not as mobile or as agile as the other two guys prior,' and they probably weren't expecting too much on the (quarterback) run."

BSB: You declared for the draft after that season. In your eyes, what's the most difficult part of going from college to the NFL as a quarterback?

Jones: "The speed of the game and everything that consists of it. It's just like getting a promotion in a job where you are just an employee, then you go to a manager, then a CEO. There's just more on your plate."

The full interview with Jones can be seen in the July print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, available to subscribers. Subscribe at [this link](#) to receive immediate online access, or call 614-486-2202 to subscribe and receive online access, and ask about receiving our July interview issue.