

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Danielle Hunter

Press Conference



Q. To play for your hometown team and come full circle, what does it mean to you?

DANIELLE HUNTER: It means a lot. It's an honor to be able to come back and play in front of my family and all the people that I grew up with. I know they've been pretty excited about the news lately, and it'll be fun to be able to come to a game and see me play.

Q. From afar watching what the Texans were able to accomplish this past season, what's your assessment of the hometown team and the success they had last year?

DANIELLE HUNTER: It was a big part of it. I remember last year during the playoffs, I actually came to the game against the Browns and I liked what I saw there, and just the home feeling and how the guys were on the field, playing together for each other how they stormed the ball on defense. That was a big part of it, so I'm excited about that.

Q. This isn't your first time (indiscernible) what were some things that you were looking for wherever you went?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I mean, anything that has to be dealing with contracts, I'll leave that to my agent, but the biggest thing was having a good amount of guarantees. We play the game of football; you've got to make sure you're guaranteed a lot of things.

Q. From a game standpoint, what were some of the things you were looking for?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Just being able to just go after the quarterback. The Texans showed that they were able to do it, and that's been in my DNA since I came into the NFL, and I'm happy to be able to go out there and play for my teammates and bring that to the table.

Q. (Indiscernible).

DANIELLE HUNTER: Oh, man, that kid right there, he's exciting. Has a lot of tools. I was with him earlier, and he just can't stop jumping, how eager he is to go out there and rush the passer together.

Very good kid. I'm excited just to be able to go out there and teach him a lot of things that I know and become a better player. And same, I can learn from him, also.

Q. What do you feel like your acquisition to the team, what do you think that can do in terms of (indiscernible)?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I feel like the biggest thing about going into a football game is affecting the quarterback, and if you have a team that's able to affect the opposite team's quarterback, it gives you a better chance of winning the game.

I like what we see here, what I see here with the D-line, and I'm able to add my attributes skills to that to be able to affect the other team's quarterback.

Q. Growing up were you a Texans fan? Or was there a player you looked up to?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Man, when I was younger I grow up in Mario Williams, Coach Ryans, I seen that era and I seen all the stuff they went through. I was a big fan of Mario Williams and what he was doing. I tried to model my game after that sometimes, but I realize there were some things he could do that are just not for me. I grew up in that era and I liked what I saw from that team.

Q. What do you like from Coach DeMeco Ryans?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I like that he understands the players. He understands players and having them be able to go out there and play for each other as one unit. He brings in the family aspect of playing football. It's not an individual sport. You've got to go out there and play for each other.

That's one of the biggest parts about it, and he understands his players, what we need and what we want



in order to be successful.

Q. You mentioned going to a playoff game. What prompted that? You said you liked what you saw. Expand a little bit on the things that you liked.

DANIELLE HUNTER: I was home and I didn't have nothing else to do and there was a playoff game was going on, so I was like, let me go check it out.

Went there, man, they were out there playing together, the excitement, everybody celebrating for each other. That hit me. I was just thinking -- during this process I was just thinking about that, just being home and just seeing the excitement that they had. That played a big part of it.

Q. Your high school coaches talk about how you continue to give back, giving jerseys -- what does that mean to you, getting started here?

DANIELLE HUNTER: It means a lot. I was at that school when it first started, being the first playoff game that they have had, and they've just been continuing to climb ladders ever since.

It's very important to give back to where I came from. They helped me in order to be where I'm at today, and that's a big part of who I am. It's always important to just go back and give back to my team.

Q. Your track background, high jump, 400 meters, all that stuff, how much does that influence what you're doing?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I mean, I'm Jamaican, so it's in my DNA to run track. It plays a big part of it because playing on D-line you've got to get off the blocks, get off getting towards the quarterback, so it all translates over to playing football.

Q. I know you play defense, but how much does it help on the other side of the ball when you have a quarterback like CJ Stroud?

DANIELLE HUNTER: It means a lot, especially having a quarterback like him, being able to be in the position that he is at such a young age. That's very impressive. It brings the team closer together, and it gives them something to play for.

Q. (Indiscernible).

DANIELLE HUNTER: Some of the biggest things that I've noticed is that being able to just go every play. We'll have interior pressure this year, and I feel like that's a big thing,

just having me and Will on the edge and the interior pressure, that's going to be a massive increase from what I saw last year.

Q. You wore 99 with the Vikings. It was kind of a special number. Here do you anticipate wearing that or having to change or what?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Man, 99, that's JJ's number. He's done a lot with that number. I'm not even going to mess with it.

To be able to do what he's done with that number for the community and the Texans, I'm just leaving that under him. I decided to possibly go with the number 55.

Q. You were drafted by the Vikings and were probably their most defensively impactful player on the team last year. (Indiscernible)?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I always felt like they were going to bring me back, but business is business, and I just wanted to be very thankful for them giving me the opportunity to play in the NFL because there was a lot of teams out there that didn't give me the opportunity, and they were one of the ones that wanted to, and I was very thankful for that.

Went back, thought through all the years of playing there and how much I grew as a player, and where I'm at today is because of them, and I'm thankful for that.

Q. (Indiscernible) another LSU grad, what have you seen from him?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Just the speed of his game. He is going out there and moving fast from what I've seen, making plays. That's what you do as a DBU, especially when you go to LSU. But he's playing faster, making plays from what I've seen so far.

Q. What have the conversations been like with DeMeco Ryans, and did you mention to him that you grew up watching him play?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Yeah, I was talking with him earlier. We talked for about an hour. He was just talking to me about the game of football, how it's able to impact your family and everything around you.

Being able to just go out there and just doing things the right way and just playing together as a team, that's big time, especially when it just feeds off of each other. That kind of energy feeds off of your teammates.

That's one of the biggest things he talked about, just

playing together as a unit, playing together as a team. There's never a single individual out there that's doing everything by himself. Everything works as a unit.

Q. What did you like (indiscernible) to go to Minnesota to see you play?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Oh, man, she was excited. I'm telling you, everybody was excited, my family, my coaches. They're excited. Everybody that wasn't able to go to Minnesota to go to a game, they're finally able to come see me play, come see the Texans play.

Q. Did you interact with any Texans players or coaching staff or anything like that after the playoff game you attended?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I wasn't able to do that because I left early because of traffic. (Laughter.)

Q. Did you get a hook-up or sideline pass --

DANIELLE HUNTER: Somebody in my agency got me a ticket. We were able to figure something out. But I liked what I saw. Good energy and all that.

Q. I don't know if you've thought about this, and maybe you haven't, but what impact do you hope to have here?

DANIELLE HUNTER: The biggest thing I feel like I need to do while I'm home is to be a bigger impact on my community, give back to the kids. Show them that there's a way, able to get where you want to be in life. I feel like that's the biggest thing that I'm going to be doing right here.

Q. Do you remember when was the moment you started to realize that potentially coming back home was an actual reality?

DANIELLE HUNTER: I mean, honestly, I've been hearing it a lot from people, like family and friends, like hmm, Texans. It's a business, so free agency came, and I just kind of figured things out, me and my agent. It would have been just better to be here with my family, great football team, great organization, great quarterback, great front office staff. That played a big role in it.

Q. There's a long list of stories in the past of nicknames that teammates and friends of yours have thrown at you. Does one stand out that you like the most?

DANIELLE HUNTER: Well, I've been called Vortex. I've been called Gumby. I've been called He-Man. But I feel

like the biggest ones I liked was from my first coach. He called me Gumby, Andre Patterson. That was a cartoon before my time.

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