

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

Friday, April 29, 2022
Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Jon Robinson

Mike Vrabel

Draft Press Conference



JON ROBINSON: Welcome back. End of night two for us. Really excited to add the players that we added, starting with Roger. Obviously, really high on him. Good cover skills. Covered a lot of good guys in the SEC.

Nick out of Ohio State played both sides, left and right. Long athletic, spent a lot of good time here on the visit.

And wrapped it up with Malik there. He was the best player on the board, and excited to add him to the team. With that we'll open it up for questions.

Q. Why was it important to move up a couple of spots? How worried were you there that you had to do that?

JON ROBINSON: You just never know what's going to go on behind you. He was the best player on our board. We were a couple of picks out. You are looking at the teams that are ahead of you, but you are also looking and being cognizant of the teams that are behind you and the potential for somebody to come up or a team in the fourth to come back in to the third.

Q. (Indiscernible) What do you think about where he is right now?

JON ROBINSON: The quarterback? Good arm, athletic, moves around well. Got a really good skill set. Throws a good ball. He is tough to tackle. He has a lot of work to do, obviously, like all the rookies do, but excited to add him to the team and compete.

Q. (Off microphone).

JON ROBINSON: Well, you are learning a new offense. You are coming in. All these guys, whatever position they play, they're learning new terminology, they're learning new things, so how quickly he gets acclimated to that will probably determine how quickly he progresses.

MIKE VRABEL: We're excited to add Malik to the quarterback room with Kevin and Woody and, obviously, Ryan. We're really just excited about being able to develop young players and see what happens. I don't think anybody is going to be able to talk about anybody's future tonight. I think we're just excited to be able to get these three players where we got them, guys that we have met about and talked about, so we're excited.

Q. Malik was a guy that was projected in the top ten in some of the mock drafts. Did you ever think you would be able to get that guy in the third round?

JON ROBINSON: As it started to go on, I had my doubts. I thought some teams might look at it like us and, like, here's a good football player who has got a lot of good traits and things to work with and develop, and then as it got even closer and closer it became a little bit more apparent we've got a shot here.

Q. Mike, with Malik and his skill set, obviously, you need to see him here, but potential maybe to work him into a package or two?

MIKE VRABEL: I think that there's a lot of things that we can do with different skill players, Theresa. So when we look and we talk and watching his tape, he is a tough tackle. Obviously, there's a lot of things that we're going to have to work with and develop that our coaches are excited, and I know Malik is ready to get here and get to work, but I think it's just too soon to talk about certain packages, and we've done that in the past, and we'll try to do and put the best players out there to give us a chance to win.

Q. What about Nicholas's skill set? He is kind of a unique personality as well?

JON ROBINSON: Yeah, extremely intelligent. I like the fact that he has played a couple of different spots and he has played a couple of different spots in-game. You can see him. He has kicked over to the right side, kicked over to the left side in a game, and that's sometimes a tough transition for players to do that.

I thought he did it pretty well. I like his length and like the way he competes. Obviously, he played at a really good



school.

MIKE VRABEL: Really good. Kudos.

JON ROBINSON: In a great conference and for a great coaching staff.

Q. Mike, does he make Dillon more likely now to be guard?

MIKE VRABEL: No, I don't think we've had those conversations. I think Nick does have flexibility. He does have versatility. He has played a lot of snaps in the Big Ten. I'm very familiar with the program that he is coming from.

He has a really good frame, great build, and we'll figure out where guys start to go. We haven't even been out on the field yet.

Q. Roger, what does he give you from a trade standpoint?

MIKE VRABEL: He covers his guy. I know when you press play, he is close to his guy, and he is competitive, no nonsense. Came in, sat down, talked. Every tape that we watched he is close to his guy, and they all get beat.

It's fun watching him in that Alabama game, and those guys all got drafted high. He was covering them pretty well.

Q. (Off Microphone).

JON ROBINSON: When we get to the third round, it was the best player on our board, like we said. We felt the value was there to add a player at that position. Really all of these guys, we're excited about the competition. Roger, Nick, Traylon. The competition that they're going to add and infuse into their position groups.

Q. Talking about it, it sounds like it's different than if he was a first or second round pick in terms of what you are forecasting him for. Do you envision him as the starter of the future, or is that less the predetermined case based on his draft slot?

JON ROBINSON: I think his role will be determined by how quickly he comes in here and learns the offense and improves and gains the respect of his teammates. No different than any other player. They're going to earn opportunities, but, again, he is a player that was just kind of staring at us there. We were excited that when we were able to get up and get him and not get jumped, if somebody was coming up.

Q. Three years in a row you drafted a cornerback first and second round. Is that one of those positions that it's harder to find quality later in the draft maybe?

JON ROBINSON: It went pretty quick. After we took Roger, that was a position group that started to get picked pretty quickly. You see the receivers that are in this league. You better have guys that can kind of match and cover them.

Roger was great. He was great on the interview. He likes cereal and baloney sandwiches and baked beans. Simple guy. I try to cover my guy, Coach, and don't let him catch it. When they throw it to him, I tackle him. You got the job description down pretty good, Roger.

Q. How did that interview process go? There were some things that said he didn't interview well. How did that go for you guys?

JON ROBINSON: He came across good. He was well-spoken. He was engaging. Easy to talk to. I just got off the phone with him a while ago. He is deeply rooted in his faith. His family got together and prayed and thanked the Lord for the opportunity to come here, which I thought that was pretty cool, so he was good with us.

Q. You talked last week in terms of quarterbacks a lot about leadership. How do you go about evaluating that? What did you see from Malik in that regard?

JON ROBINSON: I think it's the teammates and how they respond to that player. You saw guys rally and playing hard when he had the ball in his hands, trying to block guys to free them up, and excited when he would make a big throw. He knows he has to come in here and earn the respect of new teammates, and that was one at the top of his to-do list when I spoke to him.

Q. At the cornerback spot, assuming that Farley is healthy, you've got Farley, Fulton, McCreary, do they all get on the field in some ways together, or is that -- to either one of you guys.

JON ROBINSON: We'll see how it shakes out. You can't have enough of them, and we saw that last year when we went through 91 different players, so you can never have enough good players that we think can go out there and compete and play at a winning level.

Q. Mike, when you have corners that have different skill sets and experience, does that give you more flexibility week in and week out determining match-ups?

MIKE VRABEL: If you could play man coverage every single snap and not get picked and rubbed, you would. So I think the guys that we start to get now, we hope we can continue to play some more man, mix in the zone. They've all played inside except for Caleb. They're all really, really improving, and I know that this is going to be a great opportunity for us to add competition like Jon said, but also, man, you got some match-ups. You have guys with different skill sets that Caleb is a little longer and Christian may be a little more seasoned and versatile, and then Roger really excelled at that roll man coverage last year.

Q. When he comes in and grows and matures the way you envision a year from now, what do you imagine?

JON ROBINSON: I don't know. I can't predict the future, but I know right now we're excited to get him and these other guys that we drafted, the guys that we're going to pick up tomorrow and sign in the post draft and let them come in here for rookie camp and compete, and transition them over with the vets, get them to know their teammates. I hope they all grow and improve and develop into contributors here for the team.

Q. You say you want him to compete for a starting role. Would you expect him to compete for a starting role by the --

JON ROBINSON: Like I said, I think that's up to the player and how quickly they come in here and learn the system, gain the respect of their teammates. They'll determine how quickly they move up and compete for whatever role it may be.

MIKE VRABEL: We want them all to compete for starting roles. I think that would be the idea. Everybody wants the corner office. Everybody wants to live on the top floor, and so that's what you are trying to do in professional sports.

Q. Are four quarterbacks too many to get work for throughout the offseason?

MIKE VRABEL: Well, we've tried to do a lot of two-spot stuff, and we're going to have to evaluate that and see if we can get everybody enough work, but hopefully in the offseason and some of the stuff that we're doing we can two-spot it and make sure that we've got two groups working at the same time.

Q. Jon, you mentioned Nick's swing tackle versatility. Can he also play inside, or do you maybe see more of interchangeable --

JON ROBINSON: Yeah, when we get those guys in here,

we move them around. Like I said, when I spoke the last time, it's about getting the right five, getting the combination of the best five guys up there, whatever combination that is. I think he is probably a little more versed at tackle, but it doesn't mean he can't play guard. Nate Davis was a tackle at Charlotte who moved into guard.

Q. Can you project ahead, Jon. What's the board look like now? Maybe what are some areas that you still feel like you need to tackle?

JON ROBINSON: I don't know if the round is ended up here. We'll take stock in the morning and start to kind of see where we're at and who is left. There's still some players that we certainly like at certain positions, and we're trying to get ourselves in position to get as many of them as we can.

Q. I know you want everybody to be versatile. He is a little more than versed at tackle. He played only tackle last year.

JON ROBINSON: He has played both tackle spots.

Q. But no guard?

JON ROBINSON: You can work those guys at guard. Just because they're at tackle, like Nate was a tackle, we moved him to guard. So, again, I think he would probably work at tackle, and we'll see if he works at guard.

Q. Does this have any bearing on Dillon Radunz? I know he worked left guard as well as tackle. Does that have any bearing on where you project him?

MIKE VRABEL: No. I don't think we're going to go into projections. We're going to start next week with the guys that will be here with a lot of individual work because that's what the rules are, and I think it's great. I would advocate for as much phase two work as we could possibly get because that's where you improve. That's where you make strides. That's where you learn your craft and are able to play in a manner that hopefully is safe and keeps you healthy and helps the team win.

So that's where we're going to start, and if you are a guard or a tackle on the right side, you're going to be in a right of handed stance and making the same movements. We're going to be coming off the ball. If you are on the left side -- right now for the next three weeks we're going to be working skills, and we're not going to be working against each other or having to block anybody. We'll go through that process. Once we get closer to where we have to compete and block somebody, then we're going to try to

find them, line up and allow them to compete.

Q. When you talked to Malik, how emotional was that call? I bet it's been a rough 24 hours for him, the wait?

JON ROBINSON: Yeah, it started off kind of quiet, and then once I think it kind of set in that he was a professional football player, you could hear the elation in the background. He had a lot of family and friends there that were hooting and hollering pretty good.

It's a cool moment for me to have those conversations with those guys when they pick up on the other end of the line and say, hello, and you deliver that news to them. The aftermath of what happens is really special moment.

Q. You have your rookie camp next weekend or the weekend following?

MIKE VRABEL: The weekend following.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports