

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

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Mike Borgonzi Draft Press Conference



MIKE BORGONZI: We came into tonight with pick 35. We felt we had a good volume of players in round two. We wanted to get back up in three. So we did that. We ended up trading with Seattle there at 52 and then getting the pick 82 in the third round back. So we felt good about that. It was a 17-spot move.

And with the first pick there at 52, we took Femi Oladejo, the outside backer from UCLA. Femi is a tough, physical kid that really just started playing outside backer the fourth game of the season this year. He was playing Mike before.

So he's developing as a pass rusher. I think he has a lot of upside there as well. But I'll tell you what, he can set the edge. He's physical. He's violent. The kid loves football, too. So that was a big part of it.

At pick 82 we ended up taking Kevin Winston, the safety out of Penn State. The same thing with Kevin, he's a tough, physical player that probably could have went a little higher in the draft. He had the ACL in September and we felt comfortable with the doctors that he'd be ready here for training camp.

So two guys that we felt bring a lot of competitive juice to the defense and physical tone setters as well.

Q. How difficult, with Kevin, how difficult does it make the evaluation when you didn't get to see him play a lot this last season?

MIKE BORGONZI: His tape last year in '23 was good too. He was probably up there with the two top safeties that went, in our opinion, when we watched him. And we felt comfortable. We met with him at the combine. Obviously had the medical there with the doctors. We got with them and they felt he was on track to be available in training camp.

But we love everything that Kevin brings. He's tough, physical, loves football, all that stuff. Plus he's from DeMatha where Dennard Wilson went to high school. So

that was part of it.

Q. The approach to wide receiver, was it initially you were looking to go early and it shifted, or how did you plan on attacking that position?

MIKE BORGONZI: Listen, we have six picks tomorrow, so we still have a good volume of players there and fourth round and down that we feel good about. So it was just a matter of we stayed true to the board where we were at. We felt we had a lot of players there in the second round we felt good about and I thought it was important for us to get a pick in the third round, too.

Q. Obviously before you got here, but the organization has had some bad luck with drafting players who have been injured. Was there any concern whatsoever when you evaluated Kevin even though the doctors had signed off on him?

MIKE BORGONZI: No, we have full trust in the doctors. Kevin's 21 years old right now. He's a young kid. And the imaging looked good with the doctors. And we felt like he was on track to -- he's going to be ready for training camp.

Q. What's the challenge of kind of projecting -- like you said, Femi's only played a relatively few games -- what's the challenge of projecting what his potential might be as an edge rusher?

MIKE BORGONZI: He showed a lot of flashes of the two. We got to see him at the Senior Bowl, too, especially in one-on-ones. He's a kid, 260 pounds, has power, long arms, 34-inch arms. You saw the flashes -- he's going to develop as a pass rusher -- but you certainly saw some of the flashes where you said to yourself this guy is going to -- once he gets coaching there, he hasn't been doing it that long, that he's got a lot of upside to be a really good pass rusher in the league.

Q. You mentioned Dennard, did he stand up for Mitchell and how much voice do you give coaches in this process?

MIKE BORGONZI: That's part of it, yeah. He obviously liked him. We liked him too. It was a vision for him. I joke

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around with the DeMatha thing. That's a joke. But there's a connection there.

But obviously like I said, it was -- the process we went through, we involve the coaches a lot. We took their opinions and we had to make sure we had a vision for the player.

Q. How much can you realistically expect a fourth- or fifth-round rookie receiver to help a rookie quarterback in his rookie year?

MIKE BORGONZI: It depends. Some of these guys have traits. That's why you take them in those later rounds, whether they have speed or size. So all these guys, no matter where you take these guys, they're going to have to develop.

Take them the second round, third round, there's a developmental process to it. So we feel good about some receivers there, though, in the mid-rounds.

Q. Did you get a lot of action at 35? What happened right before you influenced what you did?

MIKE BORGONZI: What happens is at the end of last night, people are looking to come up to 35. So we had conversations with people last night and really all day today. We felt like the deal with Seattle was the best deal that we wanted.

Q. Where did you have safety ranked on your list of needs? How did you evaluate that as a unit?

MIKE BORGONZI: I said we had a lot of needs. At this point we were taking the best available player on the board, and Kevin was.

Q. Where do you feel like this draft is still deep where you can get value in the third day, what positions?

MIKE BORGONZI: Running backs, receivers, those are probably the two deepest right now.

Q. Brian has talked quite a bit about the culture of the team. How do you feel these two guys tonight fit in to that culture and maybe add to it?

MIKE BORGONZI: Yeah, I think both these guys, because they love football and everything -- their work ethic, those are the type of guys that elevate the culture. So really when all three -- obviously Cam as well -- you want to change the culture of a program, you take guys like that, that love football, love the process. And all three of these guys that we've taken so far fit that.

Q. How important has that been in your evaluation in this particular instance with this team in terms of changing the culture?

MIKE BORGONZI: It's a big part of it. It's a big part of it. Obviously they've got to be good football players, but that part of it where once you start stacking guys in the locker room that all love football, they work, they hold each other accountable, then they really police themselves in the locker room. That's how you change the culture.

Q. Would you have felt any more urgency to go wide receiver had you not picked up Lockett a couple of days ago?

MIKE BORGONZI: No, I don't think it really changed much with that, no.

Q. Do you expect to get a lot of interest in pick 103? And has that already started?

MIKE BORGONZI: Not yet, but we could, though. So we'll get on the phones again tomorrow and we listen to all offers. So we'll see what's out there.

Q. I know you've already taken a quarterback, but does it shock you at all to see Shedeur Sanders fall this far?

MIKE BORGONZI: Yeah, it has, because he's a good football player. It has. It certainly has.

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