

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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John Schneider

Mike Macdonald

Draft Day Press Conference



JOHN SCHNEIDER: Great day. Added three Seahawks, through and through guys. Competitors, athletes, tough. Just great job by Josh and Ryan, like, really getting to know the people, the competitors.

Yeah, it was a fun day. And we were able to make a trade. So we give Pittsburgh a lot of credit for doing a great job and working with us. We had a number of -- can't wait to give these guys crud. We had a number of teams, like, kind of go away on us. No, it was a great day.

Q. John, we've heard you talk about wanting to get draft picks that will come in and come in with a mindset of wanting to compete with guys and raise that level of --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Absolutely, yeah.

Q. From talking to these guys for five minutes on a conference call, they sound like they're going to bring some of that.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, yeah. It's interesting. Dave told us that Julian was like that with you too. In reputation-wise, he's just been a fairly quiet guy. But he's a really confident athlete. He's been through a lot. The young, hipper scouts. They have a saying for leveling up. This guy has done it, with Fresno and rolled with Stanford for a minute, and then wanted to challenge himself in the SEC, and he did it. Performed at a high level.

Yeah, no, they're both really confident guys, but Bud is going to be -- Bud is going to be fun too. He's a blast. Mike and I were talking about the personalities. Throughout the process, if we put Bud and Spoon in the same room, what's going to happen? Nick in his second year, so...

Q. How much more digging do you have to do to find those qualities in guys you're drafting?

MIKE MACDONALD: A deep dive, if you may?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, go back and do a deep dive.

No, our guys just do a great job of getting to know the people. We have a great cohesion in our room. You know, all the guys that go in over the top to the schools too. Aaron and JB and Jason Barnes and Matt Berry and Trent and all the cross-checking that goes on.

Then all the interviews we have with the guys, you know, with the All-Star games, throughout the spring with the scouts, and then when the coaches come in, all those Zoom meetings are just so important. Then having the guys in here as well. Bud came in on a 30, and everybody in a blast with him.

Q. Julian told us that at the combine Leslie told he was going to be a Seahawk. What in that interview stood out that Leslie would have told him that?

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, I think there's clearly like a competitor and a confidence in there. Takes a lot of pride in how physical he is at the corner position. He's played safety as well. Yeah, Leslie looks like a pretty smart guy. It's pretty cool. Turns out Leslie is pretty -- knows what he's doing.

Q. Regarding Bud, how important was it to place Coby and say, all right, let's have similar attributes in that regard, or did that not steer your thinking with him at all?

MIKE MACDONALD: I don't think we think through, like, in those terms that we're going to try to replace anybody. We're trying to find the best people for us.

Bud has a really great, cool, exciting skill set and personality, competitive spirit to him. We're not just going to play him at safety. He can play nickel. He can probably play corner for us. We'll figure that out kind of as we go and how the team kind of shapes up, but we got some really great players at safety too that are going to compete.

Ty Okada helped win us a lot of games last year. Rodney Thomas is a guy that we're really high on. A lot of guys. So it's going to be a lot of great competition. But Bud has

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the skill sets that we're looking for in our secondary, play with the competitiveness, the ball skills, the man-to-man ability. That type of stuff.

Q. You guys obviously didn't know at the end of day one who you were going to be able to get on day two. Now you have that behind you, how did the draft fall relative to how you were hoping it would fall through two days?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Matt Berry sent me a text on Friday morning with these three guys' names. It's, like, okay. We did kind of, like, just kind of scrimmage this out a lot through, you know, is it a runner or a corner or a corner or a runner? You know what I mean? All the way through like that.

No, we're really excited. Yeah, just to be able to, you know, that balance of best player, team need really held true. Yeah, it was exciting.

Q. Last Friday he texted you that, or is that --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Sorry, I apologize. Thursday morning. Yesterday morning.

Q. How important was it to add another pick?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It was huge. Yeah, we almost added another one too, but we decided to stay and pick.

Q. Which pick was that?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Sorry?

Q. Was the third-round pick or the second round?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No. Well, I'm not going to tell you. I mean, it's a great try, but...

Q. Mike, how difficult is it to project these 24, 22, from a different program across the country and how they're doing? What do you consider to try to mold them into the culture?

MIKE MACDONALD: I mean, I know -- actually, I don't know how much it's changed. You know, I think the way that we've been able to, like, bring our coaching staff kind of in concert with the way that we've done it here for a long time, and our personnel people, it's not like we came in and said this is what we want. It was like we came together, and we both said this is kind of how we want to build it, and that's grown. I think it's evolved since we got here.

It's just that makes it a really fun process. So it's easy to

trust when guys, like, Ryan Florence is saying that he believes in a certain guy or our scouts and stuff. It's a really fun process, you know, that we can get aligned and have buy-in kind of across all levels, which is really cool.

Q. What trades did you guys figure? How did they best --

MIKE MACDONALD: I think this is a great example that it's -- like you asked yesterday about JD. His personality is way different than Julian's, which is way different than Bud's, but we all believe that they're -- Spoon is a different personality than Leo, but they have those core fundamentals. They have swag. They have confidence, but they have humility. I mean, they play an exciting brand of football, which we feel like we're excited to work with. I think that's the common denominator.

Q. Mike, you had Julian, and Julian --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: They understand it's the ultimate team sport. They have that self-awareness, self-sacrifice. Like all the lessons, whoever is in the room who has played football has learned from the game, yeah.

Q. Mike, Julian hasn't been playing corner that long. He told us that he moved over there from safety. Where do you see him coming into the NFL in terms of where his progress is playing that position?

MIKE MACDONALD: We see him playing corner. I think that's one of the exciting parts about where he is there's so much room for growth. He's already playing a really good brand of football. He has great traits, got a great work ethic, super competitive. He's smart. Those are all the ingredients that we believe can add up to playing even better football as his career grows. It's pretty cool.

Q. When you guys talk about the attributes, what's a Seahawk, you two won a Super Bowl together. Does that in any way leave you more convicted about this double down on this because it worked? Was there some stamp of certainty that winning the Super Bowl gives you with regards to your plans?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think this one is yours.

MIKE MACDONALD: Not to, like, wax poetic, but whether or not we won, what happened in the Super Bowl last year, I think we all felt that our process was, like, worth chasing and, like, preserving, honestly.

We're really proud of the team that we were able to build last year and how we did it and the people on the team. When I say team, I'm saying everybody in the building, all



70 guys, coaches, staff. I think it's more of a product of just kind of attacking what we want, like the vision of who we want to become over the course of two years.

I think we're more confident. Having the results for it definitely helps, but I don't think if we won the game or lost the game, we would have changed anything.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It stops and it all starts again. You know, it's like this, okay, well, that's the last game no matter if you made the playoffs, didn't make the playoffs, whatever. Now, here you go. Here's our next round of the process.

Q. Mike, you talk about how having the same guys on the field that can get into different structures is an important, like, evolution. These two guys that you drafted today have experience at different positions. How much does that versatility play into how you guys play defense?

MIKE MACDONALD: It's really important. It's really important. You have to be careful when you say versatility, because to be like a jack of all trades, master of none is not really our brand of ball. So we've got to be intentional in how we play our players.

As we've seen last year, you need guys to be able to do different things, whether it's attrition over the course of the season or, you know, as you build out your systems on the things you need to be able to do, obviously being able to do more is better. It's our responsibility as coaches to make sure it's refined and focused enough that it's still in, like, our guys' wheelhouse so they can go play their best ball and let their talents shine.

That's why you go through the process. That's why you attack phase one like crazy, and you just respect those -- all those, the importance of each day, because that will bring everything into focus.

Q. Clark had 15 interceptions at TCU. How is his play-making ability?

MIKE MACDONALD: Is that good (laughing)? That's pretty good.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: We'll give him crud when he was here, but he probably should have had 30. He dropped, like -- he had his hands on a lot of balls, let's put it that way.

Q. Sounds like he played well at the Senior Bowl too. Did his tape there stand out to you?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I thought the coolest part

about the Senior Bowl was he just took a ton of one-on-one reps. I don't know how they do it, but it seemed like he was a guy in every other rep, and he was covering people. So for me that was really cool. That was awesome.

Q. To get those opportunities to get his hands on the football, he's really aggressive jumping routes. I guess how much of a balancing act is there when you are doing NFL quarterbacks, NFL offenses with you want him to play aggressive, but you also -- I mean, this is the NFL?

MIKE MACDONALD: It's a good point. It's a balance, right? We want to train him the way we train our people and play within the system, but you can't coach the player out of the player.

I think that's going to come -- again, you got to go through the process and get a good feeling for the things that he's seeing. That's why you practice. Go make those decisive decisions in practice and then kind of go through the process that way and coach him up and go, you know, just one play at a time.

The thing you can't coach is his ability to go get it, you know, so you don't want to take that away there him.

Q. Obviously there was the attempts earlier on to try and move down, didn't work out. But staying where you were for the most part and still getting these guys, and Julian saying we're going to go back-to-back, getting those kind of guys --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: What did you say?

Q. Julian said back-to-back.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Julian said that?

MIKE MACDONALD: We'll talk to him about messages.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Maybe it was the wrong scouting report. No, I'm kidding. He's a confident sucker.

Q. How did it work out that way?

MIKE MACDONALD: Is there a question?

Q. Moving down maybe didn't work out, but you get these guys. They're Seahawks, they're confident. How special is that?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it's great. I think Brian Fleury would say it's very enjoyable.

MIKE MACDONALD: Enjoyable tape to watch.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: He has a funny thing. Yeah, I really enjoyed watching this guy's tape. It was very enjoyable. We're getting to know Brian. It's fun.

MIKE MACDONALD: I think it speaks to the process. Just trust the process. I think not because you're sitting here, but to see how John operates the whole draft and with the rest of our staff and how well they work together, it's really cool to see it happen in real time.

Q. John, maybe Mike as well, how do you balance that self-confidence and then the awareness of the team? Where is it in your evaluation? How important is that? How has that changed over the years? Players have to be confident, right, but --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, your self-awareness. I get it. Yeah, no, we've learned a lot over the years. That's our character process, our evaluating the person and the connections that everybody has that our scouts work their tails off to reach out to have their connections and spend the extra time to figure out who that person truly is. The competitor, the swag, but yet having, like, an awareness of not putting yourself in front of the team.

Q. John, how are you going to handle tomorrow morning with (indiscernible)?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, we had plenty of time to get ready for rookie free agency. We could have had our meetings tomorrow, you know. I think that our estimated -- our estimated time to pick at 188 is, like, 12:03 or something like that, so it's going to be a freaking blast. Sit there and watch all these names come off. It's really fun.

Q. On Julian's physicality, he called himself the most physical corner in this draft. Can you talk about that part of his game?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, that's cool that he said that. It's actually another one of the things that stood out to me when I first -- like, when the guys were presenting, we first started studying, this guy, like, he brings it. It's important to him, and yeah, he wants to be physical. If you're into 6'2" corners that have length and want to tackle.

Q. John, is there any adjustment in any way that you make going through a draft with Mike as opposed to with Pete?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Any adjustments?

Q. Well, just kind of approach. Obviously there must

be some difference in their personality. I'm not trying to --

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No, that's not --

MIKE MACDONALD: There's no difference whatsoever.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No, it's getting to know obviously the head coach, but getting to know the guys you're going to be spending time -- the position coaches, the guys that will be spending time and what kind of buy-in are they going to have, and do they want to coach the player?

Yeah, I mean, I know the mistakes that I've made personally in the past and what that looks like, so we've learned from those things. You know, we don't want to repeat it.

But, no, it's not -- it's different with all the assistant coaches I would say more than -- because you're always going to have those private conversations, like, okay, you good? We good? Except in pregame. Mike doesn't want to talk to me during pregame (laughing). Pete wanted to talk to me all the time.

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