

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Kevin Colbert

Mike Tomlin

Draft Press Conference



Quincy Roche did a nice job after he grad transferred from Temple down to the University of Miami. At Temple his junior year he was I believe 13 sacks. He played exclusively defensive end for Miami. But he has the athleticism to definitely project to the outside backer spot.

Tre Norwood is a safety/corner. He's played both at Oklahoma. He was moved to safety before he was injured last season in 2019. He came back, put together five interceptions for Oklahoma this season. Playing mainly safety, but he also is a package guy that can move around, and coach will address that.

Pressley Harvin is a big legged guy. When I say that, he has a naturally powerful leg. He averaged 44.7 for his career. I believe it was 47.6 this season. It's just a natural, powerful leg. Again, excited to have him come in and join the competition.

We're in the process of starting to sign free agents. Hopefully we get that process wrapped up here quick, then we'll be ready to move on.

Coach.

MIKE TOMLIN: Nothing to add. I'll be happy to address any questions you might have. Kevin did an awesome job of summarizing what we've done today and this weekend to get to this point.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Coach and Kevin, is it just coincidence or did you make a concentrated effort, you took a lot of seniors, guys with multiple starts over their career? Was that any part of the focus?

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that senior was a direct focus. I know we really were interested in guys that had an opportunity to play in 2020. No disrespect to those who didn't play in 2020 or who participated in conferences who had uncertainty in that area. We just had a certain level of comfort with people with fluid résumés and participation in 2020.

When it was close, Kevin mentioned on several occasions

KEVIN COLBERT: We're happy to reach the conclusion of the 2021 Draft. We just met with all the scouts and coaches, congratulated them on their efforts.

Our bottom line is we think we're a better team today than we were yesterday. That's always the goal coming out of this process. We've talked about Najee and Pat and Kendrick Green before. Yesterday I know the assistant coaches addressed those guys that we didn't talk about. We'll be glad to answer any questions along those lines.

But Pat and Kendrick, both quality players. Both have versatility. Pat can play in the formation, outside the formation. Kendrick has played both center and guard. He'll start off as a center here.

Today we added Dan Moore. Three-year starter down at Texas A&M playing in the SEC at left tackle. Did a nice job there.

Buddy Johnson is his teammate. He was the team captain, but he was also the leader of that group. That group had several very good players on it, as witnessed by the draft picks today. Buddy was a big part of it. He's a good run defender that shows up in coverage. He'll be able to help out on special teams.

We traded our fourth round pick in 2022 to be able to draft Isaiahh Loudermilk this year. In doing that, just to address the trade, we're pretty sure we'll have some type of compensatory pick in that fourth round range. We never know exactly what that will be. We feel confident. We just wanted to get back into that fifth round this year, especially when a guy like Isaiahh was available.

Loudermilk played in 3-4 defense, has the length and athleticism that you like. He's played techniques that he'll continue to be taught here. That was really exciting to be able to trade back into that round, get a guy like Isaiahh.

leading up to this weekend we were going to lean toward those who played in 2020.

Q. It happened to work out you were going to use the first four on offense, then follow it up with the next four on defense?

KEVIN COLBERT: Yeah, again, just to echo coach's comments with the seniors, there was really no plan for that entering into this draft. That's just the way it unfolded for us. Happy to have some balance. I don't even know what the exact numbers were. Looks like it was four, four, one. We included the special teams for the tiebreaker.

But it was no intent to do that. Hopefully, again, we got balanced help for both sides of the football or all three sides of the football.

Q. Kevin, seemed like you played the draft board quite well by getting skill positions early where that might not have been as deep, getting value with Green and Moore later where positions were deeper. Is that fair to say? It seems like you balanced need with want with those first four.

KEVIN COLBERT: I think when we look at the board, we look at who's available, regardless of the depth. If we really liked that player, we're going to take them there. If we know there is good depth at two positions and two players are graded pretty close, we will take the player that has the least amount of depth as we look at the total picture.

In that case, what I mean to say is if we like a guy, regardless of the depth, we'll take him. But if it's close and there's more depth, we'll probably take the position with the least depth.

Q. Talking with Adrian Klemm last night, he mentioned an emphasis on drafting these offensive linemen that have a nasty streak. With the guys across the board, they all have this toughness, nastiness. How important was it to bring guys like that into the fold?

MIKE TOMLIN: Yeah, I think that play demeanor that you mentioned is something that we always covet, at least the time period I've been here. I think it's a component of football that's time tested, supersedes all trends and things of that nature. I don't know if that was a new discussion or new discovery for us.

Q. On Monday you made it a point to mention fixing the running game isn't exclusively based on bringing in new faces. If you look at the first four guys, in general those guys are designed to maybe help you

better in that area. What do you like about that group? Do you think your running game is better than it was three days ago?

MIKE TOMLIN: I like the players. I like their talents. I like what they were able to do at their universities. As I mentioned on Monday, the acquisition of players is just a component of it.

Obviously I feel better about where we are today than I did on Monday because those are four quality players. But as I mentioned on Monday, it's just a component.

We're excited about teaching them. We're excited about training. We're excited about the evolution of our schematics. All of those things are going to ultimately determine the look of it all.

Q. Mike, what's the value of having a guy the size of Loudermilk that can play at any point along the line? What does that bring?

MIKE TOMLIN: There's a scarcity. When you talk about the size of Loudermilk, that was one of the things that was really intriguing to us. Also intriguing to us is that he's got a lot of experience in a very similar scheme defensively. It wasn't a lot of guesswork.

Much like when we were looking at Watt, when he came out of Wisconsin, it was an easy evaluation because all the things that he did at Wisconsin, whether it was play anywhere from a five to the interior parts of their formation structure, we'll be asking him to do similar things.

Q. I know Kevin said you guys weren't overly focused on one position or one type of thing. You did draft a lot of guys that are going to be involved in the trenches either running the ball or blocking runners or stopping the runners. You're in a division where there's a lot of good running talent. How do you think you're going to fare with the guys you added?

KEVIN COLBERT: Hopefully these guys will make us a better team. As we mentioned when we opened up, we think we'll be better. As coach alluded to, the new work will start on Monday, not with this group because they can't come in quite yet. We hope we've added people on both sides, interior, offensive and defensive linemen. We really added people at every level at positions that we really wanted to add to.

Again, we'll wait and see how much they can do for us.

Q. Mike, you mentioned that excitement you had about these guys. What excites you about this draft class as



a whole, what they're going to bring to this team?

MIKE TOMLIN: I can't think of a last day of a draft where I haven't been excited. New men to work with is exciting. Getting to know these guys over the course of the last several months through our research brings a certain level of anticipation. We're excited about getting started with them. There are a lot of reasons to be excited.

If you're in this business, particularly from a coach's standpoint, players are the lifeblood. New quality, talented, young men to work with makes you smile.

Q. A lot of Big Ten and SEC guys early, then you stuck with the power conference guys. You've been open about liking some of the MAC talent you had. They played a short schedule. How much did that play into things evaluating these guys?

KEVIN COLBERT: During the process we did mention there wasn't as many MAC players that were on our board this year. Not to say there wasn't good players in the MAC, there just wasn't as many as there have been in recent years. Their shortened season I'm sure didn't help along those lines. The MAC has always produced good NFL players. This year was just a little bit less numbers than usual.

Q. A lot of your players have experience, your rookies have experience, at multiple positions. Was versatility an emphasis when you looked who was left on the board?

KEVIN COLBERT: Yeah, we always look for that versatility because we have to figure out what they can do, if they have different options and talents. I know coach is always excited about bringing a guy in and finding out about them.

We'll learn about these players as we go on. But when you have different options for them, I know it's exciting for coach.

I'll let coach address that, too.

MIKE TOMLIN: Yeah, versatility helps them and it helps us. By that I mean when you're a young guy trying to carve out a niche for yourself, versatility aids you in doing so. It also aids us in terms of making decisions and finding work for them.

Versatility is an asset that we're really excited about. It helps all parties involved.

Q. Kevin, you were real patient waiting for defensive

back and outside linebacker help, even though you had some free agent departures this off-season. Is that a result of how the board broke, or depth at those positions, your own depth on your roster?

KEVIN COLBERT: Really everything because we knew there was certain amounts of depth at all the different positions. We just had to wait it out. Again, trading back into the fifth round with a future pick, we didn't want to let a defensive player like Isaiahh Loudermilk out there. To be able to draft that young man at that position, I think it was just indicative of the people that we felt were available.

In Isaiahh's case, there wasn't a lot of defensive linemen entering into this draft. Obviously they started to get picked. That's why we were willing to trade a pick from next year because we're pretty sure we'll have some type of compensatory pick. That wasn't the one we traded. We traded our actual pick. It will be supplanted by a compensatory pick in some form.

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