

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Omar Khan

Mike Tomlin

Draft Press Conference



OMAR KHAN: As you guys are aware, we traded up and acquired Broderick Jones. As late as this afternoon, we've been going through detailed strategy meetings, and Broderick was a player we identified would be a great addition to our team.

You know, when we saw how the Draft was going and he was still sitting there, we started making some phone calls to see if there was an opportunity to trade up and get him and fortunately we were able to make that trade with New England.

Really excited. I think he's going to be a really great Steeler for a long time. I love his athleticism. Love the upside with him. We got off the phone with him, talked to him, and he was really excited.

With that, you know, I'll open to any questions. We've got more business to do in the draft room here, so fire away.

Q. How did you know to wait for pick 14 to come along?

OMAR KHAN: It's just part of the process. You just make phone calls and you get a feel for what people are willing to do. Some people, some clubs are a no; other clubs are a maybe. You know, you just stay close to the phone and stay in contact with the clubs that might be interested. And it just so happened that with New England, it worked out.

Q. Talk about left versus right, and what he can do and what impact it might have on your existing offensive line?

OMAR KHAN: I'll let Coach speak to that but I'll just say, hey, our job is to bring in competition. And I would say that by the time we get to the opening game, the best five offensive lineman will play and we'll see -- that's Coach's area. See how it shakes out.

MIKE TOMLIN: He's a really talented guy. We were excited about him, really, at every step of the process. We had dinner with him the night before the pro day. Had a chance to spend time with him in his environment.

It was interesting, I was in Athens a year ago and took a group of his former teammates out 12 months ago, and I said, give me a name that we're going to be back for in 12 months. And universally, Broderick's name was the guy's name that we got 12 months ago. That was the first time I really heard his name.

In investigating, I see why they held him in such high regard. He's a really good player right now. But the upside is tremendous. He's a Diaper Dandy. We're excited about getting him in the fold and teaching him and letting him sort himself out.

In terms of the division of labor and who is going to do what, those things will be decided in the team developmental process but make no mistake, we are excited about having a young man of his talent.

Q. Is it a case of playing the board; if you knew you wanted him, and if he wasn't going to be there at 17?

MIKE TOMLIN: The scenarios are countless. We had a high level of preparedness. Obviously we were not willing to mortgage anything above a third-day pick. He got within range. There had been a run at his position. There was some teams potentially from us that may have had an interest in the position. It was a player that we coveted, and so we did what we needed to do to secure the player that we identified.

OMAR KHAN: The value was right for us for the trade.

Q. You have an reputation of being aggressive over these last 12 months. Do you like that?

OMAR KHAN: I don't know if I'd call myself aggressive. I'm just trying to win a Super Bowl. That's what I'm trying to do.

MIKE TOMLIN: He's aggressive.

Q. An extension of that question, if you look at who got picked the next couple selections thereafter, a lot of the teams that went next were kind of looking at the same positions and maybe the same players did. Did that make the negotiations a little muddy? How did you navigate that?

OMAR KHAN: We were prepared with what clubs in front of us and behind us, and what their needs are, and you know, it just sort of worked out. It was more about us, really, wanting the player; and we found somebody that was willing to trade and at the value that we were comfortable with.

Q. Trading a tackle, what does that say about the investment you guys are making, your first two round picks in Kenny last year and Najee the year before?

MIKE TOMLIN: We are just trying to build a quality football team. We are not trying to make statements.

Q. Do you feel his limits are just starting to scratch the surface?

MIKE TOMLIN: He's got big-time upside, but I also say that he's a really good player right now.

Q. You always talk about meeting with guys at those pro day dinners, like Cam Sutton. What did you learn about Broderick in that environment and what makes him tick?

MIKE TOMLIN: He's got a competitor's mentality. He's wired right for this line of work. He's got a desire to be great. He's highly competitive. There's a reason why he put himself in that environment. He's been part of a winner. He understands that we are in the winning business. He values that. He's experienced that.

Sometimes you can't really value that unless you've been a part of it, and obviously the run that that university has been on with their football program and they have won about as much as you can win over the time they spent playing a significant role for them.

Q. You're offensive line is one of the most improved units, and yet you've paid attention to bringing in some new faces. What's the thought process?

MIKE TOMLIN: We are just trying to improve our football team.

Q. Coach, you had spoke about his upside. What intangibles or leadership qualities did you find in Broderick?

MIKE TOMLIN: We are not necessarily looking for leadership qualities in a third year junior. We believe that's potentially in his future.

But those guys, man, we like them for their physical pedigree, the things that they can do, and the overall trajectory of their game and their lives.

So he's an exciting guy. The leadership component of it will develop, I'm sure, with time.

Q. On the phone, he said he left here and felt like Pittsburgh was home. Could you guys feel that from him as well?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah, I just -- I think he was -- we've spent a lot of time with him. We met with him at Indy. We flew down to Georgia. Had dinner with him along with several of his teammates.

So we got the opportunity to watch him interact and how he was with them and then spent a great deal of time with him the day of the pro day, and then we brought him in for a visit.

I think you guys can ask him here, I don't know if you guys had a chance to talk to him yet, but he's extremely excited. He felt at home here I think when he left.

Q. Who did he say to keep an eye on for next year?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'll keep that under my cap but nice try. You're always working.

Q. Are you guys done for today?

OMAR KHAN: We'll see.

MIKE TOMLIN: We're still open for business. I think it's just prudent to be. Man, this is a quality draft. We have to get back in the back.

Q. You said you did talk to him, and he used the phrase physical, fast and dominant; those are adjectives he used to describe himself. Was there a particular moment in games where those adjectives stood out to you, a game or a play that encapsulated those descriptions?

OMAR KHAN: I think he was consistent in all those areas. He's a national champion, two-time national champion, and he just kept growing from the first game he started. We pretty much watched every game he's played and I think it's all that, and more.

Q. Do you think with the history with George Pickens, it might develop an automatic synergy that will embed itself with the offense?

OMAR KHAN: Obviously they know each other and George is a great player, and we feel great about Broderick and we'll see where that relationship goes. But I know they know each other and held each other in a high regard.

Q. Was this a surprising first round, a bunch of different moves? How difficult was it to do business? What was it like for you, a hectic couple hours?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah, it was exciting, let me put it that way.

You know, there was a lot of, I think everyone that was watching the Draft would probably say there were several moves that were probably unexpected and surprises, and we see these moves pretty much at the same time everybody else does, and you know, it was an interesting time. We are just really excited we were able to move up and make that trade.

Q. What's it like working with the Patriots?

OMAR KHAN: It was great today. My first, it was good. We got a deal done. Win-win. You know, just excited. We got Broderick Jones, it's exciting.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...