

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Wednesday, July 23, 2025
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

OMAR KHAN

Weekday Press Conference



OMAR KHAN: What's up, guys? Great to see everyone. I did want to start by just kind of acknowledging Craig Wolfley. This is the first camp since I've been here where he won't be here and won't see him every day in front of Benedict Hall, and I think I speak for everyone in here when I say that we miss him. And hopefully he's looking down proudly at all of us and we make him proud here. So, Wolf, we miss you.

To the community here, as always, I just want to thank them for embracing us and having us here. I've been coming here since 2001, with the exception of the two COVID years where we didn't come here, and it's been awesome. We don't take our time here for granted, and we appreciate how welcoming the community is. The people here are great, and obviously having our fans here is just awesome, and I can't wait to see them and meet a bunch of them here.

I think the last time I spoke to you guys was after we traded for George. So I'll just mention a couple of things that we've done. Obviously we signed Aaron. We signed Aaron Rodgers and can't wait for the fans to kind of get to know him. And we've been getting to know him, and it's been really cool, and I'm excited for you guys to get to know him and our fans and feel good about having him lead our team, our offense. And, yeah, so I think you guys will speak to him here at some point and excited to have him.

What else have we done? You know, we traded for Jalen and Jonnu Smith, and you guys have heard me several times talk about how important position flexibility is for me, and that's what those guys are. Those guys are both Pro Bowl players that in my opinion, in our opinion can line up in different places on the field and do some exciting things. And we'll see how it all shakes out. That's what training camp is for. We'll figure out the roles.

But just really, really excited to have those guys on board. I think they're going to help us, and again, those are guys that just really getting to know them over the last few

weeks, guys that our players that you guys and the fans are really going to enjoy having around.

What else have we done? We extended DeShon Elliott. We signed him last year to a two-year deal. It was a really good experience for us and for him. It just made sense to extend him. And he's a player we want to have around. And not that we didn't have the expectations when he came on board of who he was going to be and how good of a player he was, but it made sense for us to extend him, and I'm glad we got that done.

What else am I missing here? Obviously, T.J., we got T.J. finalized. And I said I think when I met with you guys at the combine and I was asked about that, you know, it was always very important for me and for the organization to have T.J. be a one-helmet Hall of Famer, and hopefully he's got several years left, and we feel really good about having him locked up and excited.

And, yeah, so here we are. I'm not sure if I missed anything you guys want to ask about, but free to take any questions.

Q. How important was it for you to get T.J. under contract before Cam to take away distraction, and did it come about any quicker than maybe you thought it was going to?

OMAR KHAN: You know, I'll be honest with you. I think these things sort of -- I'm sure when you guys negotiate all your big deals with your company also, you guys realize sometimes these things take longer than you would like. But I always felt good about getting it done when it happened, it happened last week, and it all came together.

We had conversations obviously since early in the off season, and it just kind of came together last week or the week before that. And, yeah, it was good, and it's nice to have it done before we get here. He's excited; we're excited, and I think hopefully the fans are excited, and here we go.

Q. What went into the decision to move on from Minkah, for lack of a better phrase?

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

OMAR KHAN: Yeah, I don't know if necessarily it was moving on from Minkah. We had an opportunity to acquire two Pro Bowl players that we felt with where we are as a team made sense for us. Have a lot of respect for Minkah. Minkah was a great football player for a few years for us and wish him the best. But it was really an opportunity to acquire these two players that we think can help us.

Q. Looking at the safety position then, is that to be filled by Thornhill or is Ramsey going to play a lot of that role? How do you fill that void with what you've got?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah, we signed Juan. That's not to say we won't look to see what else is out there. But part of training camp is for us to kind of figure out and get to know the players that we have and see how those roles are going to come together. And I'm sure you guys will ask Coach throughout training camp about how these guys are progressing and what he's seeing. But that's really what training camp is is to help us sort all that out.

Q. When you started this process going into the off season, did you envision this many changes when you set out to lay out that plan that you would bring this many new faces?

OMAR KHAN: I wouldn't say exactly -- we didn't have a number in place, but the way we ended last year wasn't good enough, and we talked about change having to happen. I know people maybe expected chain sooner than later, but change doesn't always happen at the pace everybody expects. But we knew changes had to be made, and here we are.

Q. T.J. was just in. He said he's excited about this new team because you're responsible, partly responsible for building this new team. What do you feel? Are you excited? Are you curious? What's your approach? Are you nervous? What?

OMAR KHAN: I'd say excited and curious. You know, Jerry, a lot of thought goes into every one of these decisions. It's not just, hey, Jerry is available; let's trade for him, he's the best guy out there.

Q. That would be a good deal.

OMAR KHAN: Yeah. Good deal. So, you know, I'm like everyone else. I'm in this role, but I'm excited to watch these guys perform on the field and see how our team comes together, and obviously we have expectations for ourselves. But we -- we're just going to do our best and try to get better every day.

Q. Did you think it would be patient with Aaron Rodgers? I'm sure you obviously knew more than we did, but those months going by and there was no official decision yet. Were you ever wondering that this might not work out?

OMAR KHAN: We obviously were having conversations. Some people might view my patience or our patience as a weakness, but we view it as a strength. And we just felt good about it. If there was a point where we didn't think things would end up where we wanted to end up, we would have gone in a different direction, but we just felt comfortable and felt good about it, and we wanted Aaron Rodgers, and Aaron Rodgers wanted to be a Steeler, and it worked out.

Q. Over the last two years Minkah saw less and less deep ball targets where he could make a play on. Today was talking about like, hey, Minkah was still playing well. He wanted to give him shots. Was that part of the impetus to bring Jalen Ramsey in in exchange because he's a guy that can actually play close with cornerback and still be a turnover creator for you guys?

OMAR KHAN: I'll just say Jalen, as I mentioned earlier, he's got some position flexibility. I think you guys will see him he's going to line up in different places on the field and can do some exciting things. He's proved it. He's proved it. His resumé speaks for itself.

Q. You had acquired a number of players over 30. Obviously Aaron is in his 40s. Extended T.J., he'll be 34 at the end of this deal. What steps do you take to try to make sure you're protected as an organization when you're acquiring older players, and are you concerned about the age of your team and the potential for injuries and things like that?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah. We're not concerned about the age. I think we're going to be smart how we handle those guys. But every one of these is a case-by-case issue, and it's just part of the process on how things come together. But we're not trying to do anything that's going to hurt us in the future. Every decision we make is important not only for this year, but for the next couple of years.

Q. You mentioned the magnitude of Ramsey. Do you get to talk to numerous people saying is he open to playing other positions other than outside corner? And Mike's had dinner with him this is eight years ago or whatever, but does that relationship, Mike say, hey, I can vouch him as a guy and a player?

OMAR KHAN: Sure. Before you make these type of



decisions and you seal a deal, you like to have the opportunity to have a conversation with the agent, or sometimes the teams give you permission to speak to the player directly. And we are always going to be very transparent about what our expectations are, what are the roles, what the role is going to be. And, yeah, if both sides didn't feel comfortable, we wouldn't have done it.

Q. You guys have had a really busy off season to this point. Do you anticipate looking for any other extensions for guys that are currently on the roster or acquiring outside talent, whether wide receivers, safeties or anything else that becomes available?

OMAR KHAN: In terms of extensions, there's nothing going on right now. Could there be a player maybe that we think about? Sure. I mean that option is still available. I think you also said about acquiring other players. I'll be honest with you. We made a lot of moves this year, and I feel really good about where our team is right now.

So to say that we're out there trying to find someone, that's not the case. If an opportunity comes available, you know, we'll look at it, but I feel really good about our team.

Q. The acquisition of Jonnu, did you acquire him thinking he can be our second receiving option if we need him to be or were you acquiring him thinking if I don't get a guy, he can fill that role?

OMAR KHAN: So love his flexibility. If you look at where he played last year and even when Arthur had him a couple of years ago, he lines up at receiver. I hate to say that he would be the number two because obviously different plays and different packages require players to be different target in a specific job play. But he has the ability to play receiver, outside receiver, inside receiver, tight end. He can line up in the back field. He gives you so many options on what you can do, and that also impacts who else you have on the field and what they can do.

Q. What did you learn about maybe your receiver depth rotation in mini camp and how do you feel about the receiver group going into first practice?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah, I feel really good. Obviously we traded for D.K. D.K is going to be an impact player for us. But I saw how the growth in Calvin Austin last year, and that was really -- that was cool to see.

Watching Roman Wilson this off season has been really great to see his progress and where he's at. And I think we would have seen some of it last year if you would have -- towards the end of last year if he would have had the opportunity to play. We acquired Robert Woods, a veteran

leader in that room. So feel really good about that position.

Q. Omar, you received your own contract extension in the off season. What does that mean to you personally and how do you view the opportunity to continue leading this team for the NEXT couple of years and beyond?

OMAR KHAN: Obviously there's pressure. Our goal is to win a Super Bowl, and that's what I'm striving for. I'm very appreciative to Art Rooney for this opportunity, and I feel like I owe it to him and to the organization, to the fans, to do everything I can to win the Super Bowl. I mean that's what they want; that's what I want. So that's our goal.

Q. Omar, your history, your strength has been on the money side. Has there been something of a chip on your shoulder to prove that you're a personnel guy, too?

OMAR KHAN: No. Not really a chip. I worked very closely with Kevin Colbert for 20 something years, and him and I probably spent more time with each other than we did with our families. We were together all the time. So I feel like my time with him allowed me to learn the different parts of the business.

Q. What would Kevin say about all those trades?

OMAR KHAN: (Laughs). When you see him, you should ask him. I'm curious to see what he would say.

Q. Did 25 years of contract negotiations, does that skill set pay off, then, when you're communicating with another general manager and trying to negotiate a trade?

OMAR KHAN: That's an interesting question. You know, I would say this. When you talk to other general managers, the key is relationships and the relationships you have and the ability to have honest conversations. That's a key. And for things to get done, it has to be -- really both sides have to feel like it's a win-win. So I'd say just having the ability to build relationships and have honest conversations and be up front about what everyone's goals are. That's the key.

Q. Have you found it difficult to build for the now while protecting the future? I know you mentioned that a little bit earlier, but how fine of a line is that to get both sides accounted for right there?

OMAR KHAN: Yeah. It's important. Like I said, I think when I talked to some of you guys at the league meetings mentioned that we always kept in mind what our draft



capital situation would be next year. And we're staring at probably 10 to 12 picks next year. And we really weren't willing to stray away from or give up too many of those picks with some of the stuff that we've done.

So it's important. We're aware of it. I think when you look ahead, I think one of you guys asked about the age factor. You know, you're not really there saying, okay, this guy's too old or this and that. But we're trying to win this year, but we also understand that there's just going to be a natural youth movement next year when you have 10 to 12 draft picks available to you.

But we're excited. I'm going to start my meetings with the scouts later this week, and we understand what we have available to us. So they always do a great job, work really hard. But we're just going to have to work a little harder this year because we have lots of picks.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports