

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Friday, April 24, 2026

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Gennings Dunker

Draft Day Press Conference



**Q. Gennings, you're a hay bale champion. How did that come about? I know that's a Midwestern thing. Talk to me about that.**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, I mean, I grew up baling hay back home in Lena, Illinois. There was kind of a hay baling contest in Solon, Iowa. It was kind of an O-line tradition to go do it. Someone had to do it, so I guess me and Lo Jo went out there a couple times, and I guess I got him.

**Q. How do you see that impact you as a football player?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I guess maybe explosiveness. I'm not sure throwing a hay bale exactly correlates, but I guess it's a handy skill to have.

**Q. We just talked to Coach James Campen and he said he was really impressed by seeing you go to the Senior Bowl and go right into guard after playing tackle at Iowa and the way that you attacked that. How difficult was that for you, and what did you do to get ready for that?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: You know, at Iowa our tackles play like guards, so the biggest difference is kind of things happen faster, like the point of contact happens a little bit faster at guard compared to tackle.

But it wasn't a huge transition just because of how we play at Iowa. I also played guard my freshman year.

**Q. Curious, what was your reaction when you got the call from the Steelers? Did you have any idea that this is where you would end up?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I did not. But, you know, I mean, it was almost kind of hard to breathe. I was so excited. I don't know, it was kind of hard to talk. Just getting the opportunity to go play in the NFL and also the opportunity to go play with some of my former teammates, Logan Lee and KJ, it's just really special.

**Q. What have you heard from those guys, Yahya, Sebastian Castro, about playing in Pittsburgh and that kind of thing?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I mean, they love it. Like they have nothing but great things to say. I wish Logan Lee was back in Iowa training with me this off-season, so it's going to be awesome.

**Q. I read a lot about you're a big fan of Culver's. Are you going there to celebrate? Did you go there earlier today or have that at your draft watch party, anything like that?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I haven't had Culver's for a bit. It usually doesn't fit the macros exactly. But potentially there might be some Culver's in the foreseeable future, but I'll play that by ear.

**Q. What do you feel your biggest strength is?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I would say running and hitting.

**Q. NFL.com has you compared to Mason McCormick. Do you know who he is?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, I'll take it.

**Q. Well, he's your new teammate and he's a guard, and I'm wondering if you can explain the comparison in any way, if you can.**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, I'm going to watch some tape on him probably today or tomorrow. I mean, he's from South Dakota, so I've got a good buddy from there, so...

**Q. Where are you tonight? Who are you watching with? Can you give us a little peek at the scene for your draft night?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, so my hometown is 2,600 people, so I had, like, an open community event, so basically everyone from the town could come out because I wanted to have everyone from my hometown enjoy it just



because so many people raised me and helped me out to become who I am.

I didn't just want it to be about Gennings Dunker. I wanted it to be about my hometown, so that's what I did.

**Q. Have you done much on the left side in your career? Some guys are cool with moving over, other guys aren't. What are your thoughts on that if that's where you ultimately end up?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, so my freshman year when I was playing guard, I actually played left and right guard. The biggest difference is just the different hand goes down. I've been repping left side leading up to this just in case. I should be well prepared.

**Q. The mullet has become a thing throughout this process. When did that become -- did that become a full thing in Iowa or did that more so take off in the draft process, and what is your reaction to the folk heroness of you almost in this realm?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Yeah, so I kind of copied my guard Connor Colby who plays for the Niners right now, so I kind of did a little case study on him and I saw his progression through the years when we grew it out together. Then he got drafted by the Niners, not this draft but the draft before that, and I was like, you know, maybe it's kind of a secret, so I figured I'd keep it with him.

**Q. How much do you know about Pittsburgh, especially the fact that this is a place where the mullet never went out of style, so you may fit right in here?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Actually I was there a little bit ago. It's actually beautiful out there. I went to -- what's that restaurant called? Is it Del Frisco's? That place is electric. The city is beautiful, and yeah. It was awesome.

**Q. What are the reactions you get to the mullet?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Usually a lot of staring.

**Q. Why were you here in Pittsburgh? Did I miss that?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Oh, I was meeting Skattebo. He was in town for something, and I met him and I went to Del Frisco's -- is that a Pittsburgh thing?

**Q. Not specifically I don't think. I think it's a chain.**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Oh, it was pretty good.

**Q. So you met with Cam Skattebo? What's the**

**connection there?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: Me and Skat actually have the same agent, so yeah.

**Q. How would you describe the energy you play the game with?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I would say fast and aggressive.

**Q. Your new position coach talked about Iowa offensive linemen and how good they are, and obviously there's the tradition of that. Why do you think Iowa offensive linemen are always such a good reputation?**

GENNINGS DUNKER: I think it's just how Coach Ferentz runs his program and also how Coach Barnett runs the offensive line room. We do the same drills every day, day in and day out. I was not a highly recruited guy. Iowa was my only offer. I just did exactly what Coach Ferentz told me to do and what Coach Barnett told me to do, and I owe it all to them. I'm really fortunate to be coached by them.

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