

New York Giants Media Conference

Saturday, May 15, 2021
New York, New York, USA

Joe Judge

Press Conference



Q. So you've been around a lot of players who have had pretty good careers focusing mostly on special teams. Are there any qualities among those guys that are in common that you look for when you're projecting if somebody can handle that role and be that kind of guy in their career?

JOE JUDGE: Yeah, I think a lot of things we talk about when you talk about special teams players are more intangibles, sense of urgency, physicality, guys that really play with a heightened sense of intensity on field but at the end of the day, it not the -- the intangibles we look for in common for every player on special teams is speed, you know, and really speed is the biggest difference. It's a space gain, so it really start with the coverage units. You talk about special teams, return game is nice. It's very important but ultimately it comes down to, you know, punt and kickoff coverage. You really build your special teams and your coverage unit, and it's got to start with speed. Some guys are fast players, some guys are speed players, some guys are smaller more athletic speed players. But you want to make sure they have an advantage in space in single blocks and being able to beat double teams.

So to me the common thing is all that speed and some of the guys, Slater, Bolden -- that's three different body types but they are all fast and they all play explosive. A lot of things you get with special teams players is you get a mix of body types and a lot of times there's a measurement of stiffness that correlates to being on special teams. It's not a desirable trait, but just something a lot of those guys end up having and the thing that allows players to control their stiffness in space. We do a lot with guys working on drills, working on football position and body positions and hopefully it carries over and gives them a chance to control their stiffness and play in space.

Q. Does Gary have those abilities?

JOE JUDGE: Yeah, I do, I think Gary has enough traits to work with and build with. He's a long way from some of the top players in the last few decades and there's a reason

those guys have made a living out of it and won a lot of games and been successful.

There's things you see from Gary as a running back and you saw on his tape in college covering kicks that we are giving him the opportunity to come and compete. But he definitely has the speed and the size to factor in and go out there and give himself an opportunity. Now at this point it's just an opportunity. We'll see what he does with it and it's up to him and go ahead and carry the coaching to the field, and it's up to us as coaches to put him in the right position to be successful.

Q. You said at the end of yesterday you were going to go check with the trainer on Kadarius and we saw him sit out the second half of that work out today. So is there something bothering him physically?

JOE JUDGE: No, it's not an injury situation with him right there. I think every player out here is kind of on their own program in terms of, you know, what's best for them, what the schedule of the day is. One thing we keep in mind with these guys is these guys have not been with team sports now in over five months, and that's something we have to consider bringing them in and for all these guys, the first time of football activity. That's why we structure practice the way they do. There's different positions on the field. A lot of them are skill positions early in their career, so you have to make sure you don't put two days together that may put them in a stress position.

Again this is an orientation weekend. Our goal is to get them started so that this week coming up they can jump in with our vets and they can jump in with our full off-season program and be moving and stay healthy. Again, it's going to be a four-day week of working this next week for them and we want to make sure we don't take it and make it a seven-day week for them. It's a different pace we work at for different reasons, but no, it's not an injury case to answer that.

Q. What can you do now with the rookies for the next few weeks and what are your expectations for the off-season of when you're going to be able to get guys in? Do you expect them to come in for OTAs?



JOE JUDGE: We've already scheduled and released the OTA dates. Obviously it's a voluntary period so we are going to work with every player we can whether it's virtual or in-person. So obviously whoever is here we'll coach in person, whoever is virtual for the meetings we'll work with them virtually. Some guys will be doing both.

In terms of rookies, what we're looking to accomplish at this point we are just trying to get them caught up enough and physically in good enough shape that when they come back to training camp, they can compete with the vets. That's the biggest goal right now, give them a further understanding of not just the X's and O's but everything associated with the league.

We have a player development team that will meet with these guys multiple times every day. We will spend a lot of times meeting with the strength and conditioning staff not as far as just lifting weights but understanding how to best manage their bodies, recover, sleep, nutrition, everything that's going to help them be a better pro.

Q. With the vaccinations there's been a lot of talk about masks around the building. Have you talked to the team about getting vaccinated and how they should approach it or you let them make their own decision?

JOE JUDGE: I leave that to the medical professionals. I'm not in the business of giving any medical advice to anybody.

Q. With Kadarius, how similar or different is what you're going to ask him to do in your offense compared to what he did at Florida?

JOE JUDGE: We are going to look to play him to his strengths and so there's going to be some things you'll see that may look similar what to what he did in college, although it's different systems.

So we are going to be looking to go ahead and make sure we create enough versatility in his game to play him in different spots to play him in our system, but also we'll have to change our system like we do with everything to cater to our players.

I can't give you a definite answer until we get through training camp to see everything he can do and how it fits with other players on the field. I'm sure you'll get some things that you can say, hey, that looks very similar to what he did in college, and you'll see some other things that you can say, we've never seen that on tape before.

But our focus right now is working with him on the field and identifying exactly how to use his skill set and putting him in the best position to be successful.

Q. Fair to say you didn't have anyone on last season's roster with his skill set. He's unique in terms of what he brings.

JOE JUDGE: Yeah, I think I really like our receiver room. We have a lot of guys with a to the of talent and different skill sets, some guys are more size, speed, inside, outside, guys with good quickness, good top end and long speed. I like the combination of layers we have right now both the receivers and the tight end room gives us a lot of versatility as an offense.

Q. Do you have like a handshake agreement with Nate right now like with the rugby? I know he's technically a free agent, kind of an understanding there that he can get through that and you'll double back, or what's the situation?

JOE JUDGE: Technically Nate is a free agent right now but we fully intend for him to be a member of the Giants and he has to go through Olympic rugby training and we're supporting him with that.

But that's an experience I've been through with him before. Actually he returned from the Olympics in 2016 and had a tremendous year for us. So I've gone through this before with him. I understand exactly how his training applies, rugby and can lead into football, and look, honestly it was one of his most productive years ever.

He's a guy that's very locked in and focused. He was a captain last year and is a great team leader. This team, what he's helping build is very important for him and while I don't speak for anyone else, I don't mind going echoing that for Nate because I know I can speak very directly and honestly. But look, he's a very important part of this team and we look forward to getting him back.

Q. On the running backs, what are the qualities you're looking at in the tryout guys?

JOE JUDGE: I think all those players, they are different players. So the qualities are going to vary a little bit. Really what you're looking for is movement skills on the field. With the guys this weekend, you're looking for a mix of things in terms of how they look on the field, what shape they are in currently, your interactions with them as a player, and that's a big part of them is getting them in your meetings and having them on the field and it's your first chance of really getting these guys in person on the field with your coaching staff and really seeing how they react to

your style of coaching.

It's a good experience for us. I really enjoyed all those guys. I thought they did a good job this weekend, and the unfortunate thing is there's only a limited amount of spots on the roster total. So again it was a good experience to have them all here and we'll see where it goes from here.

Q. How much do you try to take advantage of this time in your building with these guys? You got to meet a lot of these guys in the draft process but a lot of it was virtual, the Senior Bowl, now you've got them and it's a more relaxed situation to some extent to get to know who they are, see what they can take, get a little personal story, get a little joke to help you know who those guys are moving forward?

JOE JUDGE: You know what, really, that's honestly the most important thing we can do right now is trying to establish requires, establish what the boundaries are within our organization, let them know what to expect on a daily basis, but ultimately we have to start forming relationships with these players beyond just evaluating from the Draft.

Look, to be honest with you, yesterday was the first time that I got to see in person a lot of players that we drafted, which is bizarre to say any other year but without a combine, without having, you know, full pro days everywhere, it was just a different process.

So it's funny, there's a lot of guys you meet for the first time in person and you turn around, me and Pat are talking walking off the field, yeah, that guy is bigger than we thought he was going to be; that guy has thicker legs than we thought they were going to be. The first time seeing a guy in practice is bizarre because even our meetings are virtual.

So it's not like you're sitting in a meeting room across from the guy. Your first experience is on the grasses and they are wearing a helmet looking at you. It's different. But look, it's great to have life in the building and it's great to have players back and it was a fun weekend working with these guys.

Q. If you and Pat walk off the field and say "that guy is a lot smaller and scrawnier than we thought he was going to be," that would be a problem.

JOE JUDGE: That would be the issue, you know, that would be the issue. Yeah, the scouting department can a great job of painting a picture of these guys, luckily we had a lot of personal experience, as well with a lot of these players we drafted with coaches on the staff so as we went through some of the guys who personally were sight

unseen we could rely on the coaches on the staff and the scouts who had worked with them before.

DraftScripts by ASAP Sports