

New York Giants Media Conference

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

Elerson Smith

Press Conference



Q. Can you talk about what you picked up from Defensive Player of the Year, Bryce Paup, that helped you get to this point and what you want to work on moving forward?

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, to be honest with you, I pretty much learned everything I know about football from him. Going into college, I didn't know much about this game. I just knew a little bit about football.

So it was exciting to have him in my corner, obviously try to soak up as much as I can could, pass rush and the run, offenses, things like that. So he was awesome to have.

Things I want to work on in the future, I mean, I've got a lot I want to work on. It's hard to pinpoint a certain thing that I want to work on; it's a plethora of things. I'm excited to keep getting better.

Q. In terms of you mentioned you learned about the game of football. Does that also include the little nuances? Obviously there's pass rush moves and stuff like that, but also, like I guess studying film and stuff, is that some of the stuff you learned from him as well?

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, yeah, how to break down film from offense's and defense perspective on offense. Little nuances that's maybe a tell for a pre-snap read, formation tells, what the formation's telling us.

So you can kind of just eliminate the variables and make sure I'm playing as fast as I can. He was awesome at that. He was always super willing to spend time with us as players and was always there for us as players, which I really appreciate from him.

Q. You have a number that a lot of Giants fans associate with Carl Banks. Did you pick out that number? Have you met him or reached out to him?

ELERSON SMITH: I didn't pick out the number. It's an

honor to have the number. I am extremely grateful he gave me that number. I haven't met Carl yet but I heard he'll be around the building. Excited to get a chance to meet him and pick his brain a little bit and get some advice from him.

Q. Do you know anything about his game at all? He was probably retired before you were born but did you watch any film of him at all throughout your life?

ELERSON SMITH: No, I haven't yet. I know he was a great player, but like you said, yeah, he was a little before my time. I'm excited to get a chance to watch it and see what he's done.

Q. What's your initial impression of what they were asking you to do as a linebacker here even compared to the basics of what you were doing at Northern Iowa?

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, I'm excited for the opportunity to play outside a little more. At UNI, I was a more traditional d-lineman that would play a 5-tech, 4-1, things like that. And here I get to stand up a little bit, move around a little bit more.

So I'm excited to play outside backer. I have also played this earlier in my career at UNI. I'm somewhat comfortable with it. For sure I have a lot to learn and a lot to get better on, learn with the position.

Q. And also, going back to college for one second, the Giants mentioned that Iowa State game in particular, I believe, as a game that really stood out to them to sort of prove that you can play with a higher level of competition. What do you remember about that game about how you played?

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, I mean, I think it was a good game overall for us as a team. It was an exciting game. At the FCS level we had those early games, probably the most media attention we are going to get for a small school like that. It was a fun game. It sucked that we lost. We were able to take them to three overtimes. I was just out there trying to compete with those guys as much as I could



and playing for my team.

Q. What did you think of your performance and the competition you went against in that game?

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, I think I was able to contribute to the team. I was able to make some plays. Able to, you know, help put us in positions to win. So you know, I think it good -- obviously I can watch the film, so things I want to work on, so hard to say it was a great game.

Q. Elerson, you're one of the guys that opted out of last season, and I know the Giants in the pre-draft process talked about it's 20 months for some of you guys that you had not really been on a field. Curious if you feel rust at this point or if -- how that process is for you, if you feel rusty or if you're just glad to be back on the field, if it feels completely natural or if it just feels like you haven't been out there for awhile.

ELERSON SMITH: Yeah, so actually, my season got canceled last year. So I didn't have a chance to play. I feel like football is one of those things where I've been playing for ten-plus years now, so a lot of the things can come second nature at this point. There's obviously little, you know, like you said rust that you have to knock off here and there. Getting in football shape and conditioning is one thing you can spend a lot of time doing things in the gym, but being on the field and drills is different. I feel pretty good for sure. I have a lot to work on and excited for that.

Q. You mentioned the teaching and notes you're going to be taking and how much you have to gain, just curious, I know it only been two days with Azeez, but the two of you guys are coming into a situation where you're playing similar positions, I would imagine you can kind of lean on each other a little bit. What's been that relationship like so far and what do you think of his game?

ELERSON SMITH: I mean, I think Azeez is a good dude. I don't know much about his game otherwise. I'll let him handle that. But I think he's a good guy and excited to get to work with him every day.

DraftScripts by ASAP Sports