

New York Giants Media Conference

Wednesday, June 9, 2021
New York, New York, USA

Thomas McGaughey

Press Conference



Q. Thomas, I was wondering, there are a couple of rookies that we hear have a lot of special teams potential, Gary Brightwell and Elerson Smith. Can you talk about what you saw when you were watching those guys on film and what you've seen so far now?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: You know, watching them on film, they had a really good skill set. They worked hard. They worked at it. But as of right now, they are all trying to get better. Elerson, along with Gary, along with Azeez and all the rest of the guys, they are all drinking through a firehose right now. They are just trying to figure out where they are supposed to be and what they are supposed to do and how they are supposed to do it.

Now these kids have really good potential and they work hard at it and we're just trying to get them better.

Q. Riley Dixon, last year, two years ago, he was really, really outstanding and last year he was a little bit more inconsistent. How can you help?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: Like anything else we do around here when there's issues, it's going back to the fundamentals. That's what Riley is getting back to. We are getting back to working those fundamentals. When we get the pace right, everything else will take care of itself. He's been working hard and he's had a really good off-season and we'll continue to process and just try to get better.

Q. What do you see from Kadarius Toney as a returner when you look at him?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: Kadarius, you guys saw him on tape. He is what he is. He's electric. He can do some things. But right now he just has to get in here with all the rest of the rookies and get acclimated to what we do and how we do it. You saw his tape in college. You know his ability and what he can do with the ball in his hands, but right now he just needs to get in here and gain the trust of his teammates. That job as a punt returner in this league, that's a huge job and huge responsibility. That's the main

focus right now.

Q. Human Joystick is what they called him, his former coach. Is that accurate in what you've seen from him? The Human Joystick was Dante Hall before.

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: The Human Joystick is Dante Hall. Matter of fact, me and Daunte were together all last weekend. But no, he has some skills, he definitely does. He's a good young player that needs to understand what it takes to be a pro, and you know, just learning how to operate as a pro. But he definitely does have extreme talent. We've all seen that.

Q. Do you see some Dante Hall in him?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: I've seen some very unique traits in Kadarius. He has skills. We've all seen the tape on him. We know exactly what he is. He has to come in here and get acclimated what we do and how we do it.

Q. When you have a veteran kicker like Graham, how much do you manage him or let him do what's comfortable for him? How does that work with him in the off-season?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: Any time you have a veteran guy like that, just over the years being around all the guys that I've been around, the Phil Dawsons, the Morton Andersons, Jason Elams, those guys have a routine and they know exactly what they like to do and how they like to do it. We just manage them. Especially in the off-season, they know exactly what their bodies need. They know the amount of rest that they need. They know when they are feeling good. They know when to punch the gas and they know when to pull back. We kind of let them guide the ship on that.

If Graham feels good, and most of the time he does, he'll kick and we're not going to over kick him, especially in the off-season because at this point in time in their career, it's more of a management type of deal and just keeping the stroke fresh.

Q. How does Santoso factor in? Is he going to work at



kicker and punt returner?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: Ryan is a specialist in camp. He's in here competing for a job just like everybody else, and he's working his tail off. He's had a really about off-season and any time you get a chance to work with a guy like him, it's a bonus for sure.

Q. I was going to ask about Toney, as well, I was at Florida pro day and after the session which was the longest pro day I've ever seen in my life, a team asked him to go outside and field punts, a team that didn't draft him but that had a curiosity about him. At what point in the process do you identify a guy who may become a Giant conceivably but how often do you say, like, and he could be a really good punt returner for us, he has to get the pro game down but he has those traits. What is your initial impression when you see a guy like that?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: You know, when you see a guy with those type of traits as a coach, obviously you get excited because those are unique skill sets. That's why he was drafted in the first round. He's a very talented player. He's electric with the ball in his hands. But you know, again, it's a value pick. You get a guy that can play in the slot. He can play outside, and then he gives you return flex. I mean, that's a bonus.

Again, the value at that spot was good for us and obviously we took advantage of it. Can't wait to get him in here and getting him going and coaching him up and seeing what he can do.

Q. I wanted to go back to the question about Riley Dixon. You had some different gunner play throughout the course of the year which was something that you didn't have the practice field year when Riley had such a good season. How much does that tie into the type of season a punter has?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: That's a great question. You know, any time you can have continuity at any spot, whether it be offense, defense, special teams, that's what you want. When you have a lot of turnover, things are different. You know, when you turnover on the offensive line, the chemistry is different. Guys have to learn how to work with each other and what steps they take and same thing with the secondary when you're changing out different guys in the secondary, it's the same thing. Guys got to know their strengths and weaknesses. It's no different in special teams.

It's the same thing when you've got a bunch of moving parts; it's a little harder to be as consistent as you want to

be. So yes, it does make a difference but again, any time you can create continuity and consistency, that's what you want.

Q. A unique situation, of course, with Nate Ebner not being here but basically being excused. How do you prepare for a season as a veteran who is a leader of your group who isn't here but you know is going to be on the field for every single snap when he does return.

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: Well, you know, to be honest with you because he's not on roster right now, I'm really not going to comment on it. But you know, any time you get a veteran guy, you get a veteran guy that can help you, that's a plus, especially a guy like Nate.

Q. As far as the return game and punt returners, not only with Toney but you've got Adoree' Jackson and Dante Pettis, Slayton, etc. How nice is it to attack that position in the off-season and have this many options? And second part of that is, are you backing Jabril off of that role now that you have so many other options there?

THOMAS MCGAUGHEY: No. The beautiful thing, Dave and Joe have done an outstanding job of bringing guys in that have backgrounds in the return game and it gives us options. You know, guys that can compete, it gives them a chance to make the team and provide value to our team, and I think any time you get that opportunity to have that many guys that return kicks and punts in NFL games, it makes your football team that much better. You create that competition.

I think that that right there is just -- that's huge for us. That is huge. It will be fun in the preseason just to watch these guys go and work a little bit.

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