

New York Giants Media Conference

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Joe Schoen

Brian Daboll

Draft Press Conference



JOE SCHOEN: Daniel Bellinger was our first pick today, tight end out of San Diego State. A guy that we liked, size, speed, athleticism, should be able to help up on special teams, was in Senior Bowl, was at his pro day, too, and a guy we've liked throughout the process.

Dane Belton, another guy we liked, the versatility in the player, he's got ball skills, he can play from depth and down in the box, can pay nickel.

So the common theme you'll hear is versatility on a lot of these guys.

Micah McFadden from Indiana, another guy with very good size, speed. He was a captain, he's athletic. I think he'll help us out. He can play inside, outside, and he's a good blitzing as well. Again, another versatile piece.

D.J. Davidson, see him more as a nose, out of Arizona State, be a good depth player that has some upside. We are excited about working with him inside, again, trying to add some depth up front there.

Marcus McKethan, another guy obviously we spent some time with, the North Carolina kid. Huge human being. Very good size, length. Again, some versatility, he's played tackle and he's played guard. Again, going to add depth and competition to the roster. We'll probably start him at guard but he does have tackle flex.

Darrian Beavers is another guy that we really liked, versatile piece, he played inside and he played outside. I was at his pro day. He did some stuff as an outside rusher and that looks like something that may be part of the package. Like his versatility to be inside, outside, and play on special teams.

Excited about the young men that we added today. Again, everybody is going to come in here competing, and these guys are no different, so we are excited about the players

we added.

Q. A few of the guys said that -- the tight ends had dinner with them, did you identify these guys early and then honed in on?

JOE SCHOEN: When I first got here, the first meeting with the scouts was in February. So identified players that we were interested in and then who we needed to get around a little bit more.

A lot of these guys -- not to show my hand in the future, but you guys are good at tracking this stuff -- but, yeah, we want to feel comfortable with the individuals as well as the player and I think pretty much all these guys we spent significant amount of time with, whether it was coming here or going to see them.

Q. What did you think of your first draft? Anything surprise you?

JOE SCHOEN: Have to reflect on this tomorrow and throughout next week. It's just different. You come in with a whole new staff, so you have a process in place, but where you used to look for answers when you had questions, you're looking to different people, different scouts in the room that you have, haven't worked with, and our staff did a tremendous job. The coaching staff did a tremendous job.

So just still getting to know our roster as it is. Again, not being around a lot of these guys for a while, getting to know the new coaches. That's just all that will come with time in working with each other. But overall, it was a good process, and I really enjoyed it.

Q. Joe, did this go very much like you had been accustomed to the last four years in Buffalo and other places, or did you have to adjust this year?

JOE SCHOEN: It went pretty much how I would plan it to go. The only difficult part was with the players being in here, two weeks early, with the next head coach. So our schedule when we typically would have had an uninterrupted meetings for a week or two with the coaches



involved, those days were a little choppy. We had to move our schedule around.

Overall, the process will stay the same that we had this year. It will start now, May and June we'll already start looking at the players for next season, and the scouts have already gotten a list of the Top-5 UFAs, Top-5 players from other areas. Next week I may take a week, but we'll start looking down the road what the players look like through free agency and the draft next week.

Q. Did you anticipate bringing in -- how big of a class did you anticipate?

JOE SCHOEN: As soon as the Draft is over and we can start working on that, we will. We still have -- defensively I think is where we are going to have to add. Again, when we got here, where the roster was, we had to add a lot of pieces, and there's only so many resources. So we did the best we could this weekend, and we'll continue to do that in free agency.

Again, players might have gotten drafted over somebody else, so what that means is maybe next week there's going to be some cuts and may be some veterans that are on the street because they drafted over players on their current roster. We don't play until September. Our location in the claim order, the final cutdown will be important or as players are cut.

The roster is never finished. It won't be finished during the season, and we'll always be looking to upgrade.

Q. Doesn't seem like you found a replacement for James in this draft class.

JOE SCHOEN: We are going to work on that. We have had some conversations. I'll talk to his representative and see where that goes. I don't have a definitive answer on that right now, but we are working towards some contingency plans.

Q. When would you like to have an answer on that?

JOE SCHOEN: I'm not going to put a timeline on it as we are working through this. So I don't know how long it will take, but we are working through some things.

Q. For years people were saying, fix the offensive line. Since you two have been here, I think you've brought in six free agents, drafted three guys, you have guys coming back who have been hurt, you have veterans. Do you have enough bodies?

JOE SCHOEN: I think so. We've got some big bodies,

too.

I think I told you guys at the Combine, we had maybe five healthy bodies, offensive lineman on the roster, and that's my point. There were several holes, and we didn't have a lot of depth throughout the roster.

So start there, start up front, let's see the best version of Daniel Jones we can, and it starts by hopefully keeping him on his feet. And that's going to help Saquon and that's going to help the receivers because he'll have more time to get him the ball. I think we upgraded the offensive line, which hopefully we did. We'll see how the competition in training camp goes. But, yeah, I'm happy where we are with the depth overall.

Q. When it comes to the war room, when you were setting up who is in there, how many guys, the way the whole setup is, here in years past they have had coaches, coordinators. Did you put into the process who you wanted in there, why it was important to do certain things?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I definitely wanted to be inclusive with the group. Those guys did a lot of the work. We had our pro department in there, too, so they could see the process and some professional development to see how the process works. And our pro scouts also sat in on some of the college meetings.

I'm a firm believer in that, we talk out loud, we have conversations, try to think big picture the best we can. And if I can surround myself with as many of those people as I can, it's just going to bring ideas and we'll all be better.

As for the setup of the room, I may want to change that a little bit. There was a different board this year, and I kind of like more of an open area in the middle, I'm a big pacer, but where I can go to the scouts and talk to them. That's something we'll work on next year.

But as for the coaches, you may not have seen them, but they were in and out, coordinators, position coaches. If it came down to two guys on defense, Wink may come in, or Kafka came in a few times for the offensive guys.

Q. I was going off the other night when you said you had not seen Wink yet.

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I had not, and specifically that night, going to be 5 and 7, so without having any commotion or distractions in there, we thought that was the best way to do it, and they kind of knew what we were going to do anyway.

Q. Do you anticipate making any changes to the personnel staff, subtractions, additions?

JOE SCHOEN: I haven't even thought about that yet. I'm about ready to fall asleep on this microphone.

Q. In Buffalo, you concentrated on developing offensive lineman as well as drafting or acquiring starters. So have you brought that same kind of plan to the Giants, and is that where some of these picks are coming into play?

JOE SCHOEN: Really across the board, we have a really good coaching staff, and I think X's and O's are very important as a coach, but also developing players. And Bobby Johnson has a very good track record from my time with him, as does Davis and Shea Tierney. You bring in guys in that are wired the right way and have traits, they are all hands on deck in terms of developing these guys, that's just the O-line but the defense, we have some good coaches over there, too. A lot of these players have upside.

Again, once you get in the second or third round, or fourth round, they are there for a reason, or sixth or seventh, when you take those guys, they are there for a reason. Nobody's perfect. So the best we can do in terms of developing those guys and accentuating their strengths, is what the coaching staff will try to do.

Q. What were you trying to accomplish in your first draft, and how successful were you with the goals that you came in with? I know things change as you move along.

JOE SCHOEN: Versatility, I mentioned earlier, guys that have versatility, we wanted to add depth at competition to the roster, which I think we did. Again not every guy is going to come as a starter. It takes time. Guy has to develop. And Pat's question, just develop and good coaching. Over time, you have to have depth players and frontline players. I think the idea was to get the best we could. Defensively, the guys with versatility. And offensively, as you're around Brian, you'll see, he'll take the pieces and whatever we have and develop the offense or scheme around those pieces that we have, and Wink kind of adheres to the same philosophy.

Q. A big picture, team building question. Where do you stand on the theory of building a team to compete in the division against the teams that you're going to be facing twice a year for the next -- forever year?

JOE SCHOEN: You have to pay attention to that. There's a lot of good D-Lines in our division, and I think that's

where the emphasis on the offensive line early on was, was important to us.

Yeah, we definitely always -- I was in Miami forever, and they had Gronk there for awhile, how are you going to defend this guy, when they had Gronk and Hernandez. So you're always paying attention because you have to play that team twice a year. And the ultimate goal is to win the division, and the rest will take care of itself is. Yeah, we'll always be looking at that.

Q. When a guy like McKethan has flex but mostly plays guard, would you rather him have the versatility to play both, or sometimes does a guy have a position and you'd rather hone in on that?

BRIAN DABOLL: You'll see here in OTAs when you guys are around and in training camp, we are big believers in mixing and matching as many people as we can early on because you can only get so many to go to a game. And the more you can do, the more you can do.

Most of the players, unless you're really, really good at one spot, and that probably goes throughout our team offensively and defensively, is as much versatility as you can have, the better it is for the team.

Q. On the defensive side of the ball, guys have multi-versatility. How excited are you that you can change your defensive scheme because of the diversity of the skillsets?

BRIAN DABOLL: Wink, he's pretty diverse in what he's done the past few years when he's in Baltimore. We are still working through some things, figuring out what our guys can and cannot do.

So we'll see. We'll take it kind of day-by-day on that. But I think the smarter you can be as a football team, the better you are in terms of being able to put your best foot forward.

Q. I know Bobby was at UNC pro day and worked those guys out. How valuable was getting his input and letting him get in there and coach them up?

BRIAN DABOLL: That's always valuable. The process, Joe talked about, this the communication we've had from the scouting department, the coaching staff, the people that set up the trips, it was very well organized.

This morning I was watching a bunch of Zoom calls of potential guys we can pick. The coaches put a lot of time and effort into it. There were weekends off that they had they were out on the road, and the same thing with the scouting department. It's been really good interaction with

both sides.

So 11 picks, 11 players, we'll throw them out there with the rest of the guys when they get here and let them compete it out.

Q. Do you think you have an offensive line now you can work with and get done what you need to get done on offense?

BRIAN DABOLL: We'll see once we get pads on and things like that. I know the guys are hard working. They are smart. They show some toughness when you watch them on tape. The people that we've had in the building are dependable. It's been good to go into meetings with Bobby and Tony and those guys. They are eager.

Again, let's not make it more than it is. Your job is to protect the inside part of the pocket and width of the pocket and get moving in the running game, but that position you need five guys operating as one unit. And that is what will be really important.

You'll see. I know I will get a lot of questions on it once we get out in OTAs, and I'll tell you right now, there are going to be a lot of guys out there mixing and matching. You can write the lineup down, but it's going to change each day.

Q. Guys have strengths and weaknesses, but evaluating players, guys are kind of the same, you say we want this guy, we want this guy, is there just something inside you that says, we think he's right for us?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would say after all the preparation, Zoom calls, interacting with the kids, going and seeing them or having them in your building, you've got enough information where you say, yeah, I'm good with this kid, can we all see the film, I'm good with this kid as a person and his ability to learn football and what he'll bring to the organization. We try to get all that information so when we turn the card in with anybody, we are at that point.

BRIAN DABOLL: If they are close, you know, sometimes there is a gut feeling. It's like when you're getting ready to call a big play in a red zone, you like two plays and you're anticipating something coming up. There's a gut feel at times. Some of that is the same with -- when two guys are close, but the preparation leads you to that decision usually for the most part.

Q. Sometimes is it just like, you know what, close your eyes and say, I think I want to coach this guy?

BRIAN DABOLL: Three times this past week, Joe flipped a

coin and decided who he was going to pick. We were calling heads and tails over there.

No, it's a lot of work that goes into it. Joe has talked about it. I've talked about it. When you put a lot of hard work into it, and you feel prepared, then you're comfortable with the decisions that you make.

Q. When you get into the middle rounds, how much do you lean towards traits? Some guys rated well on tests. Was that a big factor, or did that happen to be the case?

JOE SCHOEN: After Wan'Dale being undersized and Flott, I figured I better go big guys today. You take that into account, but when you look at guys with developmental upside, when they have height, speed and character, the history of those guys developing is a little bit higher than others. Definitely when you get into day three, you do take that into account. It is important I think.

Q. Knowing you had Daniel under contract and Tyrod to backup and you had Webb, do you sit there and say, quarterback is not a priority this year?

JOE SCHOEN: I wouldn't say we didn't say it wasn't a priority, because we did do work on those guys, and I think I said it yesterday that I had seen all those guys play live, and we did send a quarterback coach and coordinator to spend time with those guys and Zoom and other things.

Again we are going to evaluate the entire board across all positions, and when we think the time is right, regardless of position, we'll pull the trigger if we think it's best for us.

Q. What is it you guys think that you can get so much more out of Daniels?

BRIAN DABOLL: I just speak on the few weeks that I've been around him. I've been very pleased with how he's approached things. He's an intelligent -- he's picking up the stuff really well. Again, the pieces around him, we have a lot of work that needs to be done but I'm encouraged with my interactions with him up to this point.

Q. I asked you last night about the tight ends, you said it depends on the player?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah.

Q. You got one?

BRIAN DABOLL: We got six. Just trying to figure out exactly what they do. I had years where I had Marty Bennett and Gronkowski and other years with Charles Clay



who is a completely different type of guy.

I would say we have a variety of guys right now on the roster, some bigger-type receivers. Some a little bit more blockers. Running around with shorts on, it's good to see their movement skills and how they track a ball. But once we get to training camp and and OTAs and they have to do things a little more quickly, we'll figure that out.

But I would say we have a mix of guys that can get down in a three-point stance and block some defensive ends, and it's getting harder to find each year. It's just the nature of the game. If you have young kids that play football, you see how the game is being played. It's a spread game. A lot of RPOs, even from the earliest stages, and then you get into high school, and talk about the evolution of game right now, but that's kind of what it is.

You go to college and you see the same thing. It's not -- you've got to look at offensive lineman a little bit differently. You have to look at cover players a little bit differently. It's a completely different game than it was even 22 years ago when I started, and I think you have to evolve as a coach, too, both how you evaluate players and how you design scheme.

Q. Joe, what would you tell Giants fans you think you accomplished with this draft?

JOE SCHOEN: I think we added competition and depth. Hopefully as many of these guys turn into starters as we can, but again we are not going to hand anybody anything. We want them to come in, compete, work hard, and you know, again, we want to see progress. I've said that since day one and I think this will lead us to that.

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