

New York Giants Media Conference

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Joe Schoen

Press Conference

JOE SCHOEN: Go ahead and fire away. I'll let you know if there's anything new.

Q. Just tell us who you're drafting and we'll leave.

JOE SCHOEN: I wish I knew. I'm trying to figure out. 25 it's a little bit harder than 5 and 7 to come up with names.

Q. What position group?

JOE SCHOEN: That's a good question. I mean, there's depth at different parts throughout the draft at all positions, so it's hard to pinpoint one.

Again, based on where you're picking, like if you're at a certain part of the Draft, there may be a run on four or five players in that draft. So the top of the Draft at a certain position, then it's gone, and now there's no longer depth at that position.

So I think there's position and value across all positions throughout the draft just depending on where you're picking but I'm not going to identify one being stronger than the other. Just where the value matches up with where you have them on the board.

Q. What do you think about the idea that especially -- in the first round and you don't have an exorbitant number of first rounders compared to the past?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, again, I don't know where everybody else has people on their board. I know that we're going through the process now of who may or may not be there, and we're pretty confident that there will be a player there that we like.

Q. Do you have any first round grades?

JOE SCHOEN: I'm not going to get into how many first round grades that we have. We have guys in the first round that we like, and we are pretty confident that there will be somebody there when we pick at 25 that we'll be



happy with.

Q. Looking at COVID, an extra year of eligibility, does that help or hurt this draft, given some of these guys are now older prospects?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, there are more players when we were going through it at 24, 25 years old that we don't usually see that. You see it sometimes at certain schools.

But there are more of those players. We look at each individual case-by-case basis, and if there's an injury history or they are a smaller school or whatever it may be on the player and does that affect their age, their position.

So we look at them on an individual basis. Rarely does that come into play and deter us from drafting somebody.

Q. How much bandwidth is there with Saquon, are you still negotiating?

JOE SCHOEN: No, nothing's changed since we talked, whatever that was, three weeks ago, four weeks ago. Nothing's changed since we talked at the owner's meetings.

Q. How about with Dexter?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, after I talked to Dexter's representatives this week, dialogue's good there. So yeah, I've talked to him. Again, it's hard this time of year. We're deep into the Draft and the Draft prep so -- but yeah, we have had good conversations with Dexter's representatives, and we'll see where that stands moving forward.

Q. With Saquon, do you have a next contract offer in your head that you --

JOE SCHOEN: I'm just going to get through the Draft right now. Again, my focus right now is totally on that. So there's no rush right now. I just want to get through the Draft and step back after that and see what the roster looks like and then go from there.



Q. Knowing that you've said on the record that you want to get something done and you're negotiating, is it disappointing at all that Dexter chose not to come here, or are you fine with that and that you would rather not be here when you're going through this?

JOE SCHOEN: What was the quote, it was April 17th? I'm not going to give you that.

It's voluntary. If Dexter chooses not to be there, that's his decision. Dexter knows how we feel about him, and he knows he's an important part of the organization, and there's a business side to it, too. But him showing up for the off-season program is voluntary.

Q. You guys have obviously discussions with Saquon previously and there have been numbers widely reported, and free agency seems to have changed the running back market dramatically does. Does that, then, alter your approach in terms of how much you may or may not be willing to devote to that position -- the finances?

JOE SCHOEN: No, again, I haven't really -- when we had the conversations with Saquon, it was known that we were going to get to a certain point and then we were going to move on and regroup at some other time.

So it was before free agency started, so no, that has not really affected anything we talked about.

Q. A one-year deal -- does that impact how you approach running backs in the draft?

JOE SCHOEN: No. Again, we are going to -- there's players at all positions that are in the mix at 25, and I'm not going to rule any position out.

Q. You have a pretty good -- can you add realistically, add ten more, at least, rookies to your roster or would you like to package some of those to move up so you have less than ten picks or trade a pick for a veteran player rather than have ten more young guys on an already young roster?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, that's a good question and we'll see how the Draft plays out. I mean, right now we have ten. So we have go through it, and if there's somebody we want to move up for we have some extra draft capital to do that. If we want to move back and collect some, we can do that, too.

Again, you have got to look at the roster, not just today but 2024, 2025, who is coming up. Again, financially there are players making a pretty good chunk of money on our team

and some contracts on the horizon potentially.

So yeah, those young cost-controlled players for four years that can be contributors, whether that's a role on offense or defense, four core special teams guys. I think it's important to continue to build depth and competition, and that's what we'll try to do with those picks.

Q. Will you try to trade for a veteran guy like you did with Waller?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we'll always pursue any type of opportunity to better the roster, whether it's trade, draft, late round, college, free agency, whatever it is, definitely.

Q. How important is it when you look at the roster and the Draft, when you look at roster duplication, where you think, for example: We have a smaller slot receiver, we don't need to get another one; we have this kind of a slot cornerback, we don't need to get another one; or do you say, no, no, we are just going to get the guys in and we'll figure it out?

JOE SCHOEN: There's a little bit of that on offense. I think Dabs, that's one of his strengths and Mike Kafka, taking the pieces that you have and trying to accentuate what they do best.

We have had a really good dialogue with the coaches all week. We're still doing it. We did it all morning. Certain players, and just going through what their role and utilization will be on the roster, first down, second down, third, what's their fourth down value.

If there's any discrepancies or questions from our part on what their role will be, we try to clear the air now on that. So come Draft day, we've had all these conversations, and again, it's there's a certain value, how they will be utilized.

So they come in different size, shapes, speeds, but we are going through all those conversations right now.

Q. As far as like receivers and things like that, there's a big group of them -- move those guys in and out, is that somewhere where you say, look, let's bring them all in and we'll figure it out?

JOE SCHOEN: Yes, and then the offense has a very defined plan on how they are going to utilize certain positions, and it makes it easy to go scout players for them.

Again, we are going through all those players that you're talking about regardless of position, regardless what they look like physically, and trying to figure out what their fit would be with the team and what their role would be.

Q. Knowing that you had the coaches going out and actually getting the pro days, whereas a lot of the last year, you were getting the staff together and they weren't able to get out as much?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, Coach has done a tremendous job. They are a big help and big part of the process. I think it's important to consensus-build throughout the building; and again when you draft a player, if the coaches don't want him, the chances of success a lot of times are slim.

So we like to do our due diligence in all the prospects, and the more you can be around them, I think it puts you at ease when you turn in the card for those prospects that you've been around them a lot and you know exactly what you're getting with your investment.

Q. What about your staff? Again, you were just coming in and getting everything together and making changes, how much more comfortable are you with the changes that you've made and are they that much different than what you did last year?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, it's great, more time on task. Going through more situations with these -- some of the personnel, whether it's Brandon Brown, Tim McDonnell, Dennis Hickey; Chris Rossetti, our pro director came in from Miami.

So going through kind of a cycle, a personnel cycle whether it was Draft, free agency or whatever it may be, you kind of get to know strengths and weaknesses of your scouts.

So yeah, again, after going through it for a year, I definitely feel more comfortable this year going into it than a year ago.

Q. Going back to Buffalo for a second, in 2020 when you drafted Gabe Davis what traits did you prioritize and how did you protect a fourth round receiver to be a starter in the league?

JOE SCHOEN: With Gabe it started with his makeup. He was off the charts as a -- his work ethic, checked all those boxes, and he was a very productive receiver at Central Florida. Again that was the COVID draft. I remember I was in my basement when that happened.

Yeah, again, it's not always what you can see on film and I think that's why we go and spend so much time with these kids is to try to figure out, what's the makeup. Because when you get to this level everybody's good; what's going to give you the competitive advantage. Why is a fourth-

fifth-round player going to make it: Is it their work ethic; is their tireless pursuit of being great, whatever it may be, you try to identify those traits through this process, whether it's bringing them in on 30 visits, going and seeing them.

We talked to a bunch of coaches this week around the country, whether head coaches, position coaches and players or coordinators and getting as much information as you can on why is this kid can be successful, and Gabe was one of those players.

Q. You spent a lot of time with the top wide receivers in this draft and your interactions with them, going to dinner with a whole bunch of them?

JOE SCHOEN: I did?

Q. What have you learned about the top of this wide receiver class throughout this process and those interactions?

JOE SCHOEN: What have I learned? How am I supposed to answer that?

Yeah, it's a good group of receivers draft the top of the Draft, depending how you have them ranked. Everybody's got different strengths and weaknesses, and again I think there's a lot of talented players in the draft.

And it goes back to what I was just saying with Pat's question is identify what's going to separate those guys from the pack and what makes them great.

Again, every year I think there's 20-plus receivers that are drafted, and how many truly go on to have success, you know, that's what we're trying to figure out.

Q. When you bring in the visits -- what's the value of that?

JOE SCHOEN: Some of it's elimination. Maybe we need to confirm, there's some uneasiness with a player and confirm they are not a fit, or how will they pick up our system; our offense is very complicated. Or sometimes it can be medical; if they are non-Combine to get the medical. There's varying reasons for why we bring players in.

But again, it's a great opportunity not to just to get them around myself and Daboll and the coaches, but the rest of our support staff, training staff, strength staff, nutrition, whatever it may be, it's just good to be around these players as much as you can.

Q. You talk a lot about the alignment for a full year

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

with the coaches and scouts and the division. How different is your board this year because of that alignment than maybe a year ago where you didn't have that hundred percent alignment? Do you think about that and how much does that shape where you guys are going forward?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, and I wouldn't say we weren't aligned a year ago. It was just trying to get a grasp on how the players were going to be utilized in Wink's system. So I wouldn't say we weren't aligned.

We ended up, there's consensus building, but there's definitely after going through a full season and a training camp and seeing it applied, how he's going to utilize players. There's a better comfort level, not just myself but even Dabs. Dabs has never worked with Wink, either; as we're going through it, how he's going to utilize players first down, second down, third down.

So yeah, there's definitely a better comfort level this year, but I wouldn't say we weren't necessarily aligned last year.

Q. I didn't mean that necessarily. You've talked about Wink and knowing what Wink wants, and how that changes maybe the way you scout players.

JOE SCHOEN: Absolutely.

Q. So for you as a scout at heart, how does that change what you're looking for you may look at a certain guy because you -- have what you may think overall?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we've had to retrain a little bit how we look at different positions or the value we put on them based off Wink's system, and I think that's what's most important is what is the value for the Giants and how do we see them and how they are going to be utilized, which we are still having those conversations.

Yeah, we definitely had to retrain how we think about some things at different positions and what the value of those traits are that we covet and where those align in the draft.

But definitely feel better going into it this year in terms of what exactly he's looking for.

Q. Where in this process have you spoken directly with Saquon so that he knows --

JOE SCHOEN: Nothing's changed since we talked at the owner's meetings. There's nothing new. I haven't talked to him.

Q. When you draft at the back of the Draft, where you are this time, how do you define what a successful draft pick, five years from now when you look at a player, how would you define success?

JOE SCHOEN: We like to look at the play time over three years. Usually it's over three years what their play time is, their contribution, whether they development into a starter, that's obviously a hit; if they turn into a good starter, that's good. That's what you strive for. But there's also role players and there's really good special teams players that you value.

So again, it's their role. It's their fit on the team, their contribution over that -- that four-year period but usually after three years you know if they are a contributor or not and there's going to be different types of contributions.

Q. You mentioned changing positions -- what position have you personally changed your outlook the most on the way you evaluate?

JOE SCHOEN: It's really the front seven. It's just a different defense than I've been in. It's really the front seven..

Q. Is there a danger to that? You're building a team for the next three, four, five, six, seven years. Wink may not be here; he almost went this off-season. Is there a danger to drafting for a coach?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, it's actually something that Coach Parcells told me a long time ago. He told me, "Coaches come and go. You need to draft good football players."

Yeah, you don't want to get too pigeonholed into scheme-specific, because then, you're right, if Wink gets a head job a year from now and you bring somebody else in that runs a totally different defense, you a scheme-specific player.

So part of our job is to balance that. Like is this guy, again, add value. Like, he's only going to fit this one scheme.

And yeah, Wink's got a really good chance to get a head coaching job. If he moves on and we change things up, then yeah, you definitely have to balance that and be aware of that.

Q. You obviously have your starting quarterback locked up but are you somebody who would like to have a young developmental quarterback on the team and also, I say that because there seems to be a thought around the league that Brock Purdy has changed, maybe reemphasized the idea that teams --

you pick day three quarterback and see what happens going forward?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would just say right now we are happy with Tyrod. Tyrod is the backup. I think we are in good shape right now.

Q. You don't have a third quarterback, right?

JOE SCHOEN: Mm-hmm, yeah, we had Davis Webb last year. We'll continue to look whether it's a veteran free agent or somebody in the Draft or post-Draft, whoever it may be. Yeah, we'll have three quarterbacks in camp.

Q. Where do you see your O-Line? Are you comfortable where that is right now?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think we have 14 offensive lineman under contract right now. So no different than the owner's meetings, what I told you guys.

Q. Do you remain optimistic that Saquon will be on the field for you at the start of the season? From the outside looking in, it doesn't seem like an obvious resolution?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, you have to ask him, I'm not sure. I don't know what his plan is. I haven't talked to him in probably three weeks. I haven't talked to him.

Q. From your experience before you got here, talking about Buffalo, you were on the road a lot there, scouting prospects and I know when you go to pro days and stuff, you're not just looking at guys who are in that current draft. Curious, now, in this process, are there guys, do you go back to your notes from two years ago where guys may have stood out to you when you were on campus, someone may have said something to you, and has that factored into your evaluation of guys that are now available to be drafted?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, for sure. Yeah, there's a lot of -- I actually went through some of my books. There are some guys in this draft that I know I wrote in Buffalo. I meant to call Brandon and get some of those. I can't find them.

Yeah, definitely, I was on the road a lot more. Probably see 50 schools a year when I was in Buffalo. When players do go back to school that are now in this draft it is helpful because you have a previous exposure to the player, if I wasn't able to get out and see them this year.

So there was definitely some -- definite benefits to the amount of work that I was able to do in Buffalo. It's still

paying off.

Q. On Dexter, when a position's market keeps resetting in the off-season, how do you dictate, but also trying to properly play the player?

JOE SCHOEN: We have a formula that we have in place in terms of coming up with the value of players based on various factors. So you know we stay true to that and we are coming up with value, whether that's free agency, contract extensions, whatever it may be. We have a formula that we like to stick to.

Q. Enter that equation --

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, same deal. Any time you're paying a player, whether it's inside the building or outside the building, we come up with a value of what we think is fair. Again, takes two to get a deal done.

Q. Is Bijan the best back in this class, and how do you feel about running backs in the first round?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think there are several good backs in the draft. And again, if it's a good player and a team decides to take them and they have success for their system, then I don't think you can go wrong with taking good football players.

Again, I don't want to pigeonhole myself into saying I would never take a certain position in the first round. So yeah, it's a good running back class. It's got some depth to it, and Bijan is a good player.

Q. When you're constructing your roster, how much of your decision-making is impacted by your own system but combating what division rivals and competitors do well?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think you always have to look at that because that's the ultimate goal is to win the division. When you are building your team you obviously want to give the coaches what they want in order to run their schemes and execute their schemes at a high level.

But you also have to look at the division, I reflect on when I was in Miami and they had Gronk all those years. You're looking for some sort of linebacker that can match up and cover Gronk, and it was just impossible to find somebody that could do that.

So if there are players or schemes, or whatever it may be throughout the division, you're always looking at that and studying and seeing how you can maybe counter one of their strengths.

Q. One of your traits is you're able to separate emotion from team building, but when you have a player that's been a good Giant but maybe financially or when team building resources, it doesn't make sense, do you find you're good at separating those two things, and if so where did you learn that trait?

JOE SCHOEN: Not really. No, it's tough. Again these guys are around, they work hard and we had a heck of a season last year and you become close with them, and it's hard. But there is -- you have to separate it. I'm not going to say I'm good at it there's a human element on both sides, for them and myself.

But there is a business side to it. And yeah, again, in a perfect world there's no salary cap and you can make everybody happy and pay everybody.

But you know, that's something I haven't been through before. Last year, you know, we didn't extend anybody from our roster. It was signing some people outside the building.

After going through a season with the players, and then this next step of the process whether it's extending or players leaving the organization, yeah, the human element, that part stinks because you do like all these guys, and you know they put in a lot of work for you, and you know, again starting this time last year.

So it's tough to separate the business end and the human element. Just the way Dabs and I are around the building and getting to know the players, maybe we do that more than most. But you do become attached for sure.

Q. Your philosophy on trading up, curious what your philosophy on that is? Would you be hesitant to dip into next year's draft class?

JOE SCHOEN: I'd be open to any of that. I'm never going to rule it out. If it's the right player and the value alliance, I'd move up. If it was a future pick, I would do that, too.

Last year, just where we were financially, we needed as many depth pieces as we can. So moving back a couple times last year just made sense. It got us some more bodies that -- so that was a little bit of the thought process that went into that.

Q. How much has the big play receiver changed in the sense that when I was younger, it was a big guy who could run fast and catch a 40-yard pass. Now is it somebody who can attach 15-yard pass and make it a 40-yard pass?

JOE SCHOEN: That can be part of it. I think both of your comments are correct. If you have got a guy that can take the top off and throw the balls down the field and goes up and gets it like a Randy Moss, then you'd love to have that; or if it's Steve Smith in Carolina, you throw a slant and he can take it 80.

Any time you can generate yards after a catch, I think that helps you. You don't have to do the 15, 16-play drives. Maybe now it's six because a guy had a 50-yarder in there. I think although things are important when you're looking at the receiver.

Q. The center better position in this draft -- you don't have anybody on your roster that has extensive experience as a starter. How important is it for you to add to that position in the draft whether, whatever portion of the Draft and what do you think of that group in particular?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think there's some depth in the draft but I don't think we have to. Again, we have these meetings. As soon as the Eagles game was over, that week, we had meetings and we went into the off-season: If we can't get Nick back; if we didn't get Feliciano back, what does it look like.

You know, talking with the coaching staff and the personnel staff, there's people in house third page are available candidates for that: You know, Ben Bredeson, Jack, Shane Lemieux, JC we just signed a week ago. So there's guys that there that have played center, have played games, and you know, it will be good competition.

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