

New York Giants Media Conference

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John Michael Schmitz

Draft Press Conference



Q. What's the last 24 hours been like for you?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, kind of just taking it all in. Everyone's been telling me, you only get drafted once so just celebrate it with my family and with friends and the people that got me there and I've got a great support system, and very blessed and honored to be a part of this organization and yeah.

Q. Looking back a year ago, I think you were projected as a Top-100 project, going back for the sixth year, do you think that benefitted you?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: The main reason I went back was for my team. Came in with a lot of those guys that were staying that extra year and just wanted to go back to give it one last shot of winning a Big 10 Championship and leaving it all on the table.

Q. Could you describe your relationship with P.J., just what that was like and what he's like?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, from the start, I would just say committed to Coach Fleck at Western Michigan, and two weeks before National Signing Day, I got a call that he was coming to the University of Minnesota so without even stepping a foot on campus and stepping a foot in the State of Minnesota I committed right on the spot just because I believed in them, and I was all in and bought into this culture and was ready to go to battle for them.

Q. How much has this been your dream to be an NFL player and when did you think that this was realistic or that you would be sitting here right now?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, I have been playing football since I was five years old, and just remember this memory I have of me and my brother playing next to each other on the offensive line and my dad, coaching us up and we have a great pitcher, and I mean, just from the start, I mean, there's always a dream

to be in my position and just very honored and blessed, be a part of this organization, so yeah.

Q. You were a wrestler, right?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yes, I did wrestle when I was little and wrestled in high school as well.

Q. Does that help you on the football or did it help you?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, understanding as an offensive lineman, understanding your weight, positioning, your body movement, your force, where you need to be, your hand placement, the grappling technique. That's all important stuff to have, and it definitely benefitted me. I still talk to my wrestling coach today and he's a great guy.

Q. Strange question to ask to someone you just met. How much do you weigh?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, so right now, I'm around -- I stay between 307 and 310, and I've been playing at that weight since probably the last four years. So whatever the team needs me to play at I'll be at.

Q. What is it about center that you think you're good at that appeals to you? Obviously nothing happens until -- you're the first one that touches the ball every play, so what is it about that specific position?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I would just say, you're the first one that gets to the ball, it's got to be your mindset that you've got to set tone. It's your leadership, it's how you communicate down the line and making sure everyone is on the same page, you've got to be controlled especially in a crazy atmosphere, if we're on a road game. Just making sure everyone gets the calls, you're working with the quarterback, you're working with the right and left side, and so yeah.

Q. What's it like to come to a team that has a need at your position where you conceivably could step right in and maybe man that position for a long time?



JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Right now I'm focused on getting in the building and being around this team and getting ready to go to work.

Q. So many players have a wrestling background and they are grateful to have it. How much do you like the idea that one-on-one, is how wrestling is, and there is, at least to me, it seems some translation to the football field there.

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, you definitely have that one-on-one battle, especially as an offensive line perspective. But at the end of the day you have to win your battle and that goes across the board, offense, defense, no matter what position you are, and so that's all I would say.

Q. How challenging is it if you're a younger center playing with more veteran linemen across the line, how challenging is it to be the leader that have group and earn the respect when you have less experience?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, what I would say is, I would just say it comes with -- you've got to earn their trust and it's by how hard you work. When you come in every day with a mindset that you're going to get better and at the end of the day, you've got to -- trust is earned over time, with time, consistency and proof. Those three things don't happen overnight, so it's going to -- obviously hard work on the field and in your playbook, with your body, taking care of yourself and just honestly being a part of that team and getting close with one another.

Q. Different offenses demand different things from a center, what's your interpretation of what they are looking for you from the center position?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I would just say, to be that voice, to connect that group, and I'd just say to set the tone, like I said before, set the tone from the start and be that tough offensive line that we want to be.

Q. Were you able to find your voice early in your career or was it a process to be able to get to that position to take command?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I definitely over time developed. I feel like I had a voice early on but you always keep changing. You always keep getting better. You always keep growing, each and every day, and yeah.

Q. Most of the time the centers make the line calls. How much film work is involved in that and getting ready for each game?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's a lot of work that goes into the process leading up to game day. You work coming in with the whole offensive line extra, you're working with my offensive line coach at the time, Coach Callahan, coming in extra, seeing what needs to be done to get everyone on the same page. I'm watching film with our quarterbacks, our running backs, different position groups and making sure we are on the same pages and that when we go out and play we are ready to go.

Q. Did you talk to Carter Coughlin at all?? What did he tell you about the Giants?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: He's very excited to have me here. He was just very excited and just kind of just welcoming me in to his family and offered me a lot of whatever I need. He said he was going to be there for me and that's just amazing, so yeah.

Q. How did you adopt the dead ball snap technique and does that change anything for the quarterback in your experience.

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Didn't really change anything, just something that Coach Callahan talked about that we were going to do and experiment and ended up being -- what we were going to do, had a lot more control of the ball and more accuracy, so yeah.

Q. You're obviously going to be working very closely with Daniel Jones, what do you know about him, if anything?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, definitely he had a hell of a season last year. I mean, he led that group. He's grown a lot at his quarterback position. He reached out last night, sent me a text and very excited to work with him. Very excited to work with this offense and get things rolling.

Q. What do you know about Saquon Barkley?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: I mean, honestly I think he's one of the -- he is one of the best backs in the National Football League. He's a great player. He's explosive and I mean, he's tough. He runs the ball tough.

Q. This time of year, we see highlights of guys and it's always fun to see the highlights of the offensive linemen, which ones they choose for you, do you have a favorite highlight of yours that if you walked into a meeting and someone said, show us your favorite highlight of you blocking someone, is there something that jumps to the front?



JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: I wouldn't -- no, I wouldn't say there's nothing in particular, I would say that's a big highlight, so yeah

Q. Looking at your highlights look like everything is shotgun? Did you do any under center?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Definitely this last season we did a lot under center. Had to change it up for defenses, so yeah, I'm comfortable going under center or in the shotgun.

Q. Bobby Johnson likes to give his linemen colorful nicknames. Have you gotten yours yet?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: I have not, no. I have not.

Q. What's your interaction with him been like?

JOHN MICHAEL SCHMITZ: Yeah, I mean, it's been great. He's a tremendous coach and I met him at -- right before pro day. He came out and worked me out and we had dinner. Just a tremendous guy and very excited to work with him and develop a bond, and get things -- he's amazing.

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