

New York Giants Media Conference

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Mike Kafka

Press Conference

Q. Going back to the off-season, given to the fact the head coaches job you were up for, turns out the guy who gets the job, there are sanctions for tampering. At the time you think you're a finalist and have a good shot. Do you have any kind of emotional reaction to that happening?

MIKE KAFKA: Don't really think about it all that much outside of the experience, being fortunate enough to be a part of those discussions, those conversations, was really cool. I learned a lot about myself. Learned a lot about the league and the multiple organizations.

It was a good experience overall.

Q. You obviously are around one of the best in Kelce. Now you get a guy like Darren Waller. Can you talk about what he does for an offense, for you in play calling?

MIKE KAFKA: He's a really talented player. He's a great person. He's a really good teammate. That's one thing I learned about him. He cares about his guys. He's competitive, which we really like. We value that here.

He's doing everything we're asking him. He's working hard, putting in the time and effort to learn the offense, get in sync with D.J. and the quarterback. He's done a great job.

Q. How would you describe how many more options you seem to have at your disposal on game days this time around?

MIKE KAFKA: Yeah, I think between the skill group, all those guys are doing a good job of getting themselves in the mix, trying to identify a role for themselves in a bunch of different ways, run game, pass game, all the different schemes we want to try to build. Those guys are working to try to figure out a role there.

They're doing a great job, they're flying around,



communicating well. When you get into year two of the offense, things are obviously a little bit more smooth because you've heard it already a few more times, you've been through some of those situations already, you have some stuff that you can fall back on.

Q. Is it wired without Saquon?

MIKE KAFKA: Any time you have someone is not on the field, there's obviously players that you want out there. Saquon is one of them.

Not going to get into that.

Q. A first-year coordinator to get head coaching interviews, to get four, was your head spinning a little bit?

MIKE KAFKA: I wouldn't say it was spinning. It was just a matter of getting prepped. It was a matter of identifying what you wanted to present.

Again, that was in the past. Again, those are good experiences, things you can fall back on.

Q. When people heard you were coming back, did any player say anything to say, Sorry you didn't get a job, we're not sorry you're coming back?

MIKE KAFKA: Oh, when those things don't happen, it's kind of the nature of the business. If they do happen, they do. If they don't, they don't. You move on past it, you learn from it, you grow. No different than I tell any of our players when things happen.

Q. Where are you expecting Daniel to grow in year two of the system?

MIKE KAFKA: When we did our scheme eval, each position group identified several things we can look to improve on.

Nothing specific that I would probably share like in a public forum. Those are things we have a plan for, trying to work through all the little fundamental things. Yeah, we



definitely have a plan. The coaches are doing a great job of implementing that in the off-season.

Q. On the offensive line, at least from the outside looking in, looks like you have some new pieces here. Do you have any idea of which way you want to go or too early to talk about that?

MIKE KAFKA: It's early. There's a lot of football to be played. We haven't even put the pads on yet. That's a big part of the evaluation process, not just with the O-line but all of the position groups and the physicality of it. I think everyone is on schedule.

Q. When you look at your team in the spring, your offense, practice, OTAs, how much more explosion do you see, and in what areas?

MIKE KAFKA: I think a lot of guys are doing a good job just fitting in the mix of the offense, again, identifying that role, who they want to be in the offense.

Again, it's kind of early to tell, but guys are working. Haven't put the pads on yet. I think when we do, those things will be a little bit more declarative as far as the role side of it.

There's a good influx of new guys, guys that have been here and know the offense, kind of bringing everyone together. Then the leadership we have on offense has been outstanding in bringing those guys along.

Q. How much of a priority was it for you as the offensive coordinator, you guys were pretty successful overall, in regards to big plays? How much does that bother you and how much was it a priority?

MIKE KAFKA: You definitely want that to be a part of your offense. Any area, whether it's the protection side of it, whether it's the decision making, the routes, the concepts, the scheme, you look at all that stuff.

I think that's one thing we kind of did a deep dive on is how can we whether improve it to get some more of those opportunities or personnel to get the right people in the right spots. That's our job to make sure we do that the right way.

Q. There is a picture of Daniel Bellinger. Do you know that picture?

MIKE KAFKA: Yes.

Q. What do you make of that picture? Do you make an effort to say you need to get a little bigger?

MIKE KAFKA: Our strength staff, they do a good job of talking with the players, developing a plan. I'm not sure if the biceps was a major part of that.

He's done a nice job of that. He came in great shape. He has done a great job. He's taken a nice step from year one to year two. He's continuing to grow. That's what we're looking for.

Q. What does that mean for Daniel, help him in some ways find a different role?

MIKE KAFKA: Yeah, that's where we're at. We're kind of at that stage right now of just identifying what those roles are. I don't think there's anything set in stone. It's just going to continue to grow as we get through the off-season, training camp and the season.

Q. The Ballenger question for a minute. Do you work with the strength and conditioning coaches, I'm thinking this guy needs to do more blocking? Or is that a collaborative relationship or...

MIKE KAFKA: It's collaborative. It's definitely collaborative, to answer your question.

You talk with the player. You talk with the coaches. Talk with the training staff, the medical staff. Everyone kind of gets on the same page. That's how we worked it in the past.

Again, Bellinger is one example of that. There's a lot of guys that are doing that.

Q. With Waller, we've seen him do wide receiver drills obviously in addition to being the tight end he is. Do you get hung up on any of that or is it just he gives you more options because he's versatile?

MIKE KAFKA: We mix in a few tight ends and receivers and running backs. Everyone kind of has their spot on the field where we're working some of those routes. Those guys being a part of it.

It's a matter of getting on the same page with the quarterbacks, working some of those detailed routes and fundamentals.

Q. Last year at this time you and Daniel were starting your relationship, starting to get that dialogue, communication. You were in Kansas City where there was a lot of continuity. How much will that help you and Daniel as far as you are now on the same page, you built something, you're continuing to build it?

MIKE KAFKA: Yeah, I think that is important. Any time you can kind of get in the second year of the program, there's familiarity with the verbiage, familiarity with the communication. The conversations happen a lot faster.

Now we're working to streamline it, working to be more efficient with it, efficient with the situations that we're asking him to be in, making those decision.

Q. How about the familiarity with the person?

MIKE KAFKA: Absolutely. That's another important part of it. That's just our daily conversation. That's our daily kind of the workflow that we've built together is being on the same page and talking about certain things on the field, off the field, get to know each other on a different level.

Q. Daniel stop coming in early now that he has his money?

MIKE KAFKA: No, he's still one of the first ones in there. We see him all the time in there early working.

Q. Do you have any more thoughts on the dead snap that John Michael Schmitz uses?

MIKE KAFKA: I've been around both, the dead snap, the regular snap, I don't even know what you call it, the laces snap I guess. In Kansas City we had a lefty snapper. I've been around enough.

Just the comfortability and make sure it's accurate. At the end of the day as long as the quarterback is good with it, that matters. As long as we don't have any of those exchanges. Hasn't been an issue and I think he is doing a good job, nothing that I think is concerning.

Q. Does it have any type of advantage over the traditional snap?

MIKE KAFKA: I think each guy's is a little bit different. Our centers work a different technique for it. It's just the comfortability for each player.

Q. What has that relationship between him and Daniel been like?

MIKE KAFKA: It's growing. It's growing. Just like all the guys that are in the mix there, Bredeson, Lemieux, all the guys are in there doing a good job. Just about getting on the same page and over-communicating. That's one thing we're stressing here.

Especially there is the (indiscernible). We have to put in

the crowd noise, the music and all that during practice. We try to over-communicate those things. There's a lot of communication not just from the center to the quarterback, but down the line of scrimmage, talking to the tackles all the way out there, communication all the way out to our receivers that are way outside the numbers.

There's a lot of communication on a given play. That's what we work on.

Q. On Jalin, what have you seen from him?

MIKE KAFKA: Jalin is doing a nice job. He's right on schedule. He's working. He's growing. That's one thing you've seen from him from the first day, rookie camp, to the next day, then you're working through this Phase III part of it is his growth, familiarity and comfortability with the offense.

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