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Brian Daboll

Press Conference



Q. You have a ton of try-out guys, what is the thought process, try to have a smaller group, bigger? How did you decide on that?

BRIAN DABOLL: You don't want anybody to slip through the cracks. You bring as many people as you can in and give them an opportunity. Again maybe you sign one, you sign two or you don't sign any. But I think it's good for those guys to get an opportunity and for us to get eyes on them doing some of our stuff, and if someone we think is worth bringing up and signing, that's what we'll do.

Q. Do you recall a situation where a try-out guy really impressed you and ended up turning your head and made a difference for you?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, Malcolm Butler.

Q. What about Malcolm in the try-out phase impressed you?

BRIAN DABOLL: I was on the other side of the ball, but obviously the play he made, that was part of it, against Seattle. That was a try-out guy that ended up being pretty productive for the football team.

Q. Is it hard to draft guys you study, some of the try-out guys you study, you get a couple guys out here, and it's the biggest thing in their lives and this one and that one and you've got the coaches, is it hard to put the trained guys and make sure you see everything?

BRIAN DABOLL: That's why you film every drill and spend time after practice. You go through the tape. You tell the coaches usually when training camp starts, maybe these camps don't get evaluators -- not just one day but here you have two days. We went through the first days, go ahead and watch the guys here in practice and then hopefully make our decisions.

Q. A lot of scouting is obviously looking beyond the

numbers. Theo Johnson didn't even have a thousand yards in his four seasons at Penn State. What did you guys see beyond the numbers in Theo Johnson?

BRIAN DABOLL: He's smart. He's a young professional, true pro, loves the game. Has good size. Can defend. Can run. Obviously tested really well. But had a really good pro day, too, at Penn State, running around. A kid in the back you can get so much out of. You can tell he's athletic. He's a guy we thought we could work with.

Q. You've been here the last couple years -- did you get to know Theo from afar or even close? It looked like you had a relationship beyond.

BRIAN DABOLL: We talked a few times before. Again had a lot of good recommendations from Penn State and the type of person he was. You know, some of the people that worked down there that coached him or been on the offensive side with him. Big, long, athletic player that thought we could work with.

Q. Some specific times at Penn State where he thrust himself into a leadership role among his peers.

BRIAN DABOLL: Sure.

Q. I know that's not all-important --

BRIAN DABOLL: No, it is important.

Q. What does that mean?

BRIAN DABOLL: I think, you know, credit Joe and their staff. Something that we place a high premium on is the type of person you are, the type of leadership qualities that you do have. It's hard to be a leader when you're a rookie and you're trying to learn everything. But certainly that's an important quality that we look at.

Q. You mentioned the team calls yesterday with some of draft picks. The undrafted guys, do they go through that process, too?

BRIAN DABOLL: It was mostly our draft picks to get them



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caught up for, I would say, Monday. There's going to be a big learning curve for them. So just to try to catch them up on a few things but they are a ways away.

Q. How do you think Malik handled the bet that supposedly was made, and he ended up canceling. How do you think he handled that situation?

BRIAN DABOLL: One more time.

Q. He made a \$10,000 bet for Rookie of the Year with Jayden Daniels and then he publicized it. Wondering how you thought he handled it, first-round pick, 20 years old?

BRIAN DABOLL: I think he's a mature young guy. Was happy for him.

Q. Talking about Theo Johnson, he's one of three Canadians you have on the roster. How much of non-NFL football have you watched and how much correlation between the -- inaudible --

BRIAN DABOLL: I'll get to watch him at Penn State. We have some people in our scouting department that are from Canada. I was born in Canada. If you can play, you can play.

Q. How much have you seen the way that -- inaudible -- all over the place. What he did -- the betting, like the betting aspect of everything in sports, is that something, I don't think anyone would have turned their head six years ago.

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, there's rules in our league and we do everything we can to follow.

Q. Did you tell him when you heard about that, is that something that you flagged immediately?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, I'd say our support staff, our people, we have conversations with all our guys. Rookies you even have more. So they did a good job, and look, this guy is a good, young kid and I think you put that thought.

Q. That catch he made yesterday, is that an example of what makes him special, catch radius, the fact that he doesn't lose any speed when he makes that play?

BRIAN DABOLL: Obviously we picked him early on so I think there's a lot of things, a lot of qualities about him that you can hopefully project him taking a good step here in this league.

But there's a lot to learn. He's athletic. He's quick. He's explosive. He has very good hands. He's got good awareness. He's got flexibility inside and outside. Now it's our job and it's his job here to go ahead and start picking it up. There's a lot to learn. Certainly you can tell he's a really good player.

Q. You have some receivers, Malik is an example, guys who do have flex. Would you rather see them settle into, he's going to be our slot or he's going to be outside, or do you intending to into the season flexing them in and out?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, I think again the way the game has kind of evolved, the space game, to expect a lot of these guys to be able to play inside and outside. I think you have a number of players. Kai played a lot of inside. Obviously Wan'Dale played inside but he also played outside. Used Slay in a couple different spots last year, Malik.

So I would say that you try to teach them all the spots so that they can learn all the concepts and try to put them where you can put them. So we kind of require all our guys to try to learn multiple spots, multiple letters, if you will, where we place them.

Q. Guys who finished the season last year injured --

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, they have all been doing different things. Some more than others. I think they are all taking good steps of, you know, trying to get out there for the phase three. They are all doing something.

Q. How about Aaron Robinson?

BRIAN DABOLL: He's still working with the rehab guys. He's still working with the rehab guys.

Q. Has anyone been fully cleared?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, they are all doing something. They are all doing something.

Q. Has Evan been here?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah.

Q. Every year you look, but with the new kickoff rules, are you and your guys even more cognizant of trying to find guys who can do that?

BRIAN DABOLL: What spot?

Q. Kickoff return.

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, I'd say there's a lot of -- that's a lot of our skill players that are lobbying for it.

Q. Really?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, defensive back or receiver. I think it's a different play now. There's a lot less space to run. There's a lot more openings for some of the runners. We are using a variety of people back there, whether you're a receiver or a runner or a defensive back, guys that are good in space. You go back and watch some of the tape from the other leagues, could be an explosive play. Hopefully got some explosive guys that can make some yards. So another offensive play really.

Q. What's your philosophy with these guys, lobbying full snaps?

BRIAN DABOLL: The best guys can play. I've been part of teams that -- Edelman, returned for us, made a lot of productive plays. If it helps the team, it helps the team.

Q. Do you have to change your practice schedule and add more time for kickoff now that the play requires a lot more new teaching --

BRIAN DABOLL: Sure.

Q. -- and learning for players?

BRIAN DABOLL: We devote quite a bit of time in that area, not just in kickoff but just in special teams part of it. Really how Gho sets it up, he's done a great job since he's been here, very, very organized, detailed in things we need to try to get accomplished. We'll give them ample time. But there's definitely a little bit more strategy placed on something new, so it's something we have to work out.

Q. Has it opened the door for seeing two returners back there for consistently?

BRIAN DABOLL: Mm-hmm.

Q. What have you seen from your new staff now that you have a couple weeks?

BRIAN DABOLL: Very happy with them. Organized. Detailed. They have done a good job. Kafka has done a great job leading the group. Very organized, and then Ghobrial is full advantage here, running around. We brought Cam over from New England, special teams coordinator, he's been a good addition. Chuck has been a really good addition. TK, Kelly, Cam, we are out here. We've been out here for phase two. This will be the

second day of rookie camp which is good. Be good to get out here for phase three and really get some good practice in.

Q. Inside linebacker seemed to be a spot where you guys actually had some pretty good depth with Bobby, Micah, Isaiah is back. What made Darius a good option for you guys in the sixth round?

BRIAN DABOLL: Well, we obviously had some familiarity with him. Smart instinctive guy. Loves the game of football. He was up there on the board. Talking about him. Good football player.

Q. Dru Phillips was talking about playing nickel and how it's changed, the perception. It used to be guys always felt like a last resort; well, you go inside, you go play nickel. I know you're talking from an offensive perspective when you mention your flexibility for your offensive guys.

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah.

Q. How important has that spot gotten as a nickel corner?

BRIAN DABOLL: Sure.

Q. And do you look at it as a premium spot because of the way the game changed?

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, the game is mostly 11 personnel. There's some that people want some other, but heavy, heavy 11. I would say heavy sub on defense, almost three quarters of the game for the most part is played that way. It's a hybrid position. You have to be able to do a good job with run fits, man-to-man, tackle well, physical. It's a very important position.

There's so many -- inaudible -- that play multiple receivers that you need to be able to match that on the defensive side.

Q. How do you feel about that cornerback spot?

BRIAN DABOLL: Look forward to working and phase three and training camp. But got a lot of confidence in Flop.

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