

# New York Giants Media Conference

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**Joe Schoen**

**Brian Daboll**

Press Conference



JOE SCHOEN: All right, guys. Just want to start off again thanking my pro staff, my leadership staff. It's a lot of work during the month of August with all the pre-season games.

There's been 1100 players cut since Friday. Intimate knowledge that the staff has of those players going through all the pre-season games top to bottom, understanding the league at the cutdown where depth may be, where things may fall a little bit short for what we need. That helps us in strategy planning and all that stuff.

Brandon Brown, Tim McDonnell, Dennis Hickey, Chris Rossetti and his staff. Ryan Cowden did a great job leading the pro staff, splitting up the league.

We ended up claiming one player, Anthony Johnson from the Green Bay Packers, a safety. Again, they do all that work, we get one player. It also sets the table for us moving forward, practice squad claims. Email just come out with the subsequent moves that we'll go through this evening.

I thought it would be important to recognize those guys and the job they do, what they mean to the team.

With that, I'll open it up to questions.

**Q. Are there other guys you claimed who you didn't get?**

JOE SCHOEN: We put in one claim.

**Q. How do you feel with your cornerback two position right now? How do you feel with what you feel with what you have at outside corner?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I feel good with it.

**Q. Do you have enough to address that position this off-season?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I mean, drafting Dru Phillips. We're excited about him. We thought that was a good pick for us in the third round. You get a certain amount of swings, certain players are available.

It's a position we'll continue to look at, as we will with all positions. If there's an opportunity to upgrade there, we will.

I think there was, again, 1100 players that were cut since Friday. I think there was 26 players I believe were claimed. Five were corners. So of 1100 players, five were corners that were claimed.

That's an important position when we're making these trade calls or depth calls with other organizations. If you called every team, 32 out of 32 would probably say they are looking for depth at corner. It's a difficult position to find.

We're always going to look to upgrade across the entire roster. But that position in particular, one or two injuries away... There's not a lot of teams that have three good corners on their roster as you really look through it.

Again, like I said, every position we'll continue to look to to upgrade if we can.

**Q. How excited are you having Nick McCloud get the first crack there?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, they're going to compete it out. Flott is back now. Those guys will compete. Again, we'll leave that to Dabs and his staff, how they want to do it going into week one with Minnesota. Again, I'll let him talk about who's going to play and not play.

**Q. How do you see cornerback two? Competition? Ready to name to starter?**

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, I have a good feel for it. I'm not going to share it with you right now. I have a good idea of the direction it's going.



**Q. Joe, when you guys walk off the field at the end of last year, obviously your task at that point is to improve the roster. How much do you feel you have? In what main areas do you feel you have?**

JOE SCHOEN: I feel like we've improved in several areas. Again, like, you can improve, the team still has to come together as a team. Every team is different. I know Dabs has talked about it. I talk about it. You still got to come together.

I like the chemistry of the team, where we are now. I think that's important. Some of the best teams aren't always the most talented teams, but they come together, they work hard, they know their assignments, they execute.

Again, we don't know how this team is going to react when we're down 10 or how they're going to react when we're up 10, when adversity strikes, what's that going to look like.

Again, talent-wise we like the group we have, we're excited about them. We'll see how they gel and how they execute once we get out there on Sunday.

**Q. Obviously not the expectations or the results, but what do you think when you look down this 53-man roster you like better now you did then?**

JOE SCHOEN: I like the group. I don't want to go position by position. I like the group. We like the team. We like the chemistry. We like where we are. Excited to get things going this week.

**Q. Obviously you want to improve every year, right? Do you feel like this is your strongest roster of the three?**

JOE SCHOEN: Again, same thing. We talk about it all the time here. You're one or two injuries away. Again, we like the group. We like where we are. If you're sitting up here last year with the Bengals, you would think they would be home in the playoffs. No, they have a talented roster, Burrow gets hurt.

Again, you prepare the best you can. You put together the best group you can. Again, you hope things go well.

Again, I'm confident in our staff. I'm confident in the players that we have. I look forward to seeing how this team comes together and gels.

**Q. Joe, what to you would make a successful season this year?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, again, I'm not going to get into

what's successful and what's not. We're worried about Minnesota and getting onto next week.

Again, we like the group. We're going to see what happens.

**Q. Joe, were you surprised by any of your players that cleared waivers you were able to bring back on the practice squad?**

JOE SCHOEN: Say that again.

**Q. Were you surprised by any of the players you had that cleared waivers that you were able to bring back on your practice squad?**

JOE SCHOEN: I wouldn't say 'surprised'. I would say 'happy'. I'm happy to get guys we had on the practice squad, yeah.

Sometimes you worry about losing some guys. Again, you put some time and effort, our coaching staff does a good job of developing these young men. If you get the opportunity to continue to work with them, you're excited about that.

Also, the practice squad is an extension of the roster. You try to tread between developmental players and guys that can come up on Sunday, if you need them to play, if something happens on a Friday or something, that they've played in Sunday games, they know the offense, you can trust them to execute their assignment.

We like the group we have right now. We'll have a workout tomorrow with some guys. We'll continue to churn that to try to have the best practice squad we can.

**Q. Joe, how hard is it to really improve a team at this time of the year? You build a roster, free agency, the draft, then this time of year comes along. How hard is it to make big impact moves?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think probably the biggest area where you can do it is the practice squad. Again, those players, that's your emergency list now. Used to have six or eight practice squad players. You had these workouts. You'd have to sign somebody off the street. They have to go play on Sunday.

To me, trying to gather the best practice squad that we can where, again, those guys can be elevated on Sundays and help you win games. If they have familiarity with this or a coach on our staff, whatever it may be. To me, that's your depth throughout the year.

When you put 16 players, 17 now with the international, times 32, what's left on the street? There's not a lot. To me, the emphasis right now will be making the strongest practice squad we can because that will be our emergency list throughout the year. Maybe around the trade deadline there's a chance to improve again.

I think most rosters are set.

**Q. Why were you so judicious with just the one claim? Is it because of what you have or because of what was out there? Were you thinking we can maybe make three, four here?**

JOE SCHOEN: When you go through it, yes. Sometimes it's Fantasy Football. People aren't cutting good football players, good football players are going to get out there, you're going to put in 15 claims across the league that are going to change your roster.

A lot of times it's depth players that can come in and, again, get you through a season, or a depth safety if an injury occurs and they have to go start. You're looking for those guys.

Again, there's typically not a lot of front line starters that you're going to get. Maybe some vets that get cut. I've got experience with that. Again, Nick McCloud is still here. There's a valuable role player for us. Jason Pinnock is now starting for us. Tyre Phillips started games for us.

History says you can find some good football players during this time. Again, we're pretty thorough in our process in identifying who may or may not help us. Again, the way it fell, there was one claim.

Also when you claim someone, you have to get rid of somebody. That affects that position room, too. So you got to take all that into account.

**Q. How much difference can Brian Burns or one guy make to a defense? You're starting primarily most of the guys, few rookies maybe, almost everyone else is guys that were here last year. How much of a difference do you think Brian Burns can make to this defense?**

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, any good player makes a difference. I can't quantify it. He's a good pass-rusher. He's done a good job in camp. It takes 11 people to play good on defense. It takes 11 people to play good on offense, special teams.

When you have a good player, that certainly helps the other 10 players. So having a good pass-rusher, if we can

get them into those pass situations, pass-rush situations, should help the back end.

But again, it's team football. It's the greatest team sport there is. So we need all 11 to play. But certainly the good ones, they help.

**Q. What is the challenge over 10 days till Minnesota for your players now every day in practice?**

BRIAN DABOLL: We've had two good days. Yesterday we had a good day. Obviously missing a lot of the practice squad players. It was high tempo, but it was lower reps. Today we had a full training camp practice. We had one on ones. We did two on twos. We had a bunch of team pairs against one another. Tomorrow it will be similar with shells on. Then the players will have the mandatory three days off.

The coaches, we worked hard in the off-season, I would say the early part of the season, just getting a feel for schematics. But you don't really know the team you're playing until they have all the pieces.

The game planning for a team is not just the scheme or the coordinator, it's now the pieces. Now once these teams have their 53, and you know somewhat, not everybody plays in the pre-season, but somewhat of the guys' strengths and weaknesses...

Again, you go back and look at some of the tape of the free agents that I would say Minnesota acquired, some of the rookies, you're doing a lot of work right now as a coaching staff. You're looking at the stuff you did in the off-season. You're looking at their three pre-season games right now. You're spending a lot of time doing that as a coaching staff.

But for the players right now, what we're doing is trying to make sure we clean up some of the things that we've had issues with, whether it be in training camp, pre-season, whatever it may be. Those periods that we have, some are just offense versus defense. Some are problem plays, if you will, that we've had in all three phases.

We're focusing on us. The players will have three days off here after tomorrow, which are mandatory. We'll continue to work as a staff, make sure that we're doing everything we can do, leave no stone unturned to get ready for the opening game.

**Q. You said you went pretty hard today. We talked about the first team offensive line yesterday. How did they come through today? The fact that you have proven commodities on that line, maybe except for JMS, is it more of a feel for knowing what you're going**

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**to have in week one if those guys are healthy versus maybe last year you were waiting to see how guys will react?**

BRIAN DABOLL: Yeah, I'd say 100% with the five guys we have, knowing they've only practiced a couple practices. You have four veterans and a second-year player that are pretty diligent in their craft. They've played a lot of football. They understand what it takes.

That's why we put GVR at center, just to give him some reps early on. It actually helps you with the system when you have to play center because you're making a bunch of calls. He's played next to Eluemunor for a season. Runyan played a lot of football at Green Bay, hasn't missed a snap. Those guys are working well together.

But everybody needs to practice. Practice is important. Practice and preparation helps you game. You need to practice. Those guys have got a good day of practice. It was good to get 'em out there in pads. We need another good one tomorrow, get a couple days off, then get started again.

They've played a lot of football.

**Q. You've said you've gone back a couple times and watched Evan Neal's Alabama tape. Are you convinced that he could be a swing tackle for you guys? Could he do left tackle and right tackle? Is it enough for him to have to get back into the flow at right tackle?**

JOE SCHOEN: We'll work through that probably next week. Like Dabs said, we're still doing good on good here, the giant stuff we need to correct on. Once we get into the game, we'll talk about who is going to be active, who is not going to be active, what their roles may be if injury occurs.

**Q. At guard, have you contemplated that at this point?**

BRIAN DABOLL: No.

**Q. Why not?**

BRIAN DABOLL: Because we have enough guards. Needs to continue to work at right tackle.

**Q. Brian, would you like a swing tackle or could you have a different backup left tackle than you have right tackle?**

BRIAN DABOLL: You could have both, yeah. Again, it depends on who goes to the game. Again, I think there's some flexibility with the depth that we have now at the

offensive line. Some of those guys were starters. Now they're backups.

We have some young guys that we're developing. Kubas has come along nicely as a player. Undrafted, but has a good skill set and trade set that you covet in an offensive lineman. He's a tough kid that's really smart. We have some other experienced players that have played.

The depth is there. Now it's just to determine what eight or nine, whatever it may be, go to the game. But the five guys we have will be the five that start, hopefully stay out there.

**Q. Joe, how do you feel about Daniel and the first team offense? Do you see an offense that can take off and be explosive from what you've seen against Detroit, Houston and the Jets?**

JOE SCHOEN: How do I feel? I feel good about it. The other words you put, that's all you're saying. I feel good about it. I feel good about where we are.

**Q. Do you expect to keep three quarterbacks on the 53 all year long?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, yeah. Dabs and I were at the owners meeting in March. I think they said a stat, it was quarterbacks, backup quarterbacks, took almost 2500 more snaps last year than in the past. You've already seen a couple. Buffalo with their backup. Up in Minnesota with a guy.

There's always been some injuries with quarterbacks as is. I think it is the way things went last year. We like where Tommy is. Drew had the injury, unfortunately. We're going to continue to work with him. Daniel, we just think it's probably the best thing to do right now with us.

**Q. If that rule hadn't changed in terms of...**

BRIAN DABOLL: It did.

**Q. What have you seen from your quarterbacks this summer?**

JOE SCHOEN: They've continued to progress, get better. Dru just arrived here. His ability to pick up the offense and execute the offense through camp. From what you guys have seen, Daniel early on, there was a little bit of rust. I thought he really picked it up and had a good camp.

I understand maybe there's a throw he would have wanted back in the Houston game. I thought overall, when you step back and look at the game, if you want to look through

that lens, I do think he had a good camp. Again, in the Houston game, that pre-season game when he played, with the exception of one throw, I thought he played well.

**Q. Joe, after the joint practices, the pre-season games, the summer as a whole, when you assess the talent of this team, is it what you expected it to be before all that began or are you guys a little bit further along than what you expected?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, they've got to go out and execute. Whether it is or not, we got to go make plays on Sunday. We're getting ready for Minnesota. Whatever I say, none of that matters. They got to go out and make plays.

The team is the team right now. We've got to come together and gel offensively, defensively and special teams, see how they do.

**Q. Joe, do you think there is pressure at the start of the season to win games and show results for you and Brian?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think from everybody. You have pressure to in every game. There's only 17 of 'em. They're all important.

Yeah, I mean, we would love to get off to a fast start. We did year one and we did in year two. I mean, it helps.

Again, you want to win 'em all. There's low margin for error in this league. Every year I'm sure everybody goes back and says, If we would have done this, if this would have went our way, if we would have made that kick. Everybody does that.

They're all important, regardless of the time of the year. Getting off to a fast start helps. It helped us in year one. We struggled to do that last year.

Yeah, they're all important, though.

**Q. Almost everything you said earlier in the off-season about Daniel was, If he's healthy, if he's healthy. He's coming off an ACL. Now that he's gone through this whole thing, is that out of your head? He didn't miss anything. He looked good, strong. Is that out of your head now, the 'if he's healthy' part?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I think he's good to go. I'll just say in my 24 years in the league, no matter who is back there, what their injury history is, when that position takes a hit or gets sacked, whatever it is, if Daniel had zero injury history, you're still always worried at that position when they take a hit. I don't care what team I've been on, that's always been

a concern.

Again, hopefully we can protect him this year and he can stay healthy, he can be available for us all 17 games.

**Q. John talked earlier about, I want to see significant improvement. Joe, I know you're not going to say a win total. How do you measure significant improvement?**

JOE SCHOEN: You guys asked him. You had a chance to talk to him. He said 'significant improvement'. You talked to the most important person.

**Q. What does that mean to you? Did you have conversations?**

JOE SCHOEN: Again, Dabs and I don't approach this job without saying, We want to go out and win. That's what we're here for. That's why we work our tails off. That's why we were here all night doing the waiver cutdown. That's why we do all the work. It's not to come up here and not win games. So that's always going to be the goal.

I mean, I don't understand. I get the question, but the goal is to win games always.

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