

New York Giants Media Conference

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Russell Wilson

Press Conference



Q. Welcome, man.

RUSSELL WILSON: Thank you, man. Excited to be here.

Q. Good. I'm curious, why don't you take us through the process and what this has been like and how in your mind it all played out, you end up here with the Giants?

RUSSELL WILSON: It's been an exciting process. I think obviously being in Pittsburgh last year was a lot of fun and just a great organization. Being a free agent, obviously the opportunity to be back in Pittsburgh, I think you guys know that I did go to the Browns, another organization that's first class in every way, and then coming here.

Really love just the whole process here. Just obviously Joe and Coach Daboll and the rest of the staff and people here, just the environment, I obviously love playing in Met-Life Stadium. A lot of good memories here.

But what really was exciting was the players, the guys. Just the some of the guys I got to meet here at the facility, but also, too, some of the guys that I've admired playing against. Guys like Dex sister Lawrence and Burns and other guys that you get to admire, guys I played with. Guys like Chris Manhertz and Dulcich and many others.

Watching this freak of an athlete in Nabers. This guys, when he touches the ball, he may score every single time. He's been exciting. Got to talk to him along the way. He's fired up and we've had a lot of good conversations so far.

Just really excited to get to work. Excited about the young guys, guys like Theo and what he can do and the experienced guys like Darius and his ability to get down the field and make plays.

I think I talked to Jalin Hyatt today a little bit too. He's a guy that's been untapped in terms of what knows he's capable of. So it's just been a really good process. And there are many others. Wan'Dale Robinson, he is like a

running back. Every time he touches the ball he's hard to tackle, his ability to make people miss, his ability to get away from guys and his escapability. I've played with some guys that before.

And many others along the way. Obviously the backs and they're able to do. They're so young and talented. And then the guys up front. It always starts with the guys up front, what they're capable of. Seeing a guy like Andrew Thomas in the weight room and doing squats, just being around him a little bit.

Just guy GVR, talking to different guys along the way. Just been a really smooth process that's given me a lot of confidence. Obviously this fan base, talk to Mr. Mara himself, just the whole staff. It's been really special.

Q. Maybe then what did the Giants explain to you about your role and what they're expecting from you here? Do you expect to be the starter? Do you have to compete for that?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I expect to be the starter and come in here and be ready to rock and roll every day. This team is really looking for somebody to lead them in every way in terms of process and the offseason, during the season, our habits and our thought process, how we create a great winning culture, and how do we continue to establish that, to really build on things that we do well and things we need to continue to do.

I think the big part for me is just try to -- this might be my 14th year to be able to lead an amazing group men that really have big hopes and goals and dreams and desires, and we all share the same goal.

So I think that's the best part about it. I get to be around a lot of extremely talented guys.

Q. Just curious, in terms of your relationship with Brian Daboll, have you had any interaction previously, and what were the last couple weeks like trying to see if you would fit into what he wants to do and how have you meshed your personalities?

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RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I think Daboll is one of the most competitive guys. You get to see it in terms of his playcalling over the years. He's coached some amazing guys, guys like Josh Allen, Tua, Jalen Hurts in college and stuff, just some other places he's been.

There has been some familiar people I know that he knows as well that he's close with. We've been able to bond on that and just the experience of loving the game. This guy has won five Super Bowls I believe it is, being with the Patriots, won a national championship. He's been around greatness and knows what it looks like and sounds like.

This guy has been coach the year not that long ago, couple years ago. So there is a standard that he knows what that looks like, especially offensively, and how he sees the game. I really love that part about him and what he brings to the table.

And the rest of the staff as well. Got to spend some great time with guys like Kafka and Shea who I've known for years all the way back at NC State; I was 18 years old.

What I really like about Dabs is just his mentality, attack mentality. We haven't been able to talk a whole bunch of ball yet, but I've been able to see a bunch over the years and understand who he is.

So I think that's the exciting part about what we can do and all the guys we have around us.

Q. Welcome to New York.

RUSSELL WILSON: Thank you, man. Good to be here.

Q. Two things for you. First of all, you have your own Hall of Fame resume, and yet there were a lot of credible reports that Giants, the Steelers, maybe some other teams, were waiting for Aaron Rodgers's decision before they moved forward with you. Does that bother you to be treated like anybody's Plan B when you have done what you have done in this league?

RUSSELL WILSON: First of all, Aaron Rodgers is a tremendous football player. He's done some amazing things in this league. I've been fortunate that I've been able to do some great things, too.

What I'm focused on is right now is what we can do here. That's been my focus since I signed. Also, too, along the way is finding a place that will continue to believe in you. Obviously Pittsburgh was a special, special place for me. Pittsburgh brought me so much love, so many teammates I'm super close with. Guys like TJ, Cam, guys -- I got to

share the captain patch with those guys every day.

So many other that go unnoticed, and those relationships and experiences, man, I cherish that every day. I have some of my greatest memories being there with some great guys. People that go unsung, guys like DY that you guys may not know. He's a guy that's played in the league and has been helping the players every day and helped me every day.

And just many others, and the coaches as well and the fan base. But coming here and being in New York is an exciting place to play. It's a place that wants to win and knows how to win is and has won before.

For me it's bringing everything I know, all the experiences and touchdowns, all the wins, and also all the love and passion for the game to locker room. That's what I'm really excited for.

It's going to be a special, special thing and we got to go work for it every day and go do it.

Q. Would you have signed here last year when you visited if they had given a chance to start or told you you were the starter?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think free agency there is always 32 teams. It's a process. You can't sign with all 32, but I'm excited about the one I signed with today, so it's an exciting day.

Q. Welcome to New York, man. Appreciate you.

RUSSELL WILSON: Thank, man. Good to see you.

Q. Likewise. Obviously you have some history at Met-Life. Won your Super Bowl here. When you look at the chance to play at the stadium, do you think about that memory flooding your mind? How much did that excite you about being part of this team?

RUSSELL WILSON: Playing in Met-Life, I have some amazing memories here. Some of my most fond memories of this game that I poured my heart and soul into every day happened right here in this stadium right across the street in Met -- Life Stadium.

I'm excited to create some more memories with some amazing teammates. Really what it takes though is just one day at a time, being crazily obsessed with the process and the days and what we can do, and just winning the day. What happens is great things happen with that.

So it's a collective effort, but definitely when I pulled up to



the stadium and the facility today and when I pulled up last week, it makes me feel some type of way. It makes me get excited about the possibility of what this team can do.

Q. Two quick ones for you. First is obviously the Giants are a team that could still draft a quarterback next month. Is that something you discussed with them and how would you handle that?

RUSSELL WILSON: Listen, I think every NFL team nowadays have two to three quarterbacks, usually three nowadays. I obviously right now we have Jameis and myself, and we're just excited to get to work.

The great part about professional sports is constant change constant movement. If we draft a quarterback, we'll make sure he does everything he can to be ready to go and be prepared with his mentality.

But for me I'm focused on winning, what I can do as a quarterback of the New York Giants to help us win and do everything we can to lead.

I'm excited. I've been gifted with so much in this game in terms of experiences and things I've gone through, all the great moments, some tough ones along the way. Also being inside the white lines, that is my most favorite place to be.

I'm excited to do that and to rock the New York Giants jersey.

Q. Second question: You teased us a little bit about your conversations with Malik. Said you've been chatting with him. What were those like? What did you see from him? How can you bring out best in him?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah he's an explosive athlete. His ability to make plays, I love him, just watching him and his personality on the field, his demeanor. I watched one clip, I was watching a bunch of plays of him and he caught this one catch against the Commanders on a cross on a third down, and he cut back inside, got another extra 20 yards.

Got hit pretty good. He kind of laid the boom, but vice versa. He got up right away and just was celebrating, excited about the first down and move on to the next play. The competitor, warrior that he is. And there are a lot of guys like that.

That same play I noticed that Theo was blocking down the field and making a huge block. Those things are what championship football looks like. Obviously he catches a screen against the Colts and takes it 70 yards, 80 yards.

That's pretty special. There are only so many human beings in the world that can do that, and he's one of them.

Q. Sorry, I think my camera is not on.

RUSSELL WILSON: That's all right. I'm used to the Zoom thing by now.

Q. Think of a Brad Pitt figure there.

RUSSELL WILSON: Got it.

Q. Look, we all know your stats. We know the numbers, the pedigree, pro bowls, the Super Bowl. The past three years the stats and wins have not been there. This is your third team in three years. What do you say to the Giants and what do you say to yourself that that's not a player in decline; I have a lot left to give? What did you feel about that?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, first of all, you never feel like you do enough unless you win it all. That's how I've always felt. I've had some amazing years and different things along the way.

Any time you don't win it all as a competitor, warrior, you want to be able to win it all and say you did it that year. My focus is doing it this year and trying to find a way to do it with these guys. That's what I'm really excited about.

For me personally, I'm excited to get to work and just focus on that part of it. I know that when you put the hard work in great things happen, and I'm excited about the great things that are going to happen here.

Q. Russ, you've entered the New York market. You guys as a family have a lot of interest outside of football. How much was knowing that you're going to be playing in this market a big part of you signing here?

RUSSELL WILSON: It wasn't really a factor in terms of outside of it. I think more importantly I just love football. You know, this is a place that I think with Coach Daboll and what he's been able to do and the playcaller that he is, the aggressive nature he has throughout the game and all the different ways, I'm excited about that.

I was watching the playmakers and all the things they're capable of and what they've done so far. The youth there, the mentality across the board, this defense and how they fly around.

You know, this defense was one of the top leading sack defenses in the NFL for a while, so I just have a lot of



respect for this organization.

You know, walking in this building, walking down this hallway, just being here, I got here and Ed Triggs, one of the first guys I sat with. First day I got here in my visit and sitting here and having breakfast with the guys and different people here. Meeting the strength and training staff and everybody along the way, the equipment staff.

It's a special place. A lot of memories I think have brought me here. In a great way, too. Players and coaching staff. I think loved the memories because I've walked this hallway when we won the Super Bowl. I remember being in the quarterback room, and it was the two nights before my old quarterback coach, Coach Carl Smith, people call him Tater, he said, man, it's just ball, baby. Just be you.

So I just remember that and being in that room. Some of the greats -- obviously Eli Manning being here in this same room years before and a lot of those things.

Just been a lot of great players on this field and just it's a special place. I think obviously for our family we're excited to be here because it's the New York Giants, a great organization and they surround you with so much love and care and are rooting for you to be your best.

That's what I'm excited about, being able to talk to Mr. Mara himself and have great conversations with him on my visit and yesterday on the phone, you know, when I was about to sign. So really exciting. I'm excited about this opportunity to play football.

Q. Russ, you mentioned earlier about your Super Bowl experience and whatnot. Can you talk a little bit about bringing that winning mentality to the locker room? I know every guy has a different approach to it. What can you bring to the locker room to get kind of that winning mentality back?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I think that first part of it is our habits and approach every day, our study habits, how we go to work every day, how we push each other every day on and off the field.

You know, I think winning is a process. It's also a habit. So how we go about that, what our habits are like daily, our approach, mentality, how we communicate with one another. You know, it's funny. My old mental coach, Trevor Moawad, he passed away cancer. He is one of my closest people I've ever known. He used to always say, simple wins. Little things you do well.

If I use basketball terms, I get to go to the Knicks game tonight. I'm excited to go watch them play. At the end of

the day you got to make your free throws and layups. Same thing in football. Hit the ones that are open, make the big plays.

You got to also do all the fundamentals really well offensively, defensively, special teams. All the things we know. These guys in this locker room are really excited about the opportunity and what we can bring to the table. Been talking to a bunch of guys, all the O-linemen, some of the tight ends, running backs and receivers, different guys.

So we're excited about the opportunity. I got to talk to Brian Burns before coming here and his love for the game and what a great player he is.

So just it's a great opportunity. And so with opportunity we got to go seize it and capitalize on it and work for it every day. There is no magic pill for that. You got to do the work, love the hard work and the attention to detail that it takes.

Q. Have you had a conversation with Coach Daboll about maybe taking his offensive system, tweaking it a little bit more to the things that you do well, or has that not taken place yet?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, we haven't gotten into those details yet. Really just making sure that everything works out and me getting here first, and now we can get to work in a couple weeks, few weeks from now. We're excited about that.

I know just being with the guys it's going to be a lot of fun. A lot of us want to get throwing already. Talked to Malik a little bit about that and Theo and some of the receivers, Darius, Wan'Dale. Just a lot guys want to get together and start working. I'm excited about doing that right away, start spinning the football around with those guys.

Q. So early in your career you were part of a Seahawks team that had signed a veteran that was expected to start. Then you were the rookie that came in and took that job for himself. If the Giants do go out here, and whether it's third overall or at some point later in the first round and second round, draft a quarterback, how will you approach mentoring a guy who could potentially end up replacing you?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I think the first thing is that you're first thing is you always handle yourself first. Get yourself prepared at the highest level and control what you can control.

Part of that is doing everything I can to be my best every day. Then from there, from leading in that sense,



everybody else grows with you from that. They learn from you. They see how you work. See your practice habits and mental habits, your approach every day.

So I'm excited about the opportunity to continue to lead not just the quarterback room, but really the locker room in every way. My approach, what that looks like, I'm excited about the opportunity. Obviously like to lace up the cleats and get after it and be on the field and help our football team win.

Q. You mentioned a couple specific plays that you watched from Malik as well as a few other teammates. You only just signed your deal. How much have you watched of your team? What's the process of getting up to speed. You're getting used to going from one team to the next.

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I'm kind of a film rat, so I've watched a lot. I've watched pretty much every catch of each guy, a lot highlights of them. Just really you got engulfed in that. It's everything. If you really want to win it's got to be your lifestyle. It's got to be every morsel in your body, in your being has to think about winning and what that that looks like.

I always say that when you're playing quarterback you're finding the best in each guy every day. You know, certain guys are great at certain things. Certain guys don't even know they can be great at that yet. Certain guys may make a flash play, make it once or twice, but just haven't had an opportunity to do it again.

All this goes into playing football and the game. I always say KYP, Know Your Personnel and what guys are great at. A lot of guys are great at a lot things. We have a team that can really, really run. We want to be able to use that speed in every way.

Obviously guys like Malik and Wan'Dale, what they can do; Theo, Chris Manhertz. I'm not sure he's going to be running deep post routes or anything, but he a physical being I've played with. He's been in the league, his professionalism, what he can do. The linebackers we have. These guys are hard to tackle. Seen a lot of guys running the football and making people miss and catching the ball in the backfield too.

So really I think the fun part that me and Daboll get to experience and the rest of the staff with Kafka and Shea and everybody else putting this thing together, is really how do we make our players be at their best every play, every day.

That's part of what I get to do and what I'm excited about

doing and the process of that and just loving the process of it. So big part of that is understanding what the film looks like and spending all my time watching that. I've watched everything you can imagine so far.

These are good players. They're young and I've gotten to play with some really great young talent over the years that are still learning and growing. You take them with you, where they can do go. You paint a picture for them. I'm excited about doing that.

Q. I know you're saying you want to be on the field, play, and help the team win. When a team drafts a quarterback No. 3 overall usually the guy plays pretty early. From your standpoint, would you be willing to mentor a guy that might end up taking your starting job early in the season, or have you received any assurances from the team that that won't happen?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, you know, first of all, obviously I'm expecting to come in there and be a starter, and earning that every day. I just believe that when you play this position my goal every day is to step on the field and help our football team win and ultimately to be the best in the world and be one of the best that can do it. I think that's my mentality, understanding that.

So I'm excited about the opportunity to lead everybody. And not just one room, one guy, one thing. It's the whole organization. I think that's the thing that you realize being a quarterback in the National Football League. You got the best fricking job in the world. You're one of 32. Reality is your like a CEO of a corporation, the whole process of it all. So you're not just leading one person. You're leading a whole fan base, too. I'm excited about that and the approach of that every day. I know what my talents are and what I'm capable of. I'm excited to put those between the white lines.

Q. Obviously you're joining a team went 3-14 last year. Why do you believe in this group and where do you think they're headed for to you join them, especially when the offense hasn't changed too much beyond the quarterback position?

RUSSELL WILSON: First of all, I watch the talent and the guys that make plays. Second of all, I think Daboll is a tremendous football coach. It's funny how people forget sometimes how great of a person or coach the person is over some tough times.

I think the guy just won coach the year not too long ago. Sometimes I like the underdog mentality as well. I think that's kind of been my approach every day of my life. I don't know, maybe being 5'11". I don't know what it is.



But I love challenges. I love adversity. I love all that stuff. You know, I think the best part is just trying to bring us to the other side of winning and what that looks like.

This is a football team that I got to play last year in a great battle. Just a lot of the great football players on the field. You know, like I said, just focused on -- not focused on the end goal. Focused on the process, and I'm just enjoying today, the opportunity of today.

We'll get to work with these guys and have a lot of fun and really, really challenge every guy every day to be our best, most importantly starting with myself. Just wanting to be that for myself every day and for this team.

Q. When you guys played them last season, what stood out on the other side?

RUSSELL WILSON: Well, we got Dexter Lawrence chasing after you, Sexy Dexy, it's never a good thing. Now I'm glad he's chasing after the other quarterbacks. Burns and what he's able to do. Linebackers, how they fly around. Just the secondary. I think you have some really great additions. Joe has done a good job bringing in a guy like Holland who makes tremendous plays all over the field.

So there are a lot of talented guys, so I'm just excited about the youth. I think about Tae Banks and how great of a player he is. Just different guys that you have on this team that are just about to have their breakout years in my opinion.

So I'm excited to be a part of all that.

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