

New York Giants Media Conference

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Joe Schoen

Press Conference

JOE SCHOEN: I'd like to first off start by thanking my scouting staff, along with many people in the building through these 30 visits, the scouting process, the all-star games, the combine, the coaches are heavily involved in the process.

A lot of Zooms. They Zoomed with a lot of these prospects. Been to a lot of dinners, a lot of meetings in the facility with some of the prospects that came through, Pro Days, private workouts, also whether it's strength and conditioning coaches, the cafeteria, Pat, Deion, their staff, Ronnie, Dr. Ronnie.

We put these kids through quite a process when they come through the building, and there's a lot of people involved that are critical in our decision-making. I want to thank them for that.

With that being said, I feel like we're in a pretty good spot with The Draft coming up in eight days. There's still some work to do and loose ends we've got to tie up, meetings with coaches, Zooms. We still do Zooms with prospects. We're not there yet, but we're getting close. Feel good about where we are.

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

Q. You guys are doing some private workouts with quarterbacks. Explain why the timing of it, to do it so late in the process now rather than maybe sometime earlier.

JOE SCHOEN: It's a unique calendar year. I think the Draft is as early as it can be, that Thursday in April, being the 24th.

If you're speaking specifically of Colorado, their Pro Day was April 4th. That was the last one. Two to three weeks after the Draft, we make our calendar for the next year. And there's a process in place to determine how many days we need for our meetings, and medical, psychological, some of the third party vendors we use in



terms of how the calendar goes.

With the April 4th Pro Day of Colorado, we were already in meetings. When I left you guys at the owners meetings, we started that Wednesday. That's how the calendar is for us every year.

It was unique that a Pro Day was that late, and we had to stop meetings to go out to Boulder. But these private workouts have been in place.

What happens, Jordan, is a lot of times these prospects won't do privates before their Pro Days. If we could have done a private workout with Shedeur before his Pro Day, we probably would have. But the concern there is they also have receivers, and there's a lot of receivers at Colorado.

You don't want to be the team that does a private workout with a prospect, and then they pull a muscle. One year I was in Miami and there was a tight end at Nebraska-Omaha, when they had football, and he broke his wrist at the private workout, and the Pro Day was the next day and all the scouts were pissed off.

You've got to be conscious of that. You don't want these guys to get injured before their Pro Day when all 32 teams can watch them perform. There's nothing unique about this other than the calendar is what it is this year. We were in meetings. Some of these prospects have had 30 visits.

So you're trying to connect the schedules. They're busy. We're busy. This was the week where we could get out there and do some of these other private workouts. We're not just doing this with quarterbacks. There's a couple of other positions where we have private workouts that are coming up as well.

When you're trying to put the big puzzle together and players are coming in, they're at 30 visits, the off-season program, it takes two to be on the same page and have openings where you can get together.

Q. What do you get out of the private workouts, especially with the quarterbacks?

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JOE SCHOEN: We have a process in place that we've had. This dates back to when Dabbs and I worked together in Miami. I remember Andy Dalton, Mallett, some of those guys. It's a pretty thorough process in place that we believe in, and we've seen the results play out in the position.

I'm not going to get into specifics of that, but it's been tested, it's true, and a lot of times it's panned out whether we liked or didn't like a prospect and how they projected to the next level.

Q. Can you discuss right from the beginning about the importance of improving the quarterback position? You've signed a couple of veterans in Russell Wilson, Jameis Winston. How important is it for the Giants to select the quarterback at some point in this draft?

JOE SCHOEN: With the signing of those two players, I think we put ourselves in a position where I don't think it's mandatory or something with our feet to the fire, that we have to do.

I think the two guys we signed have played a lot of ball. They've got a lot of skins on the wall. I do think we've upgraded that room compared to where it was a year ago. I like the two guys that we have, and Tommy's still in there, and he's won games for us too, and he's still developing.

We're happy with the makeup of the room right now.

Q. When you look at the league-wide trends, how much does that cause you to tweak your processes when you look at some of the things the successful teams of last year were able to do in terms of personnel?

JOE SCHOEN: What trend?

Q. For example, more defensive line rotation, more running back emphasis, that sort of thing. Does that cause you to tweak your approach?

JOE SCHOEN: I don't want to say trends, but you look around, like the division and your matchups within the division or your opponents and what's coming up, and ultimately you're trying to build the best team. Talking about Miami, New England had two really good tight ends, well, how are we going to match up against these guys?

If you have a weakness for a certain opponent you've got to play a couple times a year, you're going to look at that and how you want to build your team because ultimately you want to win your division.

Not so much trends around the league, but it is a copycat league, so coaches are looking at that from a personnel standpoint. Really good collaboration from the coaching staff and what they're looking for and what they need to put the best product on the field and win games.

Q. When you go into the Draft, obviously you're going into the fourth draft that you've had, how much do you -- have your current depth chart, your current roster, but also project two, three years down the road as to what you have in the building but also what you're going to be drafting, position-wise, what you look for. Can it be in two different silos? Is the current over here and the Draft separate, or do you have to mesh them together?

JOE SCHOEN: We're always looking at that. That's a good question. Here's where we are salary cap-wise going into 2026. Here's our players that are going to be UFAs. If there's a guy there in the second round, that could be a backup year one but maybe we don't have to pay somebody \$20 million, you're looking at it that way.

Really good player, eventual starter, where you are salary cap-wise, whose contracts are coming up. You're always looking into the future, hey, this is a successor to Player X if we can't get a deal done or can't extend them, you're always looking at that for sure.

I was talking about the other day with our secondary now, geez, three years from now, they're all up at the same time, and Dexter's up at the same time. You're projecting down there, a rookie class last year, if they win a first rounder. Three years from now, there's a lot of core guys now that their contracts are up at the same time. You try to prevent that if there's deals here and there.

We're always conscious of that in the financial aspect of it and how we're going to replace these players.

Q. Do you look at the quarterback position different in any way you look at the Draft in that the Draft is seven rounds, you don't want a guy that's going to be a gold jacket, Hall of Fame starter. There's different levels, depth chart and where you want guys. Do you look at the quarterback in there's no reason to take a quarterback anywhere in the Draft unless you think he can start for you and be a good player, or do you take a guy in a different round where he might make our team and be a depth guy? Do you know what I'm saying? Is that different? Do you look at the quarterbacks differently than other spots?

JOE SCHOEN: It's a little bit ties into Art's question,

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backup quarterbacks are between \$4 million and \$10 million, whatever number you want to throw out. So, yeah, if you can get a quarterback in the third, fourth, fifth, whatever it is, and he can be a backup quarterback, now you're opening up financial resources that you don't have to spend on a backup quarterback, and he can be a cost controlled player for four years that's not expensive compared to what's on the open market.

So, yeah, it doesn't have to be this guy has got to be a starter. It would be nice if it's a young backup quarterback on a rookie contract too because, when you look at what we paid for backup quarterbacks, whether it's Tyrod, Drew, to where we are now, that's money you can spend elsewhere.

To sign a guy with upside at that position that can develop and maybe win you games, or maybe they develop into a No. 1, you're always looking at those scenarios.

Q. How would you categorize this year's quarterback class?

JOE SCHOEN: There's some depth to it. I mean, there's good players for various reasons, different ages, different playtime experience. There's quarterbacks in this Draft that will go on and play and be starters in the league.

Q. Are they quarterbacks of the future, so to speak?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would say so.

Q. I know you don't think it's mandatory to get a quarterback in this Draft, but how surprising would it be if you got through the entirety of this Draft and didn't take a quarterback?

JOE SCHOEN: How surprised? Like a percentage?

Q. Not a percentage. Like going in, in your head, do you think it's a likelihood that you might end up with a quarterback, or where do you stand on that at this point?

JOE SCHOEN: I don't know where everybody else is, but you're dealing with 31 other teams and how they see their board, but yeah, if the value matches up with what we have on a player and there's an opportunity to take any position, we'll do it. Not going to force it if it's not the right value.

Again, if the board lines up and we're on the clock and that's the position we want to go with, we'll go with it. I'm not going to be backed into a corner on that.

Q. How do you decide when a player is worth taking

the risk? You might have reservations on him, but it's worth taking a gamble because there's other attributes that maybe he does hit?

JOE SCHOEN: It's a good question. The issue doesn't change depending on what it is. It could, if it's medical. If this guy is coming off a shoulder surgery, he's not going to be ready till October, do you drop that player a little bit since you're not going to get him until week 8? That's going to get better.

If a guy's not very smart or can't do something that you're going to ask him to do or there's something that's not going to get better that maybe you're not comfortable with, maybe the kid has some background issues or something like that, if we drop him and say, yes, we can't pass on this guy, the issues are still the issues. That's what we're wrestling with.

Depending on what the issue is and the support system and the ecosystem system we have in place with player development and the coaching staff and in the locker room, can we handle a player with maybe an off-field issue or maybe they're immature, whatever it may be? We're weighing the pros and cons and can we fix what may cause them to fall? Is the risk worth the reward? Is that what we want to bring into our locker room?

Q. You have two options coming up in Evan and Tibs. Have you made a decision on those two?

JOE SCHOEN: We haven't. We'll probably wait till after the Draft on that.

Q. Next week's program starts. Have discussions continued with Evan maybe sliding off?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I haven't talked to Evan. Again, I'll echo what I said two weeks ago at the owners meetings. He's going to do whatever he can do to help the organization and do whatever's best for the Giants.

He's motivated. He's had a good off-season. He's been working hard. We're excited to get him back in here, and he's going to do whatever he can to help us.

Q. Speaking of medical, what is the update on where Abdul Carter is?

JOE SCHOEN: We have the meeting tomorrow with Ronnie and his crew. We'll have more information. We've been in contact -- he was here on Friday. It was pretty well reported. He feels good. He's working out. He's running.

Didn't even know he had it. He went to the combine, and it



was news to him. I don't think there's going to be much room for pause there.

Q. With Travis Hunter, who has said this week that he wants to play both positions, when you meet with a player, how do you discuss your fit, how you want them to fit in with you, versus what they envision their fit is?

JOE SCHOEN: Players ask us that all the time. How do you see me fit with your organization? Travis is a unique individual. Dabbs said it at the owners meetings. You've got to watch a lot of plays on him. He's fun to watch. It's unique, the ball skills, the route ability, and also the ability to go to the other side and play corner. You don't see that very often.

Sometimes if a guy can't catch or play receiver, they get moved to DB. This guy can do it all. Also, he's a great kid. It would be hard to keep him off the field. He's motivated to play both ways.

Again, you're always worried about the length of the season, with the NFL 17 games, and training camp. If he gets hurt doing something that he's not doing full-time, you're going to kick yourself. But he's a unique athlete that I think will be able to do both.

Q. What do you view as his primary position?

JOE SCHOEN: We're in a unique position that we have three good receivers and we like our secondary right now. So our situation will be unique. I would not be afraid to play him on both sides of the ball.

Q. How difficult do you think that is for a player to do it on both sides full-time?

JOE SCHOEN: I think it would be difficult, but he's proven that he can do it and be available. That's the unique part.

You're always concerned with these guys. We're looking at the workload and the yardage each day. To me, what will have to be settled is the mental part of it because the offense is very hard to learn. And then the defense on a weekly basis, it's not college anymore where, hey, these are our basic plays, this is our basic defense. We're going to play cover 3 against Kansas. We're going to play cover 3 against Nebraska.

There's a lot more week-to-week matchup type stuff that our coaches are doing. Just how much can you handle mentally where you can go out there and execute and they can trust you to do your job? Physically, I wouldn't doubt the kid.

Q. When you look at Travis, most people around the league say he has all world potential at corner. He also has all world potential at receiver. Do you share that boat, where he can be that good at both spots?

JOE SCHOEN: I wouldn't doubt the kid. He's that type of athlete, and he's had that type of production. It's insane the amount of snaps he played, the amount of snaps he plays a game. Doesn't sit down. Goes over and gets a drink of water and gets back out on the field.

He's got that type of athleticism. He's got the right mindset. He's a great kid. I wouldn't doubt him.

Q. Have you looked at the future in terms of looking ahead, signing guys and the salary cap and all that. When you think about potentially trading assets to move around in the Draft, do you sort of take the long view as far as not only what assets you might have in the future, but what the Draft might look like long term?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, for sure. We take all that into account. Usually if you're going to -- it depends. If you're looking long term, you've got to make sure it's a player that you really like. If you're talking about trading future assets, but, yeah, we take that all into account.

Q. When you look at a player like Abdul Carter, who made a position switch this year, does that set up ideas for you as to where he might fit in? Is there such a thing as too many pass rushers in your mind?

JOE SCHOEN: I don't think so. Everybody watched the Super Bowl, right? Philly rushed with how many, four per game? That's one way to do it.

If you think about any of these players that may or may not be in the mix, as a unique player like him that played off the ball for two years and has only played one season off the edge and had a really good season.

You've got Kayvon, and you've got Burns, you've got Dex inside. It gives you a lot of options. He's a versatile player. He's young, just 21 years old, and an exciting player to watch. Yeah, you can't have enough pass rushers.

Q. Would you be able to find a spot for him given that primarily he lines up in the same spots as the other guys?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we would find a way. It's no different than with Travis Hunter. You've got a first round corner, and we just brought in Paulson. We've got three

receivers -- you figure it out. You've got good football players, you figure out, find a way to get him on the field and utilize him.

Q. How do you put the best player available with the most important player to your organization, like the need that you have? Do you have to kind of balance that here?

JOE SCHOEN: You're always doing that. You're always balancing that. Again, I've tried to set it up each year that we can go into the Draft and play a game, and you're hoping you're better than you were the year before, as of today or next Thursday when we go to play the game.

So if there is a blue chip or generational type talent or something you just can't pass on, even if you maybe already have starters at that position, you don't pass on that type of player.

Again, if you go need based, that's when, I think sometimes, you can make mistakes at times. Again, I like to go in so you're not backed into a corner where you have to take a certain position and you can take the best player available.

Q. I don't expect you to literally answer this question directly, but do you have a pretty good idea, or do you know what's going to happen at 1 and 2 at this point? Or are you still in the information gathering process waiting to figure out what's going to happen in front of you?

JOE SCHOEN: Still in the information gathering process. I always tell my guys, when we look at our board or free agency or values, we assume everybody sees it like us, and that's not always the case. Still gathering information.

There's rumors of what teams may or may not do, but what we can control is, hey, come up with three players we're happy with and rank those guys. If they don't go in that order, they go in a different order, knowing who we like best of those three players, that's what we can control.

There's still the rumor mill. It's that time of year. There's rumors everywhere. So have somewhat of a sense that I think will happen, but obviously I don't know that for a fact.

Q. I'm sure every year when you guys come together for your meetings, people have different ideas about 1, 2, 3, 4. Were there a lot more divergent ideas this time? Or you just kind of walk in the room and say everybody's got their No. 1?

JOE SCHOEN: So we have the horizontal board,

quarterback, running back, all across, offense, defense. Then we've got a vertical stack, which we just did this past weekend with the scouts. They just left last night. Actually the scouts left this morning, but we finished up our meetings last night.

That's where you get into the hard conversations because, if these two players are there, which is a reality, like they may be there, who are we going to take and why? There's a lot of respectful debates in the Draft room when it comes down to -- a lot of times there's two good players or two players we really like and there's discrepancies in the room, ultimately I'm tasked with making the final decision.

We'll phone in the coaches and get their opinion if those guys are there, or if it's two positions and we love both players, which position best helps the New York Giants. We love both players, it's the same value, who's going to help us the best?

It is, it's a collaborative process. Scouts do a great job. They're on the road 150 days a year. They know these players inside and out. Then we bring the coaches in and get their opinion.

If there's discrepancies, which that's what this week and early into next week is, we'll work through or get the film and watch it together. Let me see if we can see what you see or try to coerce them into seeing them how we like them.

It's a good process, a good group of people, a lot of good professionals. The collaboration and communication has been very good.

Q. Is John Mara going to Boulder tomorrow with you guys?

JOE SCHOEN: John Mara is not going to Boulder.

Q. What does leadership look like to you at the quarterback position?

JOE SCHOEN: To me, probably one of the best I've seen is I've been around -- or the ones that I've been around are the ability to motivate and get people to follow, to bring the team up when things are down and motivate the rest of the group.

We talk about it a lot. You're the face of the franchise. People are watching you, all eyes are on you, and your work ethic, how you approach the game, your ability to interact and connect teammates across both sides of the ball, offense, defense. I think that's all really important at that position specifically.



Q. Joe, when you talk about quarterbacks, you talk about discrepancies and trying to get on the same page. Is it especially important that the organization, that everybody's on the same page if you're looking at a quarterback? And if there is a discrepancy, how do you break that tie, or do you just pass on that player?

JOE SCHOEN: Ultimately, the decision falls on me. You go through the whole process, and there are discrepancies. There's been discrepancies in all different rounds, all different positions in many a draft, and ultimately the final say typically goes with the general manager.

Ultimately, if there's a discrepancy and at the end of the day I'm convicted, the decision has to be made. That's how we do it.

Q. Have you considered trading up or down from the No. 3 pick?

JOE SCHOEN: We'll be open to all options. Those types of strategy sessions have been ongoing and talking through different scenarios. We're always going to be open to either/or of those scenarios.

Q. Have you received interest from teams looking to trade up?

JOE SCHOEN: We've received some calls. Yes, we've received some calls.

Q. Obviously you don't want to be picking a 3 in the future, but in this position, do you feel you can't miss on a player at this point? Pretty much, a lot of rankings have Cam Ward going 1, you have Abdul Carter, you have Travis Hunter. That seems to be a pretty consensus 1, 2, 3. You may disagree with that, I don't know.

Do you look at No. 3, if you just sit there and say we have the top three players ranked, whoever's there, do you feel like it's almost as much of a canvas player as possible in the Draft?

JOE SCHOEN: We like our options. We like who will be there.

Q. As a GM, this is your fourth draft. You haven't had the chance to put in a card for a quarterback yet. Is that an itch? Is that something that GMs want to do?

JOE SCHOEN: Where we are, yeah. You'd like to have a young franchise quarterback. I think everybody general

manager would be. Everybody wants that. But the value has to be right or it doesn't matter. You get that one wrong -- you've just got to get that right. We're in a position to get the right one at the right time, that's when you pull the trigger.

Q. Do you know who you want right now? Could that change tomorrow? Could that change on Thursday?

JOE SCHOEN: Again, we're going to run out the shot clock here. We have until next Thursday. We're going to continue to do our due diligence. I think a lot of teams are doing the same thing we're doing right now. They're in meetings.

The phone calls usually pick up early next week when guys are out of meetings and you're getting closer to the Draft. We'll continue to make our calls, whether it's college coaches, high school coaches, whatever research we need to continue to do.

Again, that's been our process. We'll do good on Thursday.

Q. What's your urgency to find a young franchise quarterback in this Draft?

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, like, again, everybody wants one of those (laughter).

Q. Do you feel added pressure to land one this year?

JOE SCHOEN: If there's not one or you don't perceive there to be one or it's not available when you pick, that's out of your control. Yeah, we would love to have one. If there's one available, we'll definitely take one.

Q. The strength of the Draft, I know a lot of people say defensive line is very strong, running back. How do you view this draft as a whole? Let's put the quarterback position aside for a second.

JOE SCHOEN: I think the D-line group and the edge group for us, the outside backers and D-line is a really deep group. I would say running backs is a deep group. Corners, there's some depth at corners. Those would be the ones where I think there's some good depth.

There's some high end guys at other positions, just maybe not as much depth.

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