

New York Giants Media Conference

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Russell Wilson

Press Conference

Q. Just curious, Dabes just told us that he had asked you and Jameis to get up in front of the offense this morning and just kind of -- I don't know if you needed to introduce yourself at all, but just in terms of when you look at a day like this, you're coming to a new team, what do you want to get out of this? Obviously you're not on the field yet, but I'm just curious from a personality aspect, from your experience, what are you trying to get out of a day like today? I'm not sure if it's a first impression for everybody, but certainly being here it's a start of something different.

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, well, first of all, I think that it's exciting to be here. Obviously to have the guys sharing the locker room, to be able to be in the team meeting room with the guys, the QB room, just to be on the field with the guys getting work and being in the weight room and all that stuff that makes it exciting and that we're playing ball again, and that part I love.

Dabes ran a great meeting today. He introduced everybody, from the coaches to everybody else, from the new players as well. Obviously me being one of them. Just to be able to go up there and talk to the guys about kind of where I come from and just my story a little bit and just the focus of it all and what we want to accomplish individually, but also this year.

I'm excited to be with these guys. Man, I'm excited to have the opportunity to play and be a New York Giant. What an opportunity it is. We can make it really special. I think we have the right guys with a lot of hard work, guys that are focused on the details of it all. Like I said, excited to be here.

Q. Who did you get to throw with since the last time we talked? I've been following you on Instagram. It looked like Bellinger, some of the receivers. Which of your targets were you able to corral, and how did those all come about? Was that your initiative?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, a bunch of the tight ends, a



bunch of the receivers. A bunch of guys, man. We really got in a lot of extra work. We were able to throw in San Diego some, to be able to throw in Atlanta too. Flew to Atlanta and just different guys that I was able to throw with back and forth in San Diego and ATL. It was a lot of fun. We just got a lot of work in.

I think what's exciting is just we've got a plethora of guys that can really make a lot of plays. Obviously our star receiver, Malik and what he's capable of to Wan'Dale and his ability to make plays. I think Darius Slayton is a star too as well. Obviously he's an experienced vet. Guys like Bellinger, who is a really, really talented tight, and Theo and guys like Dulcich I think are really good players that can run. I played with him in Denver. I know what he's capable of. So many other guys. Jalin Hyatt, just I think that he's going to have a great year this year.

I'm excited about the people. I'm excited about the guys. They love football. They love the work. They want to be great. The guys I played with before in the past two, guys like LJ and just other people. I'm excited for the opportunity just to be able to play with these guys because of their ability.

Q. Then off the path a little bit, are you going to be a regular at MSG this spring, and do you know Brunson and any of those guys? We saw the big bro hug you got afternoon Game 1?

RUSSELL WILSON: I've gotten to know Brunson over the couple of few years. Just a talented player, man. I just have a ton of respect for his game.

Obviously you get to meet guys throughout. KAT, I know him too as well. Just other guys, Hart. There's a lot of guys I'm connected to in some form or fashion. Just my guy, J Shack, know him well too, as well.

I love sports. I love basketball. I've always been a guy that admires greatness and to be able to watch guys go to work every day. To see it up close and personal, it's always inspirational to be around and it and vice versa. I've gotten to know those guys over the years. Now being in New York, you'll get to know me even better, but just to be able



to watch me them up and close and be the stars they are.

That game the other night was special. The fourth quarter was really remarkable and how they came back. I think they went on a 21-0 run. What an electric crowd that was.

Q. I want to take you back a little bit. It is draft season. 2012 some scouts said that if you were three inches taller, you would be at the top of the draft, right? That wasn't the first time you heard that you were too short. Can you talk a little bit about what you remember about your draft process and about being a third-round pick and obviously being the best of that group that came out easily by far?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I think for me personally I just wanted the opportunity to play, an opportunity to shine and do what I was capable of doing. I was fortunate to be able to go to Seattle around some great, great players and great teammates and great coaching staff, great culture and atmosphere. I loved playing there. I was very blessed in that way to be surrounded by some guys that I'm still forever connected to.

Guys in my draft class too... guys like Bobby Wagner and Bobby Turbin and guys that I played going to college with, guys like J.R. Sweezy and many others. Guys I played against in college, like Bruce Irvin. We just had a competitive group, a radio rookie class. A guy like Jermaine Kearse, who was an undrafted free agent, and DeShawn Shead, and just many guys. We wanted to be great.

All of us see the vets. Obviously The Legion of Boom and different guys I was able to play with and everything else and Marshawn.

But I think the thing going back to the actual draft day and that whole process, I remember Pete Carroll calling and John Schneider, Paul Allen, and just the excitement and the joy to be able to play the game I love, to be able to have the opportunity to do it.

Listen, I think for me I've always believed that you have to work for everything. For me it was I was going to do everything I could to be the best that I could possibly be every day and have a Day 1 mentality, and I still have that today. That's what I remember most.

Q. Are you a draft guy? Do you know these quarterbacks in this draft? Did you follow them? Do you think that you are proof that if you're not the biggest guy, you can -- obviously you're not the biggest guy. You made it pretty well. Do you think some of these guys that people say, Oh, he's too short

-- maybe taller than you but too short, no, no, like, Just look at me, you can do it?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I think in any position it's about what you're capable of. I think the grit that you have, the mentality, the ability, the winning habits that you have, all those things are critical. The "it" factor, the ability to change the room, the ability to elevate others, to make them be their best no matter what position you play.

So for me I knew that God had given me a gift to lead. God had given me a gift to throw a ball a really long ways and drop in a bucket and throw it up to the moon and let it fall down, I guess, and just the certain things that I was able to do. So for me every day I'm just grateful of the opportunity that I've had and just to be able to inspire others.

There weren't many short quarterbacks in the National Football League, and there weren't many guys at the time that were dual threats at the time. There were guys like Cam, and there were guys like Colin Kaepernick and Tyrod and a couple of others really, but that was really it at the time.

So for me I just wanted to be able to change the narrative, and I think it's definitely changed along the way, and there's many guys before me that were able to do that for me and crack the door open too.

I was fortunate to be able to win the Super Bowl and I take pride in that to be able to win the Super Bowl, to be the first mobile guy like that, but -- shorter mobile guy, I should say. Then I think also, too, to be an African-American guy, the second black quarterback to ever win it was something significant.

I always have fun thinking about that. A lot of amazing memories, and we have to go make more.

Q. I know you're not that far removed from being a young quarterback, but over your experience what has been the biggest transition other than maybe learning the language, the ways of the team? What's the biggest transition, the hardest transition for a young quarterback to pick up?

RUSSELL WILSON: The hardest thing is the speed of the game and the talent of the players around you. I was able to play in the ACC with a really good, talented team and was playing against some of the world's best guys, like Luke Kuechly, and Hall of Fame player. I got to go against guys from Florida State and Clemson and just different all-time players.



But I think the thing is the game was super fast then, but you go to the National Football League, and it's even faster. You're getting everybody's best. You're getting the best, best player in the ACC. You're getting the best, best player in the SEC in college, and then you're getting the experience of the veterans that are the all-time greats from wherever they come from.

The speed of the game I think is the biggest thing for guys. The question is, can guys adjust, whether you play receiver or quarterback, running back, defense? Doesn't matter what position you play. Are you going to be able to adjust the game? I think I was fortunate because I got to go against some of the best players in the world every day, and that was always great to just have that competitive edge.

Q. Do you think it helps the young quarterback if he has played in multiple systems for multiple teams?

RUSSELL WILSON: In college or pros? What do you mean?

Q. Well, both. Well, college I'm specifically talking about.

RUSSELL WILSON: I mean, possibly. Just depends. I think it depends. I think it's all about the guy's aptitude to learn and all that. That affects everything, and the guy's ability to learn quickly on the move and adjust and to be put into successful positions, but also get the team out of tough positions as well.

I think the thing about quarterback is you have to have the ability to win games late and often. I think that's really the name of the game most of the time.

Q. I'm curious, how important do you view the process of going through the spring, getting those extra throws with guys? How important is that for you to get the chemistry built up, and do you feel like it's a short amount of time, and you're trying to crunch it in, or is it up until the start of the season?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, just like anything, those extra reps, the time under tension is everything. I think a lot of times you get into sports, and the guys that can spend more time going full speed, getting the reps, getting the time, you know, spending time in the offseason, spending time when there's nobody watching, those moments, those relationships, going to dinner, talking, chopping it up, that team bonding is everything. It just clicks on the field that way. I think it just makes everything smooth and transition well.

I think we're doing a great job of that. I think we're ahead of schedule on that, and we're really excited about the guys we have and who they are, their work ethic, their mentality, their character, their ability to love the game, what they want to do in the community. All the different things of the guys that we have on this team.

I think it's a great opportunity to really do well and for us all to just shine. We have to work for it, though. There's no magic pill besides the work. We have to put the work in. You've got to love it. You've got to have that attention to detail, and we're excited about that opportunity to do that.

Q. I know there's two sides of things that are going on right now. You guys are here. You're starting to prepare. You're starting to work out. The flip side, the team is also still juggling the draft. Have they talked to you about that? Do you know any of these prospects personally? Have they talked to you about any of them at all?

RUSSELL WILSON: No, we don't go into all that stuff all the time. I think the biggest thing is that, man, we're excited about having an opportunity to draft extremely got a talent and to help our football team get better every day. I think that's the best thing about the draft is you get young talent, and hopefully those guys can add to the team and just really be significant playmakers for us and to change the environment on the field every day. I think that's the thing from practice, the games and those level of players.

Sometimes they're early. Sometimes they're late. Sometimes you find them through the free agency. I've played with a lot of great guys that you may find in the fifth, sixth round that are game-changers and play the longest in their careers. They may play 15 years.

So hopefully we can find some dark horses too along the way.

Q. You kind of mentioned your time with The Legion of Boom a little bit. You got a young defense on the other side of your ball here. I'm just curious, how excited are you to kind of see them grow and develop? There's a lot of young guys, like Adebo, Holland, those guys. How excited are you to see this young group grow and watch it from the other side of the ball as they gel together a little bit?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think, first of all, every great defense starts with a defensive line. I think our defensive line is one of the best in the National Football League. The opportunity to add more guys and everything else, but just the ability for guys to get to the quarterback, that's the name of the game. Who can stop the run? Who can get to



the quarterback? I think that's the reality of it.

I think the linebackers that we have, the best in the game. Guys that can fly around, really get to stopping the ball carriers from getting plus yardage. I think our secondary and the additions that we've had too.

I was just joking with Holland in the locker room because we played and he knocked out, like, two balls back in the day, punched out two in the game. Receivers were catching them and just running down the field, and I think a running back maybe, and he knocked two out. He's a talented guy, Holland is.

I think he's made a lot of plays. We're excited to have him on the team. I think just the additions that we've had. I think also the guys we already have. I know Te Banks is a young, talented guy, and I think he's really looking forward to this year and rising up to the occasion in a great way.

It just takes a team effort. I think the great thing about this game, it takes all 11 on offense, takes all 11 on defense, takes all 11 on special teams. The most important part to the offseason is the bond and the relationships and how fast can we put all those pieces together in an effective way to be as effective as possible come Sundays.

I think we have an opportunity to do that. I think Coach Daboll is a tremendous leader, tremendous communicator. He was great in the team meeting today. He's very inspirational, very clear message on what we want to do and how we want to get there. So excited about the opportunity to play and just do what we love to do.

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