

# New York Giants Media Conference

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New York, New York, USA

## Coach John Harbaugh

Press Conference



JOE SCHOEN: Good afternoon, everybody. This is obviously an exciting time for the New York Giants as we're set to introduce our next head football coach. Before I get started, I'd like to thank ownership, John Mara, and the entire Mara family, Steve Tisch and the Tisch family, Julia Koch and her family, along with the entire football operation for your commitment and your collaboration throughout this process.

When we set out, we were looking for a proven winner and an elite leader, and we're fortunate we were able to find both. John Harbaugh has amassed 193 career victories, 13 playoff wins, and a Super Bowl championship. John has built a foundation of culture, player development and toughness throughout each of his programs that he's been a part of. He's a proven winner, and when we set out to do this, we knew that John was going to be the perfect person for the New York Giants.

When we did our research, what continually came up was John's respect that the players had for him and the ability to develop young men.

With that being said, I would like to introduce to you the next head football coach of the New York Giants, John Harbaugh. (Applause.)

JOHN HARBAUGH: Thanks. Appreciate that very much. What an honor. What an exciting moment, walking in here. They say New York is a different kind of place, and I would say that's probably true. This is pretty amazing here. This is pretty incredible. To see those players back there, see those guys smiling and ready to go to work, that gets me fired up, too. To everybody, just thank you very much. Thanks for being here.

It's a profound honor to be entrusted with the responsibility of coaching the New York Football Giants. My dad taught me that they were the New York Football Giants. They weren't just the Giants or the New York Giants, they were the New York Football Giants - right, Dad? - all the way back, one of the most iconic franchises in all of sports. I

wanted this job.

I think I told you that, Mr. Mara, I wanted this job. To be on the biggest stage in the biggest sport. I know the challenges. I understand the expectations. I know the fans are hungry for a winner. We're here with one mission:

To become, to earn the right to be called the world champions in New York. That's what we plan to do. (Applause.)

I can introduce my wife, Ingrid. Say hi, my wife Ingrid. Our daughter, Alison, she couldn't be here. She's at law school trying to survive. She couldn't make it. She had class today. My mom and dad, Jack and Jackie, are here. Thanks for being here, Mom and Dad. Mom and Dad taught us to attack this day with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind, right? We learned that. That's what we're going to do every single day.

Jim and Joani, hey, out there. Jim, we're not in the AFC, Jim, you can breathe easy.

Thank you to the Mara and the Tisch families, who I had a chance to meet today. It's been incredible to get to know everybody better. Always had tremendous respect for these two families, starting with John Mara at the owners' meetings and all the competition committee meetings, we'd have all these conversations, and it goes way back.

I thank them for their confidence and their partnership in this quest to build up our football team, everyone involved, starting with John, Steve, Julia Koch, who I had a chance to meet today and talk to a little bit more. Chris Mara was a big part of this. Joe Schoen, so many conversations, Joe, thanks. Just great getting to know you and the great football man that you are. Everybody in the organization has just been great.

To the Ravens, I'd like to extend a profound thank you to Steve and Ozzie for the opportunity, for the guidance that they provided every single day. To all the players and coaches who have been unrelenting brothers all along the way through the years. We did great things. Thanks, guys.



But now as we begin a new chapter in New York, our focus is simple: It starts with building a team that is physical and tough, that's capable of overwhelming their opponent from beginning to end, and especially at the end, that understands how to finish, that is smart and disciplined, that plays the game the way it should be played, and that everybody watching it, including those playing it, would be proud of.

We're going to work together. We have great and talented people to accomplish a shared mission. There will be a relentless commitment to this organization, to this city and the fans to do things the right way every single day. Nothing will be taken for granted.

It will always, always be all about the team. The team, the team, the team. Thanks, Dad, for that. It'll always be about that. Now it's time to go to work.

With that, what questions do you have?

**Q. Two questions: After 18 years of being a head coach, did you consider taking time off before getting back into the fire? And as you look at this roster, can you tell the fans that they're ready to go to the next level and get to the playoffs?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Yeah, thanks. As far as taking some time off, I figured I didn't have enough time to take time off. There's no time for that. Just couldn't wait to get back to work. That was never a question really. Ingrid and I talked about it. Ingrid is ready to go, too. We're fired up, and it had to be the right opportunity.

This was kind of the obvious one from the beginning. This was the one, like I said, I wanted, and I wanted it because of that very thing you just talked about. We have an opportunity to go win. I like these players, man. I had a chance to watch tape. I like the way they play. I like their style. I like how physical and how tough they are, and I know they want to be successful and they want to go to work.

Absolutely we can do that, and it's our plan to do that. The plan is to win every game. One game at a time, you go into every game planning to win that game. That's our expectation. We will be expecting to do that. But we've got to earn the right to expect to do that by how we go to work and prepare and what kind of a team we make ourselves into.

**Q. How much of a role did Jaxson Dart play in your desirability for this job, and what do you believe he's capable of long-term?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Right, well, that's a great question because the quarterback is kind of important. That's kind of a big deal. I'm excited about Jaxson Dart. I've seen your backup quarterback, too, Jameis, up close and personal two years ago. I saw him complete a bunch of passes. I know, there you go. I saw you. You remember that game, right? It was a great game. For you. (Laughter.)

It starts with the quarterback for sure. The quarterback has got to -- you build your team around your quarterback. You build your team around your players and what they do well. I like the way he plays. I like his talent, skill set, all the things he's accomplished, but more than that, I like who he is and what he's about. To me, he's about football.

This young guy loves football. He wants to talk football all the time. That's kind of what I like doing, too. So I think we're going to have a lot of great conversations. I can't wait to get started with him.

**Q. Through the process you had a chance to spend a lot of time and talk to Joe Schoen a lot, the guy who introduced you here. What was it about your interactions with him that led you to believe there was going to be great collaboration and cooperation here?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: No question. Probably the conversations themselves is what led me to believe there would be great collaboration. Obviously, you get to know Joe, and we started talking ball, and you see he's a football man. This is a guy that lives and breathes football. His knowledge is deep. He knows the league. He knows the coaches in the league. He knows the players in the league. Probably knows all the scouts in the league, too, I'll bet.

He was impressive to me, and it was just really a joy to talk football and really dig into some of the plans that we might have going forward to see what we can build here.

I was impressed. Very impressed.

**Q. Several days before you were hired, President Trump put out a post advocating for you to become the next head coach of the Giants. How does it feel knowing the President of the United States has endorsed you for the job you're about to undertake?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: It feels really great, and I'll tell you, I also noticed on that post that he said, and John, take the job. So I thought that John Mara might have had something to do with it, I don't know. But it's cool, and it's sports. It's sports. Everybody is excited. Everybody follows it. At every level, people follow football, they follow

the Giants, they follow the National Football League. Like we said, it's the biggest sport.

This is the most iconic franchise in the biggest sport, so here we are.

**Q. What are you looking for in your coordinators and your position coaches, and when will those interviews start, including anybody who is retained on staff?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Right. Well, we'll start tomorrow with the interviews. Obviously great coaches, I believe, on this staff that we're looking forward to talking to. We're talking to people all across the league, talking to people in Baltimore, obviously, too. We're going to try to very best -- we will build the very best coaching staff that we can. I'll tell you it'll be a great coaching staff.

But my dad always said it starts with teachers. Coaches are teachers first, the ability to teach, the ability to take a vision that's well-organized, a structure that's put together in a really good way that the players can play fast, play around their skill set.

You've got to create something like that and then present it to the guys and train it in a way that the guys can get out there and play with a lot of confidence and just cut it loose and play fast.

That's what we're going to try to do and try to bring a bunch of coaches in that are capable of building that. We're going to do that.

**Q. How do you build a winning culture, and how long will it take for this team to win?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: You know, the second part is impossible to say, but I'm planning on day one. That's what we'll be shooting for. That's what we'll be working for, and I fully expect it to happen.

You build anything together, you build it from the inside out. It's going to be a reflection. Culture is kind of a crazy word. What does it really mean? It's a world view, it's a shared understanding, it's a vision, it's everybody being on the same page, it's talking the same language, all these kind of things, same type of values, same type of beliefs. Is that like a social studies class we're talking here?

So what is it in football? It's a bunch of guys that see the game the same way. It's a bunch of guys that want to play the game together the same way. It's a relentless brotherhood, having each other's back, being unwilling to give up because that guy next to you is unwilling to give up. All these things that these guys believe in. We'll

decide what the culture looks like together, every single day by what we do together, and that's how you build it, together.

**Q. One of your early mentors was Andy Reid, who has gone on to have a pretty successful second act in his career. What were some of the tips or advice he gave to you about changing from one organization to another and finding that success?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Andy is a man of few words, and his four words to me were: Change can be good. That's what he said, change can be good. He was excited. He's fired up for us. He's a good friend. Yeah, we'll try to do -- how about we do this: How about we deal with that right now. We'll sign up for that deal right now, what he did in Kansas City. Let's do that. (Applause.)

**Q. You mentioned coming in here that New York feels different and is different. You won everything in Baltimore, won a Super Bowl. What is your sense of New York and what it's going to be like for you and possibly winning here in New York?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Well, the skyline is a lot different. I noticed that right away.

You know, no two places are ever the same. No two people are the same. Obviously you meet people in places and circumstances where you find them, so that's what we're going to do. We're going to take every one of those things we need head on and do the best we can with it every single day.

You say you do the best you can with every single day, that means a lot when you really think about what that means. Are we really doing our best? Are we really putting everything we have into it for this day? Are we really attacking the day with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind, another level? Is that possible? Is that something that we can accomplish?

Can we have the best meeting and the best practice in the history of the National Football League? Can we? We can if we decide to, right, guys? We can if we decide to.

And when you do that day by day, you build something, you take it onto the field, and you let the chips fly, and you go play some ball.

**Q. Just curious, obviously 18 years ago you had a vision, and 18 years later I'm sure you have that same vision, but I'm curious from what you learned, do you come here knowing that the path can be different, and how much of that vision has changed through the**



## **years of what you want to do and how you build a champion?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Well, the thing that -- one of the things, you learn a lot, and one of the things is this: There are principles, right, and the principles of the vision you're talking about, that's that word, are written in stone, and they're football principles. They're self-evident truths. They aren't ever going to change.

Those are things you carry with you through 18 years or 42 years or whatever it is. You carry those principles with you. You learn what they are, and they're just non-compromised. They can't be. They have to happen.

The methods? Those things are like drawn in the dirt. You're drawing up a play, come on, guys, here's what we're going to do, you draw it in the dirt. You've got to keep those things moving, play calls, defensive schemes, blitz patterns, how you lift weights, how you train, whatever, how you practice. Practices have changed a lot over the years. They've changed a ton.

So all those things are all going to change as we go. So all those things in 18 years and 40 some years, they've all evolved and changed and grown, and they will continue to change every single day. Understand those two things, principles and methods, you're going to try to merge them the best you can to try to win the next game, keep it simple, try to win the next game, and that's what we'll try to do.

## **Q. What qualities do you prioritize in the players that you acquire and that will play for you for the New York Giants?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Well, there's a lot of qualities that go into it. Joe has got lists and lists of qualities for all different positions and all that that you'd be looking for.

To me, the number one thing is we have to have guys that love football. You just have to. It's football. What are we here for? What do we do? What is this building for? It's for football. This is a football team.

We need guys that love everything about football. They love the games. They love the practices. They love the weightlifting. They love the meetings. They love the dining hall. They love every part of football.

If you love football, guys, if you love football, you're going to want to be here. You're going to want to drive in that parking lot every single day. You're going to want to walk through those doors, you're going to want to walk up in those halls, you're going to want to get in front of that tape

and watch tape every single day because you're going to be around a bunch of guys that love what you love.

They love football, because that's what we're going to be doing, football, all the time, every day. If there's guys around that don't love football, Joe, we're probably going to let those guys play somewhere else because if you don't love football, you're not going to love it here because we'll be doing football. That's the plan.

## **Q. Trying to sustain winning over the long-term is probably the hardest thing to do in a league built on parity. Is there a common thread that ran through your 18 years in Baltimore, whether it was physicality or something else, that you think you could apply here, that's sort of mandatory to have the same kind of success?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Well, we'll see. To me, it goes back to every single day. You just never know what the next day is going to bring. You've got to understand that it's really not about what you face. Sometimes the triumphs are much more dangerous than the trials. Sometimes the good times are the things that you've got to be more wary of than the tough times.

We've got to do a great job of handling all the circumstances in the best possible way to keep it simple and keep in mind what's important. It's even as much as I'm sure all the guys love all the media. They love all you guys being around every single day - it's really great - but we've got to keep it about football.

So we want to do our jobs and be respectful of all the opportunities that come with that. But really what it boils down to is let's attack this day with an enthusiasm, and let's get ready for the next challenge that's in front of us, whether it's OTA practice or we have squat day tomorrow. Got to be great. Got to have a great squat day. Whatever it might be, we've got to be ready to roll.

I think that's probably the thread that runs through those 18 years, just kind of taking that mindset every day and everybody believing in it, and then it's how you play. When that tape comes on, that tape is going to last forever, and you're going to want to be proud of what you see.

So you've got to make a decision and a choice beforehand, how am I going to play, what's that tape going to look like. It's not about whether you make the play -- well, it is whether you win or lose, ultimately whether you make the play or don't make the play.

We know that because it's a player's game, but what you can decide on is how are you going to play, how hard am I

going to play, how physical am I going to play, how much am I going to be locked into my assignment to try to do things the right way, my footwork, my technique, try to win my battle. Am I wanting to finish the play? Am I going to run all the way to the ball and then arrive there with a real bad attitude and make a statement when I get there? Am I willing to do that every single play?

I'll have to decide, oh, maybe he'll make the tackle, I don't have to run over there. No, no. You put your foot in the ground and you start running. That's what great defenses do. That's it. Those two things. If you do that, then you have a chance. Then you have a chance and you go let the chips fly.

**Q. You mentioned good conversations with Joe during this process. What's it like to sort of get to know and work with a new person after 18 years somewhere else, and what do you expect that relationship to be like on day-to-day basis?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Yeah, I expect it to be phenomenally great. I think it's going to be incredible, I really do. I already know because we had a chance to start talking to each other. You work with new people all the time. But Joe has been around the National Football League for years and years. He's got a tremendous amount of experience. I'm going to be leaning on him, and he's going to be leaning on me. We're going to be leaning on everybody around us.

It's not just us. It's a whole organization. We're going up the chain. We've got incredible, incredible experience all the way up to the very top here, in different areas. And John Mara, nobody knows more about that league.

So we'll be working. Whatever it might be, it's Xs and Os, it's strategic planning, it's the draft, it's free agency, it's contracts. People all through the building that are just incredibly talented people, so the idea is let's work together. Let's work together every single day and let's build something great.

**Q. I'm curious when you did a lot of research and background on the roster before you got here the last few weeks, what did you see when you looked at the roster?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: I see a lot of really good players when I look at the roster. Well, not the roster so much as the tape. That's where you look, you look at the tape. That's what shows you, right, guys? It shows you. It's on the tape.

I look at the tape and I see a lot of good football players,

and not just me, my dad. He calls me up about three days into this process and he goes, You watch the Giants? I'm like, Yeah, I watched them. He's like, You see the way they come off the ball on offense, you see the offensive line, you see the offense, see those guys, see that quarterback, you see that defense, see that front, you see those guys flying around back there? I'm like, Yeah, I saw it.

So when my dad told me, I knew it was true. We have a chance. We have a chance.

**Q. A big change with your arrival is having the head coach report directly to ownership. Why was that something that was important to you?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: To me it's really not that important in the big picture, in the big scheme of things. I think it's kind of overblown just a little bit in terms of how it works.

But the main thing is that it works and that we work together. That's what matters. That's kind of what I was used to, and it felt like a good way to kind of start off. I think Mr. Mara was happy about that. It seemed like it made sense. I'm just happy, but I don't think it really matters. I think we're all going to work together.

I promise you, we all report to the boss, right? And the boss is ownership. John Mara is running football operations here, and he's running it, and I'm glad he is. That's also all the families and everybody involved. That's what this league -- that's where it starts, and we respect that, right, Joe, and we want our bosses to be happy. We want them to be smiling and happy. We want them to know we're trying to do things the right way every single day, and that's what matters.

All the other stuff is just -- that's a great question. It means everything. I have the most amazing wife and the most incredible daughter, and it's just the three of us. Three peas. The three peas in a pod. That's what we call ourselves.

It's just incredible. We've been together for a long, long time. This profession is crazy. I mean, you live a lifetime in a season in the National Football League. The things that you go through, the ups and the downs and the emotional roller coaster and the conversations and challenges. These players can tell you, everybody that works here can tell you that.

It's that, and then it's not just you, it's your family. Your wife is with you every step of the way, and more, because she'll tell me: You're not out there. You're not out there hearing it every single day. You get to go to your office,

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

and you don't have to listen to anything.

You've said that to me. She's out there, she's fighting. She's out there fending them off. So I appreciate that. I've got a fighter for a wife, and you better.

It's been what it is, and it's been great because it just -- because of who we are together. I'm very proud of that, very happy with that.

**Q. The NFL is a league where we see teams go worst to first all the time, plenty of evidence this year. Is there a similar characteristic you see among those teams that manage to have those big turnarounds from one year to the next, and what do you see here that indicates that?**

JOHN HARBAUGH: Well, that's a great question. It's probably something that probably maybe I should take a look at. We'll do some kind of study. We've got all these analytics guys so we'll have them do a study on that.

But to me, I see the teams that play really good, that's what I see. And the teams that play really good have a lot of common denominators, and we've been talking about those things throughout the course of this press conference. That's what we're going to be chasing.

It's going to be about how we play. It's going to be about us every single day just becoming as good as we can be. If we're going to be in coverage, we need to be square, our guys need to be where they're supposed to be, we need to be doing things the right way. Whatever it is, let's do it the right way and see how good we can get.

Thank you very much. It's an honor. Thanks a lot.

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