

# New York Giants Media Conference

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## Joe Schoen

### Draft Press Conference

JOE SCHOEN: I know the hot topic, or some of the hot topic other than the draft will be Dexter. Just a quick update on that for you guys. We've had good conversations with his representatives throughout the last five or six days, Coach, Dawn, myself, we've all been in communication, trying to find some resolution.

I'll echo what Coach said last week. We'd like for Dexter to be here, and at some point we'll come to a resolution here, whatever that may be. We'll see.

But conversations have been really good. They've been productive. Again, we'll see what happens here down the road.

I'm not going to say any more about it after that, but that's the update. That's really all there is. With that being said, I'll open it up for any questions.

**Q. Do you look at the first round of the draft as a deadline to get something done with Dex because if you were going to grant his request you would want something for this year's team, sew does that act as an unofficial deadline?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I'm not going to get into if there's deadline or not. He's under contract for two more years. We're not going to put any deadlines on things. Right now, productive conversations, and we'll see where it goes.

**Q. Are you listening to offers when teams call about him or are you trying to figure out some way to keep him here?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I'm always going to pick up the phone, so if a team calls -- maybe not to the effect that Coach said last week, that everybody is tradeable, but that is my job as a general manager, if teams call you take into account.

It's a case-by-case basis and what the compensation may be. That's my job, to take into consideration what that



looks like, what the compensation looks like, who the player is, how that affects the roster, and then try to make the best decision off of that.

**Q. How does that impact -- how has this trade request impacted the way you're approaching the draft?**

JOE SCHOEN: It really hasn't. It really hasn't. We're going to continue to go through our process. The scouts left yesterday, so they've been here for roughly 14 days, so now we're putting the final touches on the board. But it really hasn't affected how we're approaching the draft.

**Q. There's always that expression, best available player, and that we'll look for that as a staff. Are you looking for that, or are you looking for ways that you need things? Are you addressing needs? How do you kind of balance that?**

JOE SCHOEN: Ideally, they line up, and the best available player is also a position of need. But I would say last year if you look at what we did with Abdul, we had K'Von and we had burns here and we still took Abdul. We were really strong at outside backer when we added Abdul to the roster.

Similar, we're going through, we're going to stack the board, and the best player available is the direction we'll go.

**Q. The sheer volume of players that entered the draft, how do you view draft picks in terms of just the collecting of talent and bringing it to your roster?**

JOE SCHOEN: In terms of how many picks we have or just having more picks overall or --

**Q. Just having picks overall. You don't treat one different than the other?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, you get more swings. Again, the more swings, the better chances of hitting. It also allows you to build depth at different parts of the draft. You'd like for them all to become starters, but there are certain parts of the draft where you're looking for either special teams or



depth pieces if somebody gets injured.

I look at all those as it's an avenue for us to upgrade the roster at different levels throughout the draft, and ideally when you go into it, you want to find someone that's going to be able to help you in the short term and the long-term ideally.

**Q. As the evaluator, when do you move off of your initial evaluation, seeing that a player comes out here and played maybe a year or two? When does that move off the original evaluation you had as a prospect?**

JOE SCHOEN: You're saying if they come to the league and they're better or worse than what we -- is it a guy we drafted or a guy in the league or just in general? It's predicated on how the player plays. We talk about that sometimes in our meetings.

Like somebody brought up a guy the other day, oh, this guy reminds me of player X. Well, depends, if we polled this room, half this room may not like player X, so in my mind that's a negative, but this half of the room it's a positive. You've got to be careful sometimes when you compare players to different players.

What you really want to worry about is the players that you pick, not the ones that you didn't pick. You really want to hit on the ones that you pick, and that's really what's most important.

**Q. How unique is this draft at the top? There seems to be a lot of non-premium positions compared to the past, and how much does that change or maybe slightly alter the approach?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yes, this draft -- exactly. You're dead on with what you said there in terms of maybe it's not the surplus position or the higher paying positions when you get into free agency, or outside the building maybe the best players in this draft.

Again, goes back to where we are roster-wise, and being in a position to take the best player available regardless of position. Yeah, in a perfect world, when you look at the fifth pick and then you slot in whatever position you want, like, what that player is going to make it the fifth pick, where does that slot him in in APY right off the bat?

Well, it's the fifth pick and it's a corner. Where is that? Fifth pick and a receiver. Okay, he's 40th, fifth pick and a running back, maybe it's 11. First pick and a tackle maybe it's -- you know what I mean? You start going through it.

You would like to have, again, those positions outside the building that you're going to pay a lot of money to get that surplus value.

But it just may not be the case this year, which is fine. We're going to evaluate every position, every player, and obviously do what's best for us.

**Q. Running back, though, would put it around 10th, I think, somewhere in that range --**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah.

**Q. How much would that affect your thought process on taking a player at that position?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we're going to take the best player available and we're not going to rule any of those out. But your point in the original question, that's part of our thought process when we go through the evaluation as you're building the team. You do go through those scenarios.

**Q. Have you got a sense that from the owners meetings and talking to people, there will be more of this later on, that more teams will want to go down or up? Do you get a sense that it's going to be, as you said, this is not a normal draft, there's one quarterback, or are more teams going to want to go down and are there enough teams to want to go up?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, it depends. We always think -- and everybody sees the board -- their board looks just like ours, you assume, the way you're looking at it, at some point maybe there's a Mendoza line where there's a drop-off and the player at 8 may be the same type of player you can get at 18, so maybe there's not a big difference in those.

At some point, some teams may want to move back because of that, but at the same time they may want to get into that top 8 or 10 or 11 or whatever it is for that particular team, may want to get inside of that to get potentially a better player.

We've gotten a couple calls of teams sniffing around about potentially coming up, and again, we'll just have to wait and see who's there when we pick. I don't really foresee us moving back before next Thursday night.

**Q. You don't have a third-round pick; there's a good reason why. But does the quest for more picks -- you always want more picks. Is the quest for more picks really strong in you this year if it's possible to do that?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would always like more picks, but it would be situational. We're not going to walk away from

an impact player or a good player that we're convicted on that we like to pick up an extra pick or a couple extra picks.

Case-by-case basis; if you move back three or four spots and there's five guys you like and you can get an extra pick, absolutely.

If it's a guy you're convicted on and maybe there's a big drop-off from -- let's say it's a corner and there's a drop-off maybe two rounds to the next corner, you maybe don't roll the dice in those situations and you take the player so you don't miss out.

Certainly we'd like more picks, but don't want to walk away from good players, either.

**Q. You've talked about in the past the process by which you set up possible trade percentages, first round, second round. What about the pressure involved when you're on that phone? What confidence do you have in your process that allows you to do that and to know you only have a limited time and you've got to kind of pull that trigger? You've moved up, you've moved back. I think it's five trades on draft day since you took over as general manager. What is that like? What is that process like?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, have a really good team in there between Brandon Brown, Tim McDonald, Dennis Hickey. They have the trade calculators -- Dawn will be in there this year with the trade calculator assisting with that.

Those guys are always -- and Dawn will be thinking of trades. If teams call, I'll say it out loud, they'll go through the different charts, does it make sense, should we ask for more.

We'll have conversations while we're on the clock going through some of those different scenarios, and then we'll be able to make a decision. It's easier in the first round a lot of times because the rounds are -- you get a longer time to make the pick, and then you're having these strategy meetings leading up to that. Second and third rounds it happens a little bit more rapid.

Again, just having a really good group of people around me that can help take the information and get it in front of me as quickly as possible so we can make the best decision.

**Q. Is there pressure involved for you to kind of pull that trigger in that situation, just personally?**

JOE SCHOEN: To make --

**Q. To make the deal. You have the final call in that situation, and you've done it, like I said, I think it's five**

**or six times on draft night.**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, for example, last year with Jaxson, that was something -- we actually had a deal in place with another team until they actually accept it when you're on the clock that ended up falling through. We kind of had trade parameters in place. We knew what the value was, and we pulled the trigger on that to move up to get Jaxson.

But a lot of the thought process and the planning and strategy going into that had been done beforehand. It's almost like you play the game before the game, especially in the first and second -- going into that early pick in the second round. You've got all day. For the first-round pick we've had months to prepare for, so we'll be ready.

**Q. Based on what you guys do with the fifth pick, how many different directions do you have for that second-round pick of where you guys could go?**

JOE SCHOEN: We could get back up into one if -- this was probably a week ago we looked at it. We could get back into one but not very far. We don't have a third. If we want to go back into one it might be a little bit more difficult, but it's not out of the question. We could do it, but we'd have to give up some picks.

Could certainly go back. Typically top of the second, top of the fourth where we are on Saturday, you'll get people, they sit around all night and they look at the board and there's somebody they have to have, and you can typically move back from the early parts of those rounds in day two and day four and you've got a pretty good chance of doing that.

**Q. Based on what you do at No. 5, how many different directions could you go with filling another need there?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we've set it up -- for those of you who have been here, so we can go play a game on Thursday. Are we as good as we want to be? Can we still add to? Certainly.

I know it was reported we had DJ Reader in here yesterday. We've had people come in on visits. There's still players on the street that were free agents this year that are available.

Again, just try not to back yourself in a corner where it's a need. That's where mistakes can be made. Maybe the guy is really a third round player and you take him in the second because that's the last one left and that sets the expectation of the level the player is supposed to be playing at.

To the best of our ability just try not to back ourselves into a corner where we have to draft for need.

**Q. Based on your running back situation, would you consider a 20-year old running back who combines speed, power and vision at No. 5?**

JOE SCHOEN: We like our running back room now. Scat had a really good rookie year; Tyrone Tracy has been a 1,000 yard all purpose guy the last two years; Devin is back; Turbo, Eric Gray coming off the injuries. We'll see what happens on draft night. But like the room the way it's constructed right now.

**Q. To use a premium pick on a running back, would that be saying that it was a mistake two years ago to devalue the running back position, or what's changed to the extent it would be worth using a valuable asset on it?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would say we're in a different place. We have a quarterback on a rookie deal. At that time our offensive line was different. We didn't have Jermaine Eluemunor, we didn't have Jon Runyan, we didn't have Brian Burns, we didn't have Malik Nabers, so the roster is different, and there's a time and a place to -- in terms of the roster construction.

I like where we are right now from the young nucleus, and that was a little part of the thought process is, hey, we need to build this thing and start it up front. Last year we were fifth in the league in rushing. We were fifth in the league in rushing a year ago.

I think mission accomplished. We upgraded the offensive line and improved the run game. I thought we had to start by doing that up front, and we did that.

Again, we're going to look for the best player regardless of position, and I'm excited about where the roster is right now based on what we did in free agency. The prospects of what we can get here a week from now. Coach Harbaugh, the new staff, some of the new leadership in the building. I like the trajectory we're on.

**Q. When you have a player like Jeremiyah Love, do you look at him as a straight running back or do you look at him as an offensive weapon? How do you look at a player like that that has a skill set like that?**

JOE SCHOEN: He's an offensive weapon. He's not just a running back. He can play on 3rd down. You can split him out. He can catch the ball. Certainly an offensive weapon.

**Q. You talk about best player available, but just given how much Harbaugh has talked about stopping the run as a priority, how tempting is it to look at the defensive guys and say, hey, a player like maybe Styles or Downs or someone like that could be a potential at 5 just to say, hey, we want to continue to upgrade the defense a little bit more?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, and that wouldn't be out of the question. Those are really good football players. Those are the conversations we're having right now. Hey, we like all these guys but you've got to pick up and a couple of them are going to be there. We're working on stacking that right now. But you speak of Sonny Styles and Caleb Downs, talk about talented defense; we watched a lot of Ohio State defensive film the last couple of months.

A lot of good football players from top to bottom on that defense. Those are two of the key players on that defense that we looked at. Certainly guys that we've talked a lot about and think very highly of.

**Q. You spent four years with one head coach and kind of trying to figure out where your philosophy is with his and trying to get him the players. This is a new head coach, obviously a big profile head coach. How has that gone, and could your six players or seven players that you draft be more of a reflection on what his vision is for what the roster is because you want to get him the players that he can do well with?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, the best way for this to work, regardless of the organization of all 32, is there be a collaborative effort and be all on the same page. The early returns on that, it's been great. We've had a lot of fun. He's passionate.

Coach Harbaugh is passionate about the draft. I'm passionate about the draft. My staff is passionate about it. Just the ongoing football conversations, sitting in the film room with him, whether it's walking through the board or watching the film. It's been a lot of fun. It's been a lot of fun.

We spend a lot of time together working through not just first rounders, second rounders. He's passionate about it. He knows about fourth and fifth rounders. He's sending me text messages asking me about maybe undrafted free agents or he saw an article or an agent might have texted him. He's really passionate about the draft, and it's been a lot of fun being in these meetings and watching film with him.

It's going to be a collaborative effort. We're going to be on the same page. We're working towards that. By next

Thursday when we get to the first round, we'll all be on the same page.

**Q. Do you find your vision for what a player is and his is similar, because sometimes it's not. Sometimes it's like, I want this and that's not your priority.**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, it's pretty simple. We joke around, just good football players. Let's not overcomplicate it, and we joke with that all the time. Just take good football players. Philosophically we're aligned on that.

**Q. Do you need to do more at the guard position? Van Roten is still on the street, right?**

JOE SCHOEN: Correct.

**Q. Do you need to do more?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, we'll see. Again, we've still got the draft. There's people on the street. Greg Van Roten as you mentioned is still on the street.

One of the cool things about having a new coach is we get to be on the field next week, so we'll get to see some of the new guys move around, which will be exciting. Not just the offensive line, we're always going to be looking to upgrade the O-line, D-line, every position really. Like I said, we brought some guys in earlier this week, and we'll continue to do so.

But again, Daniel has started multiple games for the Ravens over the last couple years. Evan has started games, Stingley started games. We've got placeholders in there, guys that have done it and will compete. Ezeudu will get an opportunity inside at guard.

We will also continue to look outside the building as well as I inside getting an opportunity at guard. But we'll also continue to look outside the building as well as the draft coming up.

**Q. When you look at this draft in general, where do you see the strengths in the middle rounds positionally, day two into maybe early day three?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, I would say the outside backers. There's some depth there at the outside backers. I would say wide receiver is a position of depth, and then the corner position, I think, in those mid rounds. Those guys typically get pushed up. I think you'll see some guys go from those positions there.

**Q. You've talked about in the past the idea of when you're setting your board and then maybe there's a**

**bump for need or positional value, that kind of thing. Have you kept your philosophy on how you put together the board with your team with the new coaching staff and new head coach and John's input?**

JOE SCHOEN: Yeah, yeah, we're going through that stuff now. He's asking questions because it's the first time. He's done something one way for 18 years, so we've had constant communication throughout the process when I was, okay, here's how our meetings go, because there's also I need to get to where I need to get to, so here's my process to get me where I need to get to draft day. What do you need to get where you need to get to, where you're comfortable, and we kind of merge the calendars to get us to where we need to be next Thursday.

Philosophically, there's really not much difference from what they did in Baltimore and how -- our process to get to draft day here.

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