

# Jacksonville Jaguars

## Media Conference

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Jacksonville, Florida, USA

**James Gladstone**

**Liam Coen**

Draft Day Press Conference



JAMES GLADSTONE: Obviously we have a couple of spots open that we'll look to fill here in the near future, but certainly appreciate such a collaborative effort from so many different people, from so many different departments to bring this to life, to make it felt like we were making the best decisions for the organization moving forward and really looking forward to what comes next and seeing the group of rookies get out on the grass with their teammates and begin making an impact here in Jacksonville.

**Q. Tuten was one of the guys you wanted to be a priority. He came in during the interview process. Tim mentioned him. How many of those guys that you maybe mentioned as priority Day 3 guys during the interview process did you end up landing?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: That's a good question. If memory serves me correct, maybe two. Maybe three. Yeah, so with that, those are things that you're projecting and aren't always accurate. That's pre-combine, which typically testing is going to play a major part in where a player ends up getting selected.

I must say once Tuten ran that 40, I don't know that I would have guessed that he would be available on Day 3, but nonetheless, he found himself there taken off pretty quickly at 104. So we were jacked to be able to be in that position to prioritize him because at the end of the day we want to level up the competition across the entirety of the roster, and running back is a spot that we're going to lean on.

As Liam can probably allude to, it's so rarely just a one-person spot. It's going to take a collective effort, just like the draft did. We look forward to the group as a whole in addition to LeQuint coming in and making this thing as rounded as it possibly can be.

**Q. Who were the other two?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: That's a good question. Jack Kiser

there and Monheim, center.

**Q. James, most NFL teams and GMs would probably say, as much as you like to, you can't get to everything in your NFL Draft.**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I know where you are going.

**Q. Why was that area not able to be addressed, and will it be when you announce whoever your undrafted free agents are?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, I think short answer to that is the board always falls certain ways. You're not going to reach because of what might be a perceived need. So you are always going to take the players that you feel like are going to put the team in the best interest moving forward. You don't want to ever sort of lean heavily into just one idea of best player available and need. It's some version of balanced dynamic that comes with that.

So I do think you'll see us make some moves here in the near future that will, in fact, address that. Obviously our undrafted college free agents haven't been announced, but those positions were certainly close to filled there, and we'll look towards the pro free agent landscape as well.

**Q. A quick follow-up. I know you haven't announced it, but Memphis announced on Twitter that you were signing Seth Henigan at quarterback. Can you at least talk about him, because very highly productive player.**

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, we've agreed to terms, and Liam can probably speak to it a little bit more than I can. He poured into that stuff rather recently. Obviously with us making that move, it's certainly somebody that we would like to develop.

LIAM COEN: A coach's kid, right? He's got a ton of production. Does have a natural stroke and seems like he's a great kid. He's just trying to get better and better. We felt like it was a good add for us at the time.

**Q. I think in your opening press conference you said, How do we make this offense of Trevor Lawrence's as**



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**dynamic and as explosive as possible? Taking in free agency and now through the draft, do you feel you got there or have gotten there, and how much further do you think maybe you can go?**

LIAM COEN: Yeah, I think we've definitely addressed the ability to strike from a distance. I think that that's something that we just struggled to do a little bit in Tampa where you ended up having to go 10, 12 play drives a lot. It was efficient, right, but ultimately you're looking to be as explosive as you can in both the run and the pass.

I think that was definitely addressed in both pro free agency and the college draft landscape. Don't think we have to add any more at this point.

**Q. James, it seemed like a lot of these players -- or actually all of them except for Travis went to the Senior Bowl. Just how much of did that play a role? Why did it seem like that factored in? Was it just coincidence? Can you talk about all the experience these guys come with?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: That added exposure from the All-Star circuit, it's certainly something we leverage, getting to see them throughout the week of practices and then in the game setting. So many of the guys that are willing to do more than what the norm might be, right? Many are tapping out before they ever get to the game.

To see somebody like Jack Kiser opt in to playing a position like safety when he is, in fact, an inside linebacker, when that could make him look worse than he would like, but was productive in that setting.

I think back to Braden Fiske. One of the things that really resonated for us was when during the game, the Senior Bowl, he said, you know what, I'm going to go ahead and play defense on both sides. I'm going to fill the gap because there have been too many opt-outs.

These are guys that love the game of football regardless of if it might put them in a compromising position in the eyes of evaluators and decision makers by playing too many snaps or playing out of position, et cetera. These guys love ball, and that's what we're hunting up.

**Q. It seemed like a lot of these guys have a lot of experience obviously. They played a lot of snaps. Was that something you guys wanted? Did you need them to have played a good bit of football?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I think it's something we lean into. I don't know that it's exactly what we're prioritizing, but the fact that you can look back to some of the recent drafts that

I've been a part of, and that's typically been the case because those guys walk in the door, and they're fairly close to ready.

I think because of the nuances that come with this game, reps are something that are important. Obviously with the guys that have done it for a little bit longer of a runway, it caters to that.

**Q. Building off the Senior Bowl point, I don't think you were at the Senior Bowl. Liam, I think you were hired the week that it started. So as far as leaning on that as a tool as well as working with scouts that neither of you have worked with until three, four months ago, describe that process.**

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, I think so much of it is rooted in the film. At the same time there's boots on the ground, so to speak, who do, in fact, interact with the players, interact with the coaches who were there and sources who were there. That is a well from a background and character and touch point with the player, but the film is really where I'm talking about that evaluation being meaningful for us.

It's certainly something because it's best against best, some of the top prospects against the other top prospects, it certainly has a place. It's one that we prioritize, that's for sure.

**Q. Jalen McLeod, there were a lot of edge rushers still on the board at the point that he was taken. Why was he the one that you guys were hunting?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I think you guys can probably see this across a lot of the players that we selected, in particular on the defensive side of the ball, but the versatility. That's something that really stands out for us, and obviously we speak about being intangibly rich. His competitiveness, his play demeanor, his urgency is phenomenal, and you take him, another who was deployed across the defensive front at Auburn, stood up off the ball. When he went to the Senior Bowl, all he did was stand up off the ball when one of the best elements of who he is being moved from one spot to the next and providing a spark, being able to gain an edge, a change of pace, rushing off the edge.

That was one thing that he signed up to do at the Senior Bowl and wasn't batting an eye at the fact that, hey, I don't get to showcase what so many would call my super power, but I'm going to do this anyway because I love this sport, and I love getting out on the grass.

Another thing here is when you think about it, right, one of



the things I really value -- I know Liam does the same -- but when a guy goes from a small school to a big school and you see production continue to pop, that is a meaningful element, and that's something you can think back to guys that I've been a part of drafting in the past. Jared Verse, Braden Fiske, Kobie Turner. Think about the guys today who have gone from a small school to a big school that we just walked away with who were productive across both.

**Q. You guys really built this identity of building a roster of intangibly rich, mentally and physically tough players. Do you guys feel like you did that with this rookie draft class?**

LIAM COEN: Absolutely. Yeah, that was very clear with every pick that that was the priority. I mean, you look across the board at these guys, and you talk to the people that were in touch with them, whether it be the coaches, the personnel, their college coaches, their high school coaches. Tough resonates with all these guys, and guys that love football, that love the process that drives the results.

So many captains out of this group and leaders and guys that have played a lot of snaps. So much of that was a part of this whole process.

JAMES GLADSTONE: And the way that people talk about each of these players, it is inspiring. It is something that has caught our attention along the way. It definitely jumps out when you got people willing to stand on the table for them, who have, for all intents and purposes, lived with them, and then also people who in our own building are standing on the table for them.

There were a couple of players today that a scout or an executive made the phone call because they were someone who was truly meaningful to them. They were convicted on their thoughts around their players, and we wanted to make sure that they had the opportunity to be the first to welcome them to Jacksonville.

I think those are some special moments and ones that we'll hang on to, but again, I think it points back to this being a collective effort and nothing short of that, and very appreciative of our coaching staff, our scouting staff, and all the other departments from content team to our sports performance group and our operations staff who are currently working to get things aligned for their arrival and travel.

This was a very fulfilling three-day window, and look forward to taking the next steps to bring it all to life.

**Q. Are you able to share who one of those players may**

**have been anecdotally?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: On what front?

**Q. That a coach or executive or scout was able to --**

JAMES GLADSTONE: We ended up with a USC Trojan, so you can probably guess who made that phone call. It was kind of cool. Josh Scobee, who is a former player in the NFL, he had a lot of heat for Lane out of Navy. He made it known early in the process that he was someone he would like to see become a Jaguar.

Now, if you haven't already done so, I would advise anybody who take the time to watch his special teams snaps because they are mighty enjoyable. He was able to make that phone call to him and get that conversation started.

**Q. I got one for James and one for Liam. James, with how things played out and the construction of the room, how big of a leap and what are you guys expecting from Maason Smith this year?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I think that whole group is about to take a jump. They're working their tails off right now, and you can tell that there's a connective element that's coming to life in a short period of time. So we certainly look forward to seeing I think guys being different positions than they've been in the past and that being an element that activates different sides of them.

Their whole approach has been great so far, so we're looking forward to it.

**Q. Liam, just Tuten and Allen, what do you think they can bring to the offense? How can they maybe complement each other?**

LIAM COEN: If you look at Tuten with the ability to strike from a distance. He can get to the second or third level and score from anywhere on the field. I think behind the line of scrimmage, forced missed tackles was through the roof for him in terms of getting back or at least getting yards after that contact behind the line of scrimmage.

Then you look at Allen, kind of an interesting player. Can play a little bit of slot. Move him into the back field. Obviously he had 1,000 yards over the last two years, and then he can catch the ball out of the back field. Good in the screen game. Competitor, man. This guy loves to play, loves to compete. Made some critical plays in some critical moments for Syracuse this past year on a team that was really good again.



Excited about both those guys. I think both from New Jersey as well, right?

JAMES GLADSTONE: Oh, is that right? Love it.

LIAM COEN: I believe so.

**Q. If you're an offensive lineman that hasn't played multiple spots. Can you earn a roster spot on this team?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I would like to think so. As long as you're mentally and physically tough, I think you've got a chance.

**Q. You talked about worrying about injuries and stuff, but when you have guys that have played multiple spots, is it hard to find spots for those guys? Does it get a little tougher, you know what I mean, when you are evaluating each guy?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I don't know if that's the case. Again, I can point back to just the importance of the offensive line. When you go through attrition that you typically do throughout the course of a season, it can be debilitating if it ends up striking at that spot. That's just something that I don't want to sacrifice or put ourselves in jeopardy for, and it's going to be a spot that we'll always look to pour more resources into.

It's a great group, and I look forward to seeing those guys begin to form some version of cohesiveness because it's often more than any one individual in particular at that position. I think finding the best five that work in tandem is going to be a fun thing here over the course of the offseason and into the regular season.

**Q. Have you guys made up your mind on the fifth year option on Morgan?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: No, I don't think we have. We've been focused on the draft here over these last three days.

**Q. James or Liam, when you look at what happened with this team last year, four-win season with a lot of key injuries to offensive players, not very good on defense, not enough takeaways, the whole bit. When you look at how this roster has not necessarily flipped, but certainly added to in the last two months with free agents and this draft, what are your expectations for this first year? Obviously nobody is proclaiming you a Super Bowl contender just yet, but I'm curious as to how much better you feel like you've gotten between free agency and this draft?**

LIAM COEN: I honestly haven't even thought that far. Honestly it's really got to be a completely one day at a time approach. Yeah, you're always feeling like you're adding levels of competition and depth to the roster. That's exactly what we did. We do feel like we got better and improved.

We will not have a clue until we do this thing more than a week here in terms of being on the grass because we haven't even been able to truly play football yet. The focus is so deeply rooted in the culture, the way that they're going to play our style of play, teaching those elements.

Now we have to go and get an entire rookie class onboarded. That's a lot of work, so the focus is so tight right now that probably haven't even thought that far ahead.

**Q. James, can you talk about the upgrade much just the players that you guys have taken, the 19 guys or whatever it was, that you guys have taken here in the last two months?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: I think bringing in competition is just a healthy thing for any football team. I look forward to this group integrating with what we currently have onsite. I think it's going to be a beautiful process here over the offseason window and look forward to finally getting the pads on when we get the chance to do so because there's nothing better than tackle football.

Obviously, like Liam just alluded to, we have yet to see this group do that as a whole. Really that will show us a lot about what we're going to be here in the 2025 season.

**Q. Liam, first draft as an NFL head coach. Was it different than you expected, about what you thought you were going to experience going in?**

LIAM COEN: Yeah, kind of about what I thought in a lot of ways. I was fortunate enough in L.A. You're in and out. You do get the workings of it and the feeling of it, but yeah, when it's ours and when you're a part of it in a different landscape, it was really cool.

It was really cool to see this guy work. This is his Super Bowl really in a lot of ways at first. This is the first Super Bowl that's to happen for us really. He was unbelievable.

The communication, the resilience, the ability to move around this draft and navigate it the way he did and the way these guys communicated was really fun to watch. The work was done, and then he went and operated, and the staff went and operated at a high level, it was really cool to see.





It's really cool to see the guys, the players' responses, to hear that because that's what it's all about. Like, when you get them on the phone and you actually get to hear their response and make somebody's dream come true, that's what it's really all about.

JAMES GLADSTONE: LeQuint, he tapped it at the end there well. It was a special call. There's no doubt. He brought the juice.

LIAM COEN: Yep.

**Q. James, I know the undrafted free agent process, to wrap it up, without sharing too much into your process, can you give us a peek into what goes into that, what it looks like for you?**

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah. Once the bell rings and the draft is concluded, our coaching staff and our scouting staff who are paired together by position, they begin making calls to agents to see if a player has interest in coming to Jacksonville and begin sort of walking through the idea of, hey, here's the current roster, here's a path that you can put yourself in to be competitive, whether it's to make the 53-man roster or the practice squad and go from there to see if we can come to some agreement contractually.

**Q. Liam, we didn't get a chance to ask you about Wyatt or Caleb yesterday. Just in terms of what they bring to the table. Obviously Wyatt has played everywhere.**

LIAM COEN: I think, like you said about Wyatt, it's the ability to play multiple spots at a high level and just the finish. The way the guy plays, the toughness. He's rooted in that. That's kind of what he prides himself on being, and that's what he is kind of known for around that building is being a guy that finishes, that plays the game the right way, that approaches it the right way, and he's a big dude. He's long.

Then Caleb, man, this is somebody that we've been really excited about for the last few weeks here especially. I worked with Jon Sumrall at Tulane. I actually bought his house when I was leaving Lexington. So I've got a little trust there.

Man, he's dynamic. He can run. One of the better tacklers in this draft. The leadership, the way that he communicates, the passion for the game, again, those are the things that really stood out to me about those two guys.

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