

Jacksonville Jaguars

Media Conference

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James Gladstone

Liam Coen

Draft Day Press Conference



Q. A little busier day, four picks as opposed to waiting through the day like yesterday. How did it feel to get on the clock?

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, it was an exciting evening. I know as we labeled the guys that we really wanted to target throughout the course of it, we ended up with four guys who fit the bill for exactly what we're hunting up, and feel like we were able to level up in a few different areas that going into 2026 we were really excited about addressing.

As the trends across the NFL begin to show themselves, not only over the last season but the back half of the season and what we anticipate being big pieces to the puzzle over the course of this next season, I think that was a real reflection of the decisions that we made here tonight and the positions and players that we advertised.

Q. Adding a tight end there at pick 56, can you talk about your decision and how it fits in here?

LIAM COEN: Yeah, we definitely got tougher tonight. The type of player, the type of person that we're trying to hunt up here, attitude, toughness, mentally and physically tough. I think has a lot more in his body than was probably displayed throughout the season when they were throwing the ball a lot to those wide-outs and Concepcion and those guys, when every opportunity he had throughout the off-season to process, to go put it on tape, that he could, and that there was that in his body and that he did have those capabilities, it showed up in a major way.

JAMES GLADSTONE: You're not going to share your dream?

LIAM COEN: Yeah, I did have a vision, at night, so I guess it's a dream, that we were taking him. I don't remember where it was at or what pick or anything, I just remember that it was somebody that we have had a lot of like for for a

long time, and then you saw that run of tight ends go, so kind of glad we did it.

Q. Liam, Albert had 10 passes deflected at the line, 49 tackles, pretty active, smart player. Can you talk a little bit about --

LIAM COEN: Yeah, that's what we're hunting up, D-Ham, Vegas -- no, I'm kidding. That's just something that he can do. Like you mentioned, though, the football intelligence, the football IQ, the feel, how to play single blocks, how to play double teams, how he runs to the football, this guy chases things down, screens.

We talk about heat for players for us and the amount of buy-in in the building for these players, specifically Albert, a ton. A ton of buy-in, and you hit it on the head, the type of football intelligence, IQ, matched with somebody that's going to play his tail off and compete, that's exactly what we were hunting up.

Q. Emmanuel had a ton of starts in college. How did that look on tape as he progressed this year?

LIAM COEN: Yeah, obviously a first-team All-American, type of player that adds mass inside. That's something that we've been continuously evaluating is getting bigger, faster, stronger and tougher. That's something that he does for us.

I'm very good friends with Will Stein, who was his offensive coordinator. We talked a lot throughout the last week. Very close with Dan Lanning, as well.

You look at his -- the physical attributes, the stuff we can't coach, and then a guy that wasn't a mental error guy, wasn't somebody that couldn't handle all of what Oregon was able to do in their system and checking and killing plays, audibles, alerts, all of those kinds of things that you're hunting up, from a, okay, can he go and do that at that level, we believe so.

I think that you look at in the pass pro and in the run game, getting bigger, I like that.

Q. James, it seems like across the board these guys, a lot of starts, a lot of experience. What is it that you like as a general manager? How does that help with the projection?

JAMES GLADSTONE: I think it helps a great deal. I think if you track back to a lot of my tenure with Los Angeles, it wasn't all that different than what you just articulated. Those players tend to walk in the door and have a different version of polish than the ones that you may have to get reps and get that 10,000-hour rule associated to their play.

I think it certainly allows -- especially when the human beings themselves are the types that can really pour in and do it in the right way and have the routine that would cultivate a faster acclimation, you're going to be able to see that turn around rather quickly.

All these guys, they can have the talent, but the differentiator is the mindset, and that's a lot of what we focused on with these decisions.

Q. James, did you anticipate (indiscernible) being in the second round or was that (indiscernible)?

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, that was rooted in our own internal sentiment and understanding that the trend in the NFL was that heavier tight end sets was going to be something that got prioritized, and we felt certainly a heavier tight end run throughout the course of the back end of the second into the third, and typically that's a window where the wide receiver run is really occurring.

I think that certainly showed itself. But he was the one we were hunting up, and we weren't going to allow that to ever be something that we risked.

Q. How did you evaluate, James, the edge, defensive tackle run that occurred in the second round and how you were set up to potentially attack that position further at defensive tackle and attack the edge on day three?

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, I think there's still plenty of guys to choose from, and ultimately we went with the guys in the positions that we really had very clear and vivid visuals for, each of the pick points that we had, and know that that will only continue to be the case, regardless of what the position is.

Q. Nate had this clip against Travis Hunter where blocking --

JAMES GLADSTONE: Helmet popped off? Yeah.

Q. Did you run across that --

JAMES GLADSTONE: That was Nebraska.

Q. Did you run across that last year when you were --

JAMES GLADSTONE: Doing Travis, yeah.

Q. Did that stand out, that one play?

JAMES GLADSTONE: You know what? I can tell you I didn't know who it was at the time that I first watched it. As a part of pouring into this year's cycle and him in particular, that did catch my attention.

Q. Is that kind of a --

JAMES GLADSTONE: That's his demeanor. That is a great visual for how he operates, and I think between him and Albert, their post play energy is electric, and it shows up in the same way from snap to whistle. So it was certainly something that caught our attention and led to why we ended up choosing him.

Q. James, on Huskey, it looked like he played some corner early and then safety. What did you like about that versatility --

JAMES GLADSTONE: We talked a little bit about the bigger personnel groupings becoming a trend. To combat that, you're getting hybrid safety corners and bigger bodies at the position that can help match that a little bit more effectively. Something that we prioritize not only on the defensive back end but across the entire roster is versatility. So he certainly offers that, but at the same time, his play style is one that is extremely aggressive and tough and physical.

So that really captured our attention and our hearts, and at the same time he touches the football.

I think his Illinois game was one that really stood out in a hot way and was certainly one that as we were watching highlights come across the screen post pick, Shad was certainly taking notice of, wow, there's quite a few highlights showing up against Illinois; that's an interesting deal.

Q. Liam, to follow up on Emmanuel, what does that allow you to do possibly with Wyatt?

LIAM COEN: The nice thing is we always said since being in LA in '22 in that tough year that we're never going to put ourselves in a position to not have depth up front and to not have great competition, depth.

For what it does for Wyatt, I'm not sure. Wyatt has got a ton of flexibility for him to go out, particular out at tackle and play on the inside at guard.

The nice thing is we've got a lot of depth and competition coming up for -- obviously this being a little bit more of a learning phase throughout the spring, that you're not going to probably be able to see maybe what Wyatt's best traits are with a helmet on and shorts or maybe same thing with Emmanuel.

We have to wait until training camp to let that stuff play itself out. But shoot, I know in the last two years, getting two interior linemen with a little bit of flex that are 320, 315 plus that have that ass and mass that we're looking for, that's helpful to the cause.

JAMES GLADSTONE: I'm surprised if you were going to bring up any of our current OL you didn't bring up his former teammate in Jonah.

LIAM COEN: Yeah, they played together. They did.

JAMES GLADSTONE: We've got to kind a trend in Trojans coming in the building, you know.

Q. James, were you surprised that Emmanuel was there as late as he was?

JAMES GLADSTONE: Yeah, that was certainly a part of the equation. It wasn't necessarily something we would have projected in advance. Certainly happy to be in a position to select him, knowing that we were anticipating him going a little bit earlier.

Q. James, do you anticipate Jalen being able to help you on special teams an awful lot, given that versatility?

JAMES GLADSTONE: I would think so. And obviously with Dewey exiting, the PP role is one that we have to prioritize, and he certainly is going to be able to challenge for that spot, which is an extremely important role on punt and ensures that there doesn't end up being a critical down or a critical error in a moment that can flip games. So that'll certainly be one that he'll have the luxury of competing for.

Q. Did you guys try and move up today or were you pretty comfortable with where you were at in the draft?

JAMES GLADSTONE: We did make a couple calls towards the early portion of the night, but nothing that really came to fruition.

Q. Were you surprised when New England went in front of you at 55?

JAMES GLADSTONE: No. I didn't actually -- actually my mind did not go to New England getting in front of us at 55. It definitely wasn't something that --

Q. A lot of picks tomorrow. How do you spend the time before you get back on the clock overnight? Do you refresh some of your draft board, look at guys again, or do you rest knowing you've already done it?

JAMES GLADSTONE: We've got a pretty good idea what we'll do the rest of the way, in particular here with 125 and into the fifth and sixth round.

I would say there are a few discussion points still to be had knowing that we'll have to be agile as some surprises or not surprises show themselves. I don't think there's going to be a ton between now and tomorrow when we kick things off that'll shift, but we'll just engage in the dialogue for sure before we exit this evening and into the early portion of tomorrow morning.

Q. Liam, you guys kind of wanted to put a focus on the running game. Between Nate, Emmanuel, Chris and free agency, do you feel like you've taken a big step toward that so far?

LIAM COEN: I think we've improved. I think we've added players that are going to help that cause. What that comes to from a statistics standpoint or what that looks like at the end of the season is hard for me to tell, but I think that all three of those guys are helpful to that cause, that bring a certain mindset and mentality, demeanor, play demeanor, play edge to their game, and I think all those guys are going to help that cause for sure.

Q. Liam, how many quarterbacks do you look at in this draft cycle, and do you get any ideas, like maybe it's something they ran that --

JAMES GLADSTONE: Peripherally.

LIAM COEN: Yeah, not many in depth by any means. Probably blanked a few of those guys and was able to obviously see them in a lot of other films, other players' films, but not necessarily a huge deep dive into the top picks of this draft. I've watched Simpson, I've watched a little bit of Mendoza. I recruited Mendoza coming out when I was at Kentucky and he was at Cal, so I had some familiarity with him. Liked Simpson, obviously Carson a little bit, as well --

JAMES GLADSTONE: We'd throw a pro day on here and there just to keep updating.

LIAM COEN: Probably not as much as a year that we would be looking at taking a quarterback. But not much right now.

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