

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Dan Morgan

Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: We can start with questions.

Q. Dan, I had a question for you. In terms of needs, one of the things that a lot of people felt that was a big one for this team considering the depth was the center position. I'm curious in terms of not making any picks today, or last couple days at that position, what do you see going forward in that spot?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, you know, I think I said before we feel really good about Austin Corbett there at center. I think he's progressing well and I think Dave would say the same thing to you guys.

I think him, along with Brady Christensen, you know, he's been getting some snaps at center. You know, we feel like he has a lot of potential there as well.

You know, so we feel good about it, but always going to be looking to challenge our roster and get better and create that competition. So we're not going to leave anything -- we're not going to close the door on bringing somebody else in as well.

Q. Dave, you talked before the draft about wanting to build a great team around Bryce, not necessarily just put great players around Bryce. Do you feel like this is a good start to that with this draft, and anything you feel like you need it add?

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely. I feel like we really took advantage of some of those spots to bring a bunch of talent into our roster. Specifically talking about the offense. Just looking positionally with running back and receiver and a tight end. Skill-wise just really bringing a little bit of juice there to really challenge that whole group and elevate the offense.

So I'm really excited about what we did there.

Q. And have you talked to Bryce during this process

and how does he feel about what you've been doing?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, just short texts back and forth. He's really excited about what we've done from the responses that I got from him. He's very fired up about what we got put together.

Q. Dan, the last pick there, you pick an undersized linebacker. Curious, you know you were around Sam Mills? Did that cross your mind, that he shares some of those same traits?

DAN MORGAN: I wouldn't say specifically that it was Sam Mills. I think you just see a really good football player, really good instincts, nose for the ball. He's been productive, a guy that we thought highly of. Think he has a lot of potential and we're excited about him.

Q. Hey guys. Dan, you said yesterday and you've said before I think that you never fill every position. You did get a corner today. Looks like a lot of people view him as a nickel. Do you envision signing Steph Gilmore in the coming days or weeks?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, so first off, we're really excited about Chau. Chau is a guy that can play inside, he can play outside, so we liked his versatility. Good on special teams. I think he's a guy that can really contribute and make us better.

You know, I think obviously at every position we're going to look to improve, not just the corner position. But, again, going to try to create depth and competition everywhere.

You know, as far as Stephon, we're not going to close the door on anything and we'll continue to talk and explore and see where that goes.

Q. Also, when Scott was here he used to talk about always listening when people would call with trade offers or discussions. Will you keep an open ear where a guy like Miles Sanders is concerned after you all drafted Jonathan Brooks?

DAN MORGAN: No, I think it's more we're always going to



be, if you want to say in on every deal. Always going to keep or ear to the pavement and be open to everything.

In terms of Miles, we love Miles. We see a big role for him. I think Dave would tell you the same, that we think really highly of Miles. We love Miles.

He can do a lot for our offense. He's versatile in the pass game and a really good runner.

So we're excited about him as well.

Q. Dan, obviously you've been in these war rooms before. Having gone through that process, did it feel like a smooth process to sit in the GM chair? Any unexpected things or things you weren't as prepared for and kind of figured that out in the moment? Secondly, behind the scenes how big of an impact did Brandt Tillis have on some of the decisions that were made?

DAN MORGAN: I felt really good and to your point with Brandt Tillis and Dave and just the team that I'm surrounded with, obviously I got to give them all the credit.

You know, you're only as strong as people around you is what I always feel. To have Dave and to have Brandt and Cole Spencer, Adrian Wilson, Jared Kirksey and all the area scouts, they've done a heck of a job.

You know, I couldn't do it alone, so I really got to thank those guys.

Q. With Brandt specifically though, what does he bring to the table? I know he's obviously done a lot with the cap and everything. What kind of analysis does he bring during the draft?

DAN MORGAN: He brings a lot to the table. You know, Brandt, he's brilliant; really smart guy, and not only with the cap. He's just good like being in the draft room, being able to bounce things off him, being able to bounce things off Dave.

You know, just the group in general, I'm really happy with the group. Definitely blessed to be surrounded by a bunch of great people.

Q. How different was today compared to the previous two days where it felt like there was a lot of moving and shaking and this one it felt like you guys were a little bit more patient and let the board come to you?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think after those first, I would say four rounds, I think things start to get maybe a little more

fluid and you got what you're doing and your plans start to kind of -- you're still trying to strategize and figure things out.

So yeah, I think just it's definitely different in those later rounds. That's where the scouting really comes into play and things become a little tougher per se.

So, again, you got to have good area scouts, people with a good eye for talent. Definitely thankful that we have that.

Q. With that said, as you go in undrafted free agency, that's like seven picks away, how are you guys planning to attack that? Is there a position that you felt like you missed out on with the way the board fell?

DAN MORGAN: No, not really. I think in undrafted free agency obviously we're going to count numbers and we have specific numbers at each position that we're trying to get to fill out the 90-man roster.

Right now, as we're speaking, the guys are back there on the phone with agents trying to recruit players and just fill the roster out.

But we're just trying to fill the numbers out but not just fill the numbers out but fill the numbers out with a bunch of great players and competitors and the type of people we want in our program.

Q. Dan, I wanted to ask you, you saw this roster a year ago. I won't ask you to compare it to them, but how much better do you feel like or more complete did you feel like this roster is than what it was a year ago?

DAN MORGAN: Definitely not going to get into comparisons. You know, I think we have to make this roster the best that we can for the team this year, in 2024.

You know, that's our goal, is to take it day by day and to build it and make it the best that we can with what we have in store.

Me and Dave, we talk every day about the roster and which ways we can make it better. I think we're headed in a good direction.

Q. Enjoy the concert.

DAN MORGAN: Thanks.

Q. Dave, I wanted your take on the tight end Sanders and then I had one more for Dan, please.

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, versatility. I sound like a broken



record, but it's really what we're looking for. For our system and the things that JT, as he goes by, the things that he showed on film; just being able to use him as a receiver, in the run game in creative ways. He's definitely not the traditional in-line type of tight end.

He's a guy that can do a lot of different things. He made some dynamic plays with the ball in his hands and is really strong at the catch. That's probably one of the biggest things that we saw in him, is just the contested catch part. He's got massive hands and really does attack the ball.

Anymore in this league tight ends, to really get that separation and man-to-man, it's pretty hard. Most of them are around the same speed except for a few guys.

Since they're going to be covered, the contested catch is big, and that's where he really separated himself from the rest of the guys and we saw a great opportunity. Had all night to sleep on it, woke up in the morning and talked through some stuff and we're so excited to make that decision.

Q. Thank you. And then Dan, free agency, you guys obviously made a big investment with the guards. Then we saw in the draft three skill position players for your offense. And for Bryce. Was that the plan, to take care of the line and then look at skill guys in the draft?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think you could say that was the plan. You know, and I think it really -- free agent-wise, we looked at where we thought was strong in free agency and where we thought it was going to be strong in the draft and kind of come up with a plan of how we should attack it.

Just really came out that way to where we attacked the interior, the offensive line. Got that right, and then left us with the flexibility to go into the draft and draft a wide out, tight end.

Yeah, just some guys we liked that we can kind of surround Bryce with and make this team and this offense better.

Q. Dan, question for you. The social team has shared some video of you making some calls throughout the weekend. Curious, having been in their shoes, what was your experience being the one this time to make that call?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, it's pretty cool. You know, I think you're calling these guys and I remember getting a call from obviously the Carolina Panthers and it's really a surreal moment.

To know what they're feeling on the other end, it definitely hits a little different. You know, I know the excitement that these guys, they been working their whole lives for this moment right here.

To be able to call and interact with them and hand the phone off to Mr. Tepper and then Dave and the position coach, it's a really cool feeling. You're just really happy for the guys when you're able to do that.

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