

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Dan Morgan

Dave Canales

Draft Day Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: We hadn't selected any linemen in the last couple of drafts, but no, they're fired up, and it works out really well, especially when you bring in a young player, because he's really got his personal tutor, and Joe does such an excellent job and did that in Tampa, as well.

It's going to be all hands on deck and be really involved with Monroe's development.

Q. Can you take us through how the draft went through and how your board came through with the earlier picks and did it fall the way you thought --

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think it was falling our way. I think as the picks kept coming off, I think we were getting a little bit more nervous. We had a couple of guys that we had our eye on, and just so happened that Monroe was there at our pick, and again, he's just too good to pass up.

To be that big, long and athletic and young, yeah, it was something that we weren't sure if he was going to be there. We thought he might get taken a little sooner. So when he was there, it was easy pick for us.

Q. Did you guys explore trading up at all?

DAN MORGAN: No, we didn't. We didn't. We wanted to sit there and just keep our picks and let it come to us. Of course, we'll have our little conversations about should we or should we not, but at the end of the day, we just wanted to stay put and let somebody come to us, keep our picks and keep drafting.

Q. You wanted to learn about the person who you're going to be selecting and their story. What did you learn about him and his character?

DAN MORGAN: Oh, he's an unbelievable kid. Just always happy, great smile, like, he loves football, which is huge for Dave and I and the rest of the staff is to get guys who love

football, are passionate about being great, and you felt that from Monroe every single time you talked to him. He just loves the game. He loves competing. He's tough. So he brings everything that we were looking for.

Q. There wasn't a lot of tape to look at, 18 career starts. What jumped out from that tape? Was there a game? Was there a play or a series of plays that impressed you?

DAN MORGAN: I mean, I think you can take it all the way through the season. You look at a guy that's 6'7", has 34-inch arms, huge hands.

He's just an athlete out there, an athlete that can pass protect. He can mirror, run block, get to the second level. He can move the line of scrimmage. He just does so many things well that excited us.

Again, he's just the type of person that we want from a player standpoint and also somebody we wanted to bring into that locker room.

Q. Can we get your view on that question?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, same. Really just for me, you always start with the athletic profile, and to get a guy that's 21 years old who's, for all intents and purposes, hasn't fully grown into his body completely but to already be 6'7" and 315 pounds, he's going to settle into some really good football.

The strength and all that stuff will continue to develop. But we kind of start there with the movement skills and length. It's those two things, the quickness, straight-line speed, length, all of that is very for giving for an offensive lineman. That's what really fired me up about his film.

Q. Is there an advantage to not having that experience and being a little bit more moldable? I know you want guys that are trained, but also, with a guy who has the athletic traits and the type of blocking scheme you do, to mold him the way you want to, is there an advantage there?

DAVE CANALES: You'd always like guys to have more games, more experience that way. I just know different scenarios happen in the game. But to your point, having a guy that has limited starts when you get them, you really do have a chance to imprint on them just our style, philosophy and techniques and drills and all those things.

So there's a give and take there.

Q. In previous drafts, and granted, you guys drafted receivers the past two first rounds, but you got a chance to talk to Bryce right after the pick. Did you get a chance to call him and get his reaction to Monroe?

DAVE CANALES: We have not.

DAN MORGAN: I haven't, but he actually texted me and sounded pretty excited about it, so that was a good text.

Q. What did the text say?

DAN MORGAN: I think just, let's go, with exclamation points. I think Bryce is pretty happy.

Q. Is he the guy who blocked for Trevor at Georgia? Were you able to pick his brain on what he offers?

DAN MORGAN: No, we weren't.

Q. How did last year, the way the O-line kind of shook out, that there were so many different combinations of guys who needed to be flexible, kind of play into this pick knowing that you were getting a versatile guy who could be doing something like what you saw last year out of your O-line group?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, I think Dan said it. For us, we're always trying to add value to the fronts, both sides, whether it was in free agency or the drafts, with the two edge rushers last year with Nick and Princely, free agency with Bobby and Turk, getting those guys in here.

You can always help your team by solidifying your front and by adding talent that way.

We're so glad it worked out this way because it is along that vein, to continue to get guys into both of those rooms, because as we've seen, we play with a lot of combinations of offensive linemen over the last two years. Not just us but around the league. That happens to teams. It's comforting to know that you have a roomful of really talented athletes?

Q. You guys entered free agency with two offensive tackles under contract. One just came off a major

surgery. Now you guys have kind of -- I think you're at five now. What is your level of confidence in that room in general following tonight?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think we feel really good about it. I think we might not be done there. I think that's, again -- we want to make both offensive line and defensive line as strong as possible. We feel good about it right now, but we'll continue to add if we see guys we like the rest of the draft.

Q. You guys have been reluctant to give us much of a timeline on Ickey. You say he's doing well. We saw some video of him walking in the building. Can you give us a better idea when you think you might get him back?

DAN MORGAN: Again, he's doing great. He's making a lot of progress. In terms of timeline, I don't have that for you.

Q. Did that uncertain timeline factor into this pick?

DAN MORGAN: No, it was best player available, somebody that we felt like was a great player that we felt could help our team. That was it.

Q. Dave, you keep talking about how athletic this guy is. Is he a possible tackle eligible pass receiver?

DAVE CANALES: I've got to see what kind of hands we're dealing with here. But we definitely use a big tight end. If he doesn't win the job, he's going to play some way, shape or form because he's just such a talent?

Q. Do you feel like either of you guys feel like he's better on one side or the other, left, right --

DAVE CANALES: Well, certainly more evidence on left, but with his athleticism he'll be able to do both in time?

Q. It used to be the left tackle was your athletic guy and the right tackle would be more your bruiser. Do you feel like the league has caught up to where both of those positions are just as important and just as athletic?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think so. I think you need to have an athlete on both sides. The rushers nowadays are getting more and more athletic and faster, bigger, stronger. I think if you can have athletes on both sides, that's ideal.

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