

# Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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**Dan Morgan**

**Dave Canales**

Draft Day Press Conference



DAN MORGAN: First off, jacked about tonight. We get Lee Hunter and Chris Brazzell, two guys that we obviously thought very high of.

Start off with Lee, just big, physical, point of attack guy who's athletic enough to get up-and-down the line of scrimmage, makes a lot of plays, eats up a lot of blockers for the linebackers. A guy we're really excited about.

Chris Brazzell, obviously a big, long, linear receiver with a big catch radius, can adjust really well downfield. He's got the speed to take the top off, take it the distance. So another guy, again, we're extremely excited about.

Good day. Work's far from over. Yeah, we're headed in the right direction. We feel good about the draft so far. We're going to keep building and adding pieces and following the board. That's what we've really been doing up to this point is just following the board and letting that guide us.

Did you want to say anything?

DAVE CANALES: I'm just excited about the guys and, again, just committed to the process of taking the best player on the board. We couldn't pass up on an opportunity for a violent player like Lee.

Chris, he's one of my favorite players in the draft. Just his film over the last two years, when you look at Tulane and then you look at Tennessee and you kind of combine all of it, you're going to get a full picture of a route tree, body control, ability to do all those things and of course just the ability to stretch the field and really put stress on teams from a vertical standpoint.

We weren't expecting Chris to be there. We were sitting there waiting, and he just kept dropping right to us. Just what a great opportunity for us to just, again, add to that room, just another element, another dimension, and create

a competitive roster.

**Q. What made you guys trade up a couple of picks to get Lee?**

DAN MORGAN: The board was kind of thinning out at the time. We just felt like, hey, this is like the last guy that we kind of had a little -- in the higher rounds. We just felt like, hey, let's go get our guy. Instead of kind of settling for somebody else, we're like let's go get our guy. We were all convicted on him not only as a player but as a person.

**Q. Do you see him as being a nose that can kind of complement a rotation of Turk and Bobby? How do you guys view him from a style standpoint?**

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, let's get him in here and see what he can do just in our schemes. That part will make a lot of sense for us. When you're an interior defensive lineman, it all starts with violence. That's one thing that he kind of characterized himself. What's your play style? Violence. And repeatedly said violence.

Just the way that he's disruptive and explosive at the line of scrimmage, and then we'll figure out the pieces from there. We have a really good group in there, versatile guys that we can use in different ways.

DAN MORGAN: And I would add too the way that we play our D-line, like there's really not like starters. We're rotating a bunch. So he's just going to be in that rotation. He can play nose. He can play a little D-end in the 3-4. So he brings a lot of versatility.

**Q. Were you concerned the Jets might take him 50?**

DAN MORGAN: I was a little concerned. D-line is pretty thin this draft. I felt like, hey, let's go get our guy. Let's make sure we get who we want. That's why we traded up and got aggressive.

**Q. With the first two picks obviously on the line, was that something you really wanted to address coming in?**

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think Coach and I and the rest of the staff, we believe in building it up front and winning the line of scrimmage. I think, if you can win the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball, you have a chance to win every single game. Yeah, that's definitely a point of emphasis.

**Q. Dave, you haven't had a guy with this type of speed in this offense so far, a guy that can get downfield, like you said, vertically consistently. What is it about a guy that has that type of size and speed that makes him so dynamic outside of the route tree that you mentioned?**

DAVE CANALES: It's the ability to take those traits but then also to play the ball in the air. One of the things that Chris showed is his ability to play the deep ball, land on his feet, finish the play. That's something that's very rare.

Where a lot of times you'll see a guy high point the ball, lay out for it, and they end up on the ground. He's got a special balance with how he finishes, which translates that speed and that size. So just all those things.

And we've seen how we've been able to use Xavier, T-Mac, Jalen with all the intermediate stuff and have gone down the field a little bit and taken some opportunities. But I think about the space created when they know this is a real burner and what that does to safeties, what that does to corners, and just creating space for the whole group.

**Q. You mentioned a few guys in that wide receiver room. Can you have too much talent in a room?**

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely not. You continue to add great players, and it elevates everybody's play. How that plays out, we'll see. There's a lot of work that's got to be done from now until we start the season. It's just great to continue to add those guys so that we have different elements and increase the level of competition in the room.

**Q. You called Chris one of your favorite players in the draft. Was there a particular game, a particular play that kind of pops in your mind that you kind of point to and say that's who this guy is?**

DAVE CANALES: I can't say anything specifically, but just the body of work, his ability to have the vertical speed and threat, his ability to drop his weight, get in and out of breaks really efficiently is one of the things I was so impressed with.

In our conversations as we were going through the process, I was like, guys, look at this. Typically when a guy's 6'4", they don't have that type of bend and flexibility and power to stop on a dime and get out. That's really

valuable when you're a vertical threat because it's a two-way go for you at that point.

Then of course it was just the acrobatic body balance and the ability to stay on his feet to track the ball down the field that I really just fell in love with and was really excited to get an opportunity to work with those skills.

**Q. You guys had him in on a 30, I think?**

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, we did.

**Q. What was that visit like with him?**

DAN MORGAN: It was great. It was great. Great personality, obviously another guy that loves football, and he bleeds it. I think on our call when we called him, you could hear the excitement in his voice about coming here and competing and adding to that wide receiver room.

**Q. Any texts from Bryce tonight about Brazzell?**

DAN MORGAN: I haven't looked at my phone yet. I haven't looked at my phone yet, but I'm sure Bryce will be happy about that.

**Q. Your response or assessment of the in-person visit with Chris?**

DAVE CANALES: We had him at the Combine first, and then we brought him in for the 30 visit, get to spend a little bit more time. What impressed me about him is when he talks about what he was working on -- that's something that's really big for me, having a receiver coaching background -- when I can hear a guy talk about the different skills that they're working on, the drills they're doing.

He's got a brother, and they're doing one-on-ones. He loves the game. He's about his craft, and you can see that on the field. You can see how compact and efficient he is with his footwork and different things. That always impresses me when a guy has a plan for what they're trying to improve upon.

**Q. There are so many kind of players that fit what you guys want to do that got a lot of hype entering the draft. Originally it felt like you were going to come in after the end of the third round. Why did you guys kind of stop and come up now as opposed to maybe tracking the rest of the draft possibilities at the end of today?**

DAN MORGAN: Why did we come up --

**Q. Like the draft's still going on.**

DAN MORGAN: There's still guys out there, but we traded up once, and obviously we had to give one of our fives. We got a six back. I think in our situation we feel good about where we're at and what our board looks like, and we'll be ready for tomorrow.

**Q. I think you're averaging like 6'2", 6'3" in this receiver room now. How important was it to establish that identity, or what does it do for your offense to have receivers like that?**

DAVE CANALES: Just great players. We're not necessarily trying to set a prototype, it's just we happen to have opportunities to bring in these massive men, all the way down to Brycen Tremayne, who's 6'5" and goes about 220.

These guys are rugged in the run game. That's really important to us. That's something that Brad harps on, that Rob Moore is really serious on because we know we're going to run the ball, and that length and size does help us with some of the different things that we do with the run game.

Then of course just like creating an advantage as a target. When you have that type of size and length, length is very forgiving in terms of getting body position and finishing on the ball. That's what we've seen out of our guys being able to make those plays in contested situations.

Now we've got a guy who's tall and he's also really fast. So his length and all those things will continue to help him in the speed also.

**Q. Along those lines there's a lot of speculation that you guys wanted a yards after catch guy, someone you could also involve in the run game from a receiver standpoint. Was that a thing and it just didn't quite fit with your board?**

DAN MORGAN: I think he does have a little run after catch. Obviously he's got the 4.37 speed. He's a guy that, if he gets it and he hits the crease, he has the speed to take it the distance. Where we're at making the playoffs and kind of being a little further back in the order, obviously that's going to limit you in who's going to be available to you as well.

We're just jacked that we could get Chris there at the end.

**Q. Maybe not a position of need, but is there a certain position in this draft that's kind of gone differently than maybe you had projected or maybe a trend that you've**

**noticed in these first three rounds?**

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think you just see once -- like the tight ends, the tight ends went on a run there for a little bit. The wideouts started going on a run there towards the end when we picked Chris.

So, yeah, I think once one guy starts getting picked and teams start seeing guys fall off the board, it kind of makes guys a little antsy, and they start picking that position.

I don't know if there's one particular position, but I think once you see a particular guy come off the board, I think teams get a little spooked and they'll go on runs.

**Q. As you look at the roster as a whole and as it's getting better and deeper, does it change the way you look at day 3 of the draft just in terms of how guys fit, whether they make the roster, that kind of thing?**

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think the big thing is going to be how can guys contribute on special teams? We only have a certain amount of guys we can dress on game day. So these guys here towards the end of the draft, they're going to have to be good teamers to be able to make our team and contribute the way we want them to.

**Q. Does that look like linebackers and safeties, tight ends?**

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, it could be a combination of guys. That's a good try, though. Yeah, definitely, usually linebackers, tight ends. It can be corners, safeties, returners. We'll explore every option, and we'll pick the right guy for us.

**Q. Does Chris have any -- he doesn't have any return background, does he?**

DAN MORGAN: No.

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