**PATRIOTS HEAD COACH BILL BELICHICK**

**PRESS CONFERENCE**

**September 23, 2022**

BB: The hard core. Sparsely today. Aright how we doing here? Good. Ready to roll. Big Hall of Fame ceremony tomorrow. Ravens on Sunday. Big weekend.

**Q: Coach, on Vince [Wilfork] did you expect him to be as versatile as he ended up being at the end of his career? I don't know if you really thought of him as a nose tackle when you drafted him. But what was that process like of him evolving to a point where you could move him around to take advantage of matchups?**

BB: Yeah, we definitely saw him as a nose tackle. That's what we drafted him for. Of course, his rookie year when we had Keith Traylor, he played defensive end. He played out of position which I think was a real good introduction to us to the versatility that he has for sure. He's not really a 3-4 end but that's what he played. Keith [Traylor] was the nose. It was kind of the reverse when we took [Richard] Seymour. Richard [Seymour] played nose his rookie year before we moved him out back to end, which was really his right position for him. But Vince [Wilfork] handled it well there. He was just one of those players you had to get in the lineup. You had to put him somewhere. It was easier to move him than Keith [Traylor]. So that's what we did. But yeah, Vince [Wilfork] is a really, very athletic guy. I want to say he still holds the shot-put record in the state of Florida in high school. Which, whether he holds it or not, the fact that he's up there, that high, for that long is pretty impressive. He can run, very light on his feet. I mean for such a big guy, I think good balance, tremendous playing strength. Great competitor, very smart, good communicator. Was a good team leader. Great team captain. So he brought a lot to this organization on and off the field for a long period of time.

**Q: Vince [Wilfork] said he was hoping to speak to the team today. Any plans to do that or has he already?**

BB: I'm sure I'll see Vince [Wilfork] tomorrow. So we'll see how it goes.

**Q: He's not big Vince [Wilfork] anymore.**

BB: No. Svelte, svelte. Looks like a tight end, big running back.

**Q: Sticking with defensive line, Calais Campbell just how rare is it for a guy to be that consistent for this long in such a physically demanding position?**

BB: Yeah, tremendous player. He can do it all. Starting with the kick blocking. He's a real force on the field goal block. He's ruined a lot of kicks there. But his length is impressive. He's very athletic, very smart player, instinct, reads things well, good pass rusher, quick, strong, long. In the [Richard] Seymour mold, that kind of length and quickness combined with strength, athleticism, experience, and intelligence. He's a really good player. He's a problem. He can play a lot of spots. He generally plays three-technique. But he can play shade on the nose, certainly play five-technique, all the other ones in between. Good pass rusher. He's a good football player.

**Q: What's made Devin Duvernay so productive? How much stress does he put on that special teams unit?**

BB: A lot. He's a very impressive player. He runs, he's strong. He breaks tackles. He can definitely stretch and hit it vertically. He's got tremendous speed and get to the edge. So really everything's a problem. He can take those balls and get outside and out flank the defense. But he can also make you think he's going outside and put his foot in the ground and go vertical and run through arm tackles and cut back. He has good vision. He's got a good running style. Yeah, he's a problem. Definitely a problem. He's one of the better guys we'll face. He's got homerun speed. It’s not like it’ll just be 20 yards or get the ball to midfield on a kickoff return, or something like that. If he hits it, it's all over. Nobody has many players that can catch him. I don't know if there are any. He's fast.

**Q: On Marcus Cannon, seeing him in the black jersey this week as a practice player of the week. Is that sort of reflective of how he just maybe picked up where he left off from the last time he was here?**

BB: Yeah, Marcus has had a great attitude. Comes in, works really hard. Just wants to do it the right way. Not come in and jump in but come in and start at the beginning. Work on his fundamentals, work on the lifting, all the preparation things that go into being a good football player. You start at the bottom work his way up. That's really the way to do it is build a good foundation. Didn't have training camp but he can use the time that he has now to put that in place. So when he does play, he'll be, I think, able to hit a higher ceiling than trying to skip all those steps and just start playing. He has a great attitude, had a good week of practice, was impressive out there. So he's good.

**Q: How much does just being able to have a guy like that on the practice squad tie into the decision to trade Justin [Herron]? Which is a position where we’ve mentioned in past, depth is hard to find sometimes.**

BB: Right. Yeah, look, it’s always good to have good players and Marcus [Cannon] looks like he’s coming around well. We’ll see how it goes, but so far so good.

**Q: Bill, as someone who’s coached some of the best kickers of all time, how do you characterize what Justin Tucker’s done when you look at the consistency of his career from distance, also just to reliability?**

BB: He’s reset that position by probably a pretty decent amount. This isn’t like being 200th of a second under the world record. This guy’s really reset the bar. No miss kicks, accuracy is very good, distance, range. He really shortens the field. He makes the field about ten yards shorter than most everybody has it. Not just with his leg strength, but the fact of his accuracy and how good he is from long range as well. He’s a touchback guy, if they want to do that. But yeah, he and [Matt] Stover have had tremendous career and he’s come in and just kind of one upped it. Lot of good kicking there for a long time, between whenever Stover was, [19]92, he didn’t kick for very long, but from [19]93 on, so what’s that? Thirty years. Thirty years of having a really good kicker, two guys, that’s pretty good and counting. [Justin] Tucker’s still got a year or two left.

**Q: Bill, I know it’s just a two-game sample, but Lamar [Jackson] leads the league in yards per completion, a big jump from at least past full seasons for him, do you see him looking longer for deeper routes more often so far this year?**

BB: I think it’s been about the same. Yeah, I think the play to [Rashod] Bateman was a 7-yard pass, goes 75 [yards]. But, that’s what they are. They’re a catch and run team. But they can also throw over the top and they throw immediate RPO’s and those kinds of things. Lot of bootlegs, cross boots, those are short passes that the catch and run plays can turn into bigger plays. I mean, I think their offense is pretty comparable to what it’s been. It’s two games. We’ll see how it averages out over a longer period of time.

**Q: Bill it looks like Jon Jones has gotten off to a really good start. I know he’s played outside corner before. What about him, from I guess a preparation and ability standpoint, makes him capable of playing at such a high level regardless of where he lines up?**

BB: [Jonathan] Jones’ got a lot of things going for him. Good skillset. He’s very fast, he’s tough, he’s strong for his size. He’s a smart player. I think, when you play one position and you move to another one, it gives you an advantage a little bit because you’ve played that spot and you know what’s going on in there. Whether that’s a corner moving a safety, moving them inside to outside or outside to inside or outside linebacker moving to inside or vice versa. If the player can do that, if he has that type of versatility, then I think a lot of times, he just has a better understanding and communication. It’s easier for him to figure out, ‘what’s harder for me, what’s harder for that guy, because I’ve played both spots,’ and how to manage those problems. Bunch sets and different formations. Same thing for the linebackers, if you play both spots, you kind of know what’s a bigger problem, because you’ve been in both of them. How do you help solve that? For some players, they understand their responsibility, but maybe not quite as much as is what’s going on is hard or easy for my teammate, what he’s doing. Do I take it, is it hard for him or can I give it to him because it’s really not that bad for him and it takes something off of me. You know those things. Smart, tough, fast, very competitive. Again, has a good deal of experience, has played safety as well. I mean, this guy’s played every position in the secondary and I think in the long run, if he can do it, then I think it’s a good thing.

**Q: What do you think of the rookie Jack Jones just from when he came in to where he is now through first couple of games and what he's done to earn a little bit of a role out on the field for himself.**

BB: Well Jack's [Jones] like a lot of rookies. Learns every day. There's new challenges every day. It's a different league, different offenses, different receivers, certainly different quarterbacks, levels of skill. He's a talented player that has a lot of experience playing in that conference and he saw a lot of good receivers and some good quarterbacks. It's just way more at this level. Improving, learning every day. Still has a long way to go. But certainly, has done enough to earn a roster spot and is competing for playing time.

**Q: Joe Mazzulla was a visitor for one day of camp this summer. How did you get to know him in the first place? What have you come to learn about him since you've developed some form of a relationship?**

BB: Yeah had a great opportunity to visit. Always had a great relationship with all those guys for multiple years, but Brad [Stevens], and then as Brad [Stevens] stepped down, other people that have come in there. So yeah, it's very interesting just talking about pro athletes, pro sports, teaching, learning, so forth. It was good. It was a good day.

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