



## **FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2011**

### **Vikings Vice President of Player Personnel Rick Spielman**

**Q: Any medical issues with Kyle Rudolph?**

A: We had no issues with him medically after he was cleared by our doctors. When he fell to us, we felt that he was too good of a player to pass up. We felt that he has a lot of unique skills as a tight end and we wanted to stay true to our board. That was a situation where there was a player that normally, if he hadn't had that hamstring injury, we wouldn't of even had a shot to get. We feel that we got great value when we got Kyle.

**Q: How will he fit into the Vikings offense?**

A: He has a lot of different skill sets. You can split him out wide, you can put him as an H, or you can put him on the line of scrimmage. He's going to develop into a starting tight end in this league. The most unique thing about him right now is his ability to catch the ball and his route running ability. He'll develop as a blocker as we go along, but the skill set there, it's hard to find guys like that.

**Q: Will you be looking to get two tight ends with Visanthe Shiancoe or are you just trying to cover your bases with his contract situation?**

A: This was a situation, I know we have three tight ends on our roster right now, but when you have a player like that, it's just too good to pass up. I know we'll sort it all out as we get there. We just wanted to stay true to our board and he was by far the highest player on our board at this time.

**Q: Did you consider drafting Da'Quan Bowers?**

A: I'm not going to tell you what Bowers is, or why he's falling. You guys can figure that out.

**Q: With the 8<sup>th</sup> Circuit stating that the lockout was back on, how much time were you able to get with Christian Ponder?**

A: Once he got in the building, I know Coach (Bill) Musgrave and Coach (Craig) Johnson were spending a lot of time with him. So I know while we had the opportunity I know we took advantage of it.

**Q: You don't have a third round pick as of yet, is it more important to stay true to your board at this point?**

A: Yes, again we looked at some opportunities to possibly trade down, but when you have a player of that caliber fall to you, it's like how do you not take this guy. So we drafted a guy we felt that you couldn't normally get.

**Q: What has the league advised you for the weekend, does (Christian) Ponder need to leave now?**

A: When the lockout was lifted, players were allowed to spend time here, now with the lockout back on, he'll probably be leaving here shortly.

**Q: Does he (Christian Ponder) get to take a playbook with him?**

A: I think we were within the time frame.

**Q: Did the ruling literally come down when you were on the clock?**

A: I didn't have my cell phone on me because we have all those trade lines and direct lines on during the draft, so I was just sitting there trying to hone in on what we're doing for the draft.

**Q: If (Kyle) Rudolph wasn't there was a defensive pick tempting knowing how many good players were still on the board?**

A: Yeah, we had a defensive player we wanted to take as well, but we felt with Rudolph it was a no brainer for us. We were very excited to get him.

**Q: Assuming you don't get back into the third round, how good of players do you think you can get tomorrow?**

A: I think because this is a deep draft, if we don't move back into the third today, we're going to have the ability to get a lot more players that are going to come in and help us. To have a fourth, and two fives, and two sixes, and two sevens, and without college free agency, that's going to help you get some players at least you know you have.

**Q: Were there teams trying to get into your pick?**

A: Yeah, we had some teams. All of a sudden our pick got very hot but unless it was a deal that was going to totally blow us out of the water we weren't going to move out when he (Kyle Rudolph) fell to us.

**Q: Are you actively trying to get back into the third or does that just depend on who is on the board?**

A: It depends on how we see it as the board comes down and then who is there and potentially you have some ammunition to go into the bottom of the third with some of those extra picks you have in the second day. If there is a player worthy of that that we want to try and go get, we may take a stab at it. I don't know if anyone would deal but we'd definitely do that.

**Q: From here on out with the draft picks, the coaches aren't able to talk to them at all?**

A: We're allowed to bring Kyle (Rudolph) in for media and marketing purposes only. We'll fly him in tomorrow so you guys get a chance to meet him.

**Q: You don't ordinarily bring your picks in after the first round do you?**

A: Yeah, but since you guys want to have a go at our draft picks, we're trying to accommodate you guys.

**Q: So rookie free agency is off the table?**

A: As far as I know, yeah I'll go up and get caught up on what happens.

**Q: Who keeps you up to date?**

A: Rob Brzezinski.

**Q: How weird is this for you?**

A: I think with some of the stuff we went through last year you are just kind of immune to everything and you just react. I mean there is nothing you can do about it. You have no control over it, so do what you do. Right now we can draft players, that's what we're focused on doing, and that's all you can do.

**Q: Will you reach out to more players in the seventh round tomorrow without undrafted free agency?**

A: You're not allowed to, but you're allowed to talk to players if you're going to take those guys.

**Q: But you can't just start calling guys and saying "By the way, if we don't take you..."?**

A: No, you cannot do that. That's illegal.

**Q: Do you have to be taking a guy to be able to call him?**

A: You can have two or three guys there that "hey, you heard from anyone?" We may have two or three options and sometimes we'll maybe call two or three players right before we're on the clock.

**Q: Do you have any clarification on whether you have to send Christian (Ponder) home now?**

A: Yeah I am going to find all of that out now. It's kind of hard when, like you said, we're tired of doing that. We'll find out what the ruling exactly is and abide by that.

**Q: What was the rule previously? Cause he could always come here.**

A: Yeah, they can all come in.

**Q: But if the lockout was still in place?**

A: For media and marketing purposes only.

**Q: What was the time when he had to leave in that structure? Like on Monday before she (Judge Susan Nelson) ruled?**

A: Usually you can have your draft pick in up until Sunday morning. They have to go out so technically that's what we're looking to do since those were the old rules but now they have to come in and come out. We just got to arrange a flight.

**Q: Were you able to overnight any playbooks to anybody else? Any of the veterans?**

A: I know the coaching staff was working very hard today getting stuff out while the window was open.