

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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DB Benjamin St-Juste

On how it feels to get drafted:

“Well first of all, thank you. Second of all, I feel great. Great night. Going into it wasn't too stressful, anxious. I was just happy to be there, happy to be involved in the draft, whoever was going to pick me. I was going to have a great time and it happened to be a great team. The Washington football team is a great organization. I had great meetings with the coaches throughout my whole process since January and I'm just happy. I'm just super blessed about the opportunity.”

On his meetings with the coaches:

“The chemistry we had. They had a lot of questions for me. They were trying to see if I was a smart football player, great football player and I answered every question correctly and they were impressed with that. I had a little more extensive conversation with the position coach to get more knowledge, then to get to know me. We were able to build that chemistry compared to other teams where the meetings were a little quicker and shorter.”

On if Washington handled the interviews differently:

“It started with the position coach [Defensive Backs Coach Chris Harris]. I asked him some questions about the process, what to do as a rookie, how to perform, how to keep going with the same mentality from college to the NFL, how to stay consistent and stay in the league longer. Those were the conversations I had that I didn't have with other teams. I even had a chance to meet with the special teams coach [Special Teams Coordinator Nate Kaczor], we had a great interview, some great conversations. Washington was the only team where the special teams coach, the [defensive backs] coach and the head coach were able to meet with me and it just separated me with other teams.”

On how he conversation with Head Coach Ron Rivera went:

“It was great. I knew he was a great coach; I knew he was a great person. There was no doubt there and I think he saw the same characteristics in me.”

On if his conversation with Rivera:

“It was for the draft call today. It wasn't that extensive of a conversation compared to the defensive back coach and special teams coach.”

On his versatility:

“I can do whatever, whatever the team needs me to do - safety, nickel [back] corner - and I think that's why they picked me. I think that's why I separate myself from the other corner because maybe they just play corner or have been seen as a corner. But with my size, my speed and my quickness, and even the rest, I was able to play at free safety and strong safety at the Senior Bowl. I showed if there's a lack of a certain position or new scheme that I can be plugged in and have an instant impact for the team, so I think that's what they saw in me.”

On what it was like playing safety at the Senior Bowl:

“Some teams just wanted to see me at safety to see what I look like and I felt very comfortable doing that transition if I had to. Playing corner, I think is one of the hardest positions. Going to safety and guarding the tight ends or in the slot or showing up in the run game, it’s one of the things I’m naturally great at so I was very comfortable during the transition.”

On if he thought teams would be interested in seeing him at safety:

“I knew certain teams maybe wanted to see me. I didn't train or prepare to be at safety, I just prepared for the position I played in college, which was corner. If I have to do that transition then I will, but I was recruited and interviewed as a corner.”

On his decision to leave Michigan:

“They moved on. They had a chance to get other corners, it didn’t really work out for me. I was about to graduate, so it was perfect timing for me to not miss out a year and be a grad transfer. I just needed a fresh start. I decided to go to Minnesota. Minnesota was a great fit for me and it turned out well.”

On his ‘medical retirement’ while in college:

“Medical retirement is a business move as we called it in the NCAA because when they medically retire a player, they can give that scholarship to somebody else. Basically, my scholarship was given to someone else. I never medically retired, I never took the decision. I had no power in that decision. I knew that I was going to play football one way or another so it was a matter of time.”

On what he wants to improve upon:

“Keep working on the details, keep working on my technique, put in more work than the others - before and after practice, before and after games. I want to be more productive. I didn’t get that many opportunities in college because I didn't start as many games and because of covid this previous year. I want to be productive. With a 17-game schedule, I want to get a lot of interceptions. At corner, safety, whatever, I want to be as productive as I can.”

On how he started playing football while in Canada:

“I got into the sport because of my dad. My dad was a dual athlete, played basketball and football at a high level back home in Canada. He actually got a chance to get invited to the Miami hurricane 1986 as a safety and as a little kid, I wanted to be like pops. I asked him what his favorite sport between basketball and football and I just wanted to be like him. Also, I’m from Canada, everybody plays hockey, I wanted to be that kid that was different. I wanted to make sure I was playing football.”

On how many others played football in Canada:

“A lot but playing competitively and wanting to play in the NFL and having the same mentality I have, probably none.”

On being a physical corner:

“To be honest, I make it up with my speed and how quick I can be. I think that’s one of the questions I've had my whole career. ‘He’s 6’3”, 200 lbs. Can he move, can he stay with a quick receiver?’ And I was always able to stay with the quick receivers because I constantly work with my technique, my feet, being quick on my feet and having good balance. That’s where I bring that versatility like I mentioned earlier because I can play corner. But like I said, I'm also big so I consistently show up in the run game and I’m not scared to tackle so I can be put at safety if I have to. I think that’s my best attribute.”

On how Draft night went:

“I wasn’t anxious, wasn’t stressed, I was just blessed to be there. I’m currently in Athens, [Ga.]. My girlfriend, she runs track and field at the University of Georgia so I’m with her family and some of her friends. Unfortunately, I couldn’t go home to Canada because of covid restriction orders, so I couldn’t fly in. That hurts a little bit, but my family was there on the Zoom, so we were able to virtually celebrate together.”

On celebrating with his family through Zoom:

“Actually, it was a little bit delayed. They got the pick before me. I was still waiting on the phone call. It was crazy, I was on cloud nine. Getting that call, all that hard work and talking to Coach Rivera, that was great. We had to celebrate that virtually but still we got to celebrate it.”