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Chargers DL Justin Eboigbe Draft Availability

Saturday, April 27, 2024 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

On if Head Coach Jim Harbaugh recruited him coming out of high school:

"No, he didn't recruit me [*laughter*]. But, I had a lot of familiarity with him on New Year's Day, that Rose Bowl Game. Didn't have the outcome [we wanted], but the success that he has had in the league and in college, there's no one that you'd want to play for any more than him."

On his skillset:

"For me, it's just the versatility, the resilience, the adversity, that never-die attitude. If anybody knows my story, knows where I came from and what I came back from, as far as injury, the adversity off of the field by losing my brother the same year as the injury, and came back and had my best season. It wasn't any luck, it was just work. That's what I plan on doing when I get there, just working. Put my head down and work, grind. Gain the respect of the veterans and the teammates around me to where I get the trust of them."

On battling adversity:

"The year before last, my 2022 season, in the month of May, I ended up losing my brother, he ended up passing away. Then, at the end of September, I had a neck injury, which made me miss the rest of the season. If you know anything about neck injuries, you don't know what to expect. I just kept my faith and kept working, as far as not understanding what may happen, but understanding that I'll be prepared for a situation, if it comes or not. That's how I looked at it. Everything just started working. As far as my recovery, I came back quicker than expected. I put everything together. I had my best season. I realized that the adversity on and off of the field, losing my brother and having the neck injury, it made me more appreciative, it made me understand that there is no tomorrow, you have to give everything that you have today because, one day, it will be your last, and you never know."

On where he 'fits from an alignment standpoint' along the defensive front:

"Honestly, it doesn't even matter. If I can be on the field, it doesn't matter, I can play every position. I know one thing, whatever helps the team — whether that's at three-technique, five-technique, shade, it doesn't matter — as long as I can be able to effectively help the team, I'm all for it."

On 'how much maintenance is left' with his neck injury sustained two seasons ago:

"There's no maintenance. After I was cleared back in March, I was full-go. I didn't need a neck brace, neck collar, nothing. I can put 500, 600 pounds on my back and squat it, it doesn't matter. It was more of making sure that everything is right, clean up surgery. I went to one of the best doctors in the U.S. to handle it. I'm very appreciative for him, very appreciative for everybody that got me in touch with the right people to where I feel as if I didn't have anything wrong with me beforehand."

On his recovery process:

"It was very challenging because you're left with your thoughts. There are a lot of days where you don't know what to expect. You try to keep the faith as far as everything is going to work out. You keep telling yourself that. Eventually, it did. I just made sure I did everything in my control, as far as everything that they told me to do. Everything they said not to do, I didn't do. I had surgery in the end of October 2022. In December 2022, I got cleared to do band workouts. I was doing it to get strength. Doing everything I could until the middle of January 2023, I ended up being cleared for all weight room activities. So I was hitting it hard, gaining back my back. Getting back into that routine. Then, by the middle of March when I was cleared for all football activities, the whole plan at Alabama with [former Alabama Head] Coach [Nick] Saban and my coaches was that I would be back for fall camp. I told them that I wanted to play now, so I participated in spring ball. I knew I wanted to get my anxiety out. Getting hit again and hitting people again. It's the best thing, the adversity that I went through. It shaped me into the person that I am now."

On who he relied on during his recovery:

"I would say my faith. My faith in God, first and foremost. Then, my mom. My mom is the strongest person I know. Everything that she does in my life. Everything she has done. Just seeing how much she has instilled in me. I knew that this was just a situation where all of the things that people invested in me — the time, the effort. I knew that I'd pay it off."

On if he ever considered retiring from football due to the injury:

"I had some people ask me if I wanted to retire just because not a lot of people want to fight back and come back from an injury like that. One of the biggest things as soon as it happened, [Alabama Associate Athletics Director, Sports Medicine (Football)] Jeff Allen, the head trainer, he told me, 'This is season ending, but it's not career-ending. We're going to put you in touch with the right people. We're going to make sure we go above and beyond to make sure you're right. We're going to do right by you.' That's what they did. I'm appreciative. Of course, there's a lot of anxiety that's going to go through your mind because the statement behind hearing a neck injury, is not good. You know, behind hearing it. But I knew I was going to be different. I know a lot of people say they're going to come back better than ever, but I wanted to really prove that. No sir, I've been playing this game since the age of five. I've dealt with a lot more than just an injury."