

5/25/2012: One-on-One with Tyler Sash



Former Iowa and current NY Giant safety Tyler Sash signs a No. 9 Iowa jersey for a fan during an autograph session at Scheels on Friday, May 25, 2012 in Coralville, Iowa. Donations going towards the Brett Greenwood Foundation were collected during the event.

By Brendan Stiles

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CORALVILLE, Iowa – “Once you’re a Hawkeye, you’re always a Hawkeye.”

That one sentence is filled with words that New York Giants safety Tyler Sash continues to live by, even though 17 months have passed since the Oskaloosa native last suited up on the gridiron wearing black and gold.

That one sentence is also significant in Sash’s ongoing quest to help his former Hawkeye teammate and good friend, Brett Greenwood.

Last fall, Greenwood collapsed while working out at his high school and was in a coma for nearly an entire month. Doctors later discovered that [Greenwood had suffered an anoxic brain injury](#). Sash said Greenwood has made progress but is still continuing down the path towards recovery.

Three months after winning Super Bowl XLVI with the Giants, Sash was back in the Hawkeye State on Friday to continue his part in helping Greenwood by holding an autograph session at Scheels inside the Coral Ridge Mall. Sash had held a previous fundraiser at Scheels during the Giants' bye week last October and much like that first event, fans seeking autographs from Sash were asked to make cash donations to go towards the Brett Greenwood Foundation.

Sitting at a table placed inside the store, Sash began to sign Hawkeye and Giant memorabilia one-by-one for adults and kids alike and even took pictures with those who asked. The table featured a display case with his Super Bowl ring inside it, as well as a jar filling up with cash to support Greenwood.

While signing autographs, Sash took time to speak with *HawkeyeDrive.com* about Friday's event, as well as reflect back on his rookie season in New York and look ahead to what his future has in store.

HawkeyeDrive.com (HD): What does all the support you and Brett are both getting here mean considering how a full year has gone by since either of you played for the Hawkeyes, yet many around here still remember both of you and want to do their part in helping this cause?

Tyler Sash: I think it's just like anything else. Once you're a Hawkeye, you're always a Hawkeye. The people of Iowa are so supportive of the team and the players and you know they feel like everyone's a big family. If you go to Iowa, it doesn't matter where in Iowa. I feel like everybody feels they have a connection because you played at the University of Iowa.

HD: What does that mean in terms of being able to come back here and have people recognize you whenever they see you, wherever you happen to be?

Sash: It's obviously nice. Not only because of the Super Bowl, but what we did at Iowa, Brett and I together. You know, just to be in a situation where I can come back is the main thing. You know there are guys that can come back that didn't go to the NFL. I mean, there are tons of Hawkeyes all over the place that would help out. But just being in my situation wants me to help even more.

HD: How much would you say that bond you share with Brett has gotten stronger over the past year given everything he has had to go through?

Sash: It's hard. You know, I'm not with him each and every day and obviously we don't have as much communication. But at the same time, there doesn't go a day where I don't think about him or how blessed that I am, because of his situation. What he has been through, if anybody can go through it and be fine, it's Brett, because he has just always had that mentality that he's not going to let anything get to him. He was a walk-on freshman that started, so obviously coming out of high school, he probably thought he was under-recruited and he has always had his back up against the wall and turned out to be an all-Big Ten safety.

HD: This is a two-part question here. One, what were some of the big things you were able to take away from your first season in the NFL, and secondly, what have these last few months been like since you returned to New York with the Vince Lombardi Trophy?

Sash: The season's long. Obviously, you want to win each and every week, but you can't let a loss get to you. I'm one of the most competitive people around, but if you do lose, you can't let that get to you. It's a long season, and no matter

what happens, you just got to keep playing. I mean, I know that sounds really cliché, but we had injuries across the board and other teams aren't going to feel sorry for you. You just got to go out and fight each and every play, each and every week.

HD: Have you become more recognizable around New York?

Sash: I don't know. I'm growing my hair back, so probably not.

HD: Have you gotten a chance to talk to Brian Ferentz at all since the Super Bowl? *(Ferentz was the Patriots' tight ends coach and on the losing end of Super Bowl XLVI before becoming Iowa's offensive line coach)*

Sash: Yeah, I've seen him a few times, actually. I saw him at the Iowa CHARACTER COUNTS! event in Des Moines and sat right next to him. Then I saw him at the airport in Cedar Rapids, heading out to recruit. I've talked to him a few times. No bad blood or anything like that. Just talked about the game a little bit, but mostly it's all about Iowa football, to be honest.

HD: When Marvin McNutt was drafted by Philadelphia, I saw you send him a tweet saying congrats, but now we can't be friends since you're on one of our rivals. What's that going to be like for you the first time you get that opportunity to line up across from him and he's coming towards you across the middle of the field?

Sash: It's going to be fun. Like I said, "Once a Hawkeye, always a Hawkeye." But once you're in those lines and you're playing against your rival team, it wouldn't matter if I went to high school with one of my best friends and he went to Iowa State and I played football against him. It's basically the same thing with Marvin going to play for Philadelphia. It's going to be exciting.

HD: You're going to be taking part in [the Grinnell Games next](#)

[month](#). What went into that decision and what about it are you looking forward to?

Sash: The opportunity presented itself and Grinnell is 15-20 minutes from my house. They're doing a lot of cool things that I wanted to be involved with. They make "Amazing Chase," kind of like the "Amazing Race." We're trying to get people to come out and get active and have fun.

HD: Last question here: Is there anything you have lined up here in the future as far as events for your foundation, Brett's foundation, "GBNB" (Get Better, Not Bitter), etc.?

Sash: We've always got things going on. You know, I got a full schedule all the time about that. I'm always trying to give back, trying to do things to raise awareness or help other people, like helping the Brett Greenwood Foundation. Just trying to help out as much as I can. I'm busy all the time.