



Giants' Seubert savors strange offseason

By PAUL SCHWARTZ

Dirty clothes don't wash themselves.

So, as the NFL lockout rages on, with an antitrust hearing today in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis that could immediately or eventually shake up the dreary status quo, pardon [Rich Seubert](#) if he's got more immediate problems to solve. His washing machine is on the fritz and with two young sons (ages six and four) and the addition of a newborn daughter (Hailey, born March 31) he and his wife, Jodi, need the rinse and spin cycle to be operating at peak efficiency.

"It's always something," Seubert told the Post.

More time at home is one of the benefits or quirks of the lockout. Normally, players would be at the team facility several times a week, participating in "voluntary" off-season workout programs. The lockout means the Timex Performance Center is off-limits to players, who must find outside facilities to train, at their own expense.

Seubert's case is slightly different. He was called the team MVP by general manager [Jerry Reese](#) for his work last season at left guard and center but in the final game in Washington he dislocated his right kneecap and suffered ligament damage. That meant he faced yet another surgery and lengthy rehab but with the lockout, he can't have any contact with his trusted Giants trainers or step foot inside the team facility. "I'm doing the same thing I would do, just have to do it somewhere else, which is fine," Seubert said.

He prepared for the lockout by scouting out rehab centers and chose Excel Orthopedic Rehabilitation in Waldwick, N.J., where Matt Gibble – who has worked with members of the [New Jersey Devils](#) – is his physical therapist. Shaun O'Hara, recovering from surgeries on his left ankle and right foot, is also rehabbing at Excel.

Seubert admits this is quite different from what he's accustomed to. "Byron Hanson, Ronnie Barnes, Steve Kennelly, all those guys I've been rehabbing with over the years, we got used to one another, they know what I like," Seubert said of the Giants training staff. "I think going to Excel, going to see somebody else, you get somebody else's view who is not part of the Giants."

Seubert goes to Excel for rehab three times a week – the Giants pay the bill because he was hurt during the season – and likes that, unlike the Giants facility, he can watch TV during the 15 minutes he ices down. That's not the only difference.

"It felt strange for the first couple of times, walking in, people looking at you," Seubert said. "You see everybody else getting rehab done, normal people."

Seubert works out three other days of the week with trainer Kevin Ensenat at Overtime Sports, right down the road from his home in Wayne, N.J. "We play football for our fans, it's fun to see them and not be stuck at the Timex Performance Center," he said. "Kind of enjoy it. Some people ask questions, some people respect our time there and leave us alone."

As the longest-tenured Giants player, Seubert, 32, is confident he can return for an 11th season. He underwent a procedure similar to microfracture surgery, differing in that a piece of bone from a non-weight

bearing section of his leg was inserted to fill a hole in his right knee. He also had the patella reattached and reconstructive surgery on his medial collateral ligament. Seubert's right leg was shattered back in 2003, nearly ending his career.

"It was nice they used the scar from my rod [in his leg] they just made it longer so they could get at my knee," he said. "That was nice of them."

Dr. Russ Warren is the Giants team physician but not an employee of the team, which is why he is allowed to monitor Seubert's progress during the lockout. "He's always put me back together," Seubert said. "When he says I'm going to be 100 percent I believe him."

The Giants, Seubert believes, will get through this lockout unscathed. "Our team, we're experienced, we're veterans, we know what it takes to get it done," he said.

When someone asks him about rich players and richer owners engaging in labor warfare, Seubert has a ready-made response.

"I tell 'em the average playing time is 3.2 years, something like that," he said. "I just look at myself. I've had 10 surgeries in 10 years, my quality of life when I get older is not going to be the same as most people's quality of life. I know that, I know that's part of the risk of playing football. We need better care down the road. It's our lives. Football is a game we play that we love, I love playing it, we know it's not going to last that long. We got to enjoy it while we can and then when it's time to go it's time to move on. We're out there playing, out there sacrificing our bodies, we're taking chances every play. We just want to be taken care of."