



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – September 25, 2018

(On an update on CBs Marcus Peters and Aqib Talib and if he is having surgery)

"Yeah, so (CB) Aqib (Talib) I think I just got an alert on my phone that he's going to have surgery scheduled for Thursday – from (Senior Director of Sports Medicine and Performance) Reggie (Scott). He obviously let me know. It's not like I'm getting alerts from – you guys would probably know that before me. But, he got that second opinion. We'll find out the specifics once we get in there. It's unfortunate, but it is kind of what we had thought. So, I believe that's going to be scheduled for Thursday."

(On how long of a recovery that could require)

"It depends on once you get in there because of the specifics of what the severity is once you actually see what needs to be totally fixed. If there's something going on with his deltoid (ligament), then it ends up being a little bit longer, but we'll find out once that surgery takes place."

(On going against the Vikings secondary)

"Yeah, they're a great defense. I think you go back to last year when we played against them. You look at the production that they've had this year. Excellent coach in Mike Zimmer that does a great job presenting a variety of different looks. They play really sound on the early downs. They make you earn every single yard. Then when you talk about the secondary, you're looking at guys like (CB Xavier) Rhodes – we'll see if (CB Trae) Waynes is able to go – and then I think their two safeties in (S Andrew) Sendejo and (S) Harrison Smith do an excellent job. They've got some young guys with (CB Mike) Hughes, who's made some plays. He had a pick to the house against San Francisco. Then, (CB) Mackensie Alexander has been a guy out of Clemson that's had some good production for them and can play that nickel spot. So, they're really tough and they've got great players all over the defense."

(On Talib's deltoid ligament)

"In his ankle. I think it's deltoid. I'll get the specifics – well, I know your deltoid is your shoulder too. I think there's something in his ankle – (Senior Director of Communications) Artis (Twyman), we'll find out exactly what the heck we're calling that. Okay?"

(On if Talib also had a potential shoulder issue)

"Not that deltoid. I'm hopeful that there is an ankle, that there's a deltoid thing so I can come back and give you a hard time. If not, I'll say, 'You know what, I was wrong.' But, when you open it up I think the severity of what goes on, what needs to be fixed. If there's something else going on – I hope it's a deltoid, alright (laughs)? Whatever it might be, I hope it's not, because if it's something that we're anticipating then it'll be a little bit quicker recovery."

(On the fact that there is a deltoid ligament in the ankle)

"Doctor McVay."

(On Peters' recovery)

"Marcus is day-to-day right now. I think he's feeling good. I think it's a great representation of his toughness to even still have it be a chance that he's going to play. When you look at what occurred and you talk about what that position requires and entails in terms of the movement. So, he's taking steps in the right direction."

I would imagine it will be a game day decision for us just based on the nature of the way that we're going to practice this week. If we get him, we'll be extremely excited and that's a big boost to us. If not, like we said, have a whole lot of confidence in (CB) Sam Shields and (CB) Troy Hill and (CB) Nickell Robey (-Coleman) is going to be a guy we continue to lean on as well."

(On the recovery of OLB Dominique Easley)

"Same thing. He's day-to-day. It's a little bit more difficult because we're walking-thru. So, in terms of the physical toll where you can get a little bit better gauge, it's a little bit different in this short week. But, he's day-to-day right now as well."

(On if he's concerned at all about putting WR Cooper Kupp back to return punts and if he'll be conservative with that)

"Well, I think sometimes this week requires a little bit different approach. I think because it is a short week because of the consistency that you feel that Cooper (Kupp) will be able to field that ball. If he gets an opportunity, we'll always try to compete to do the best that we can from a production standpoint. I think our punt return unit, specifically, has done an excellent job of creating good field position. It's a big loss with (WR) Pharoh (Cooper), big loss for (WR) JoJo (Natson). Hopefully we'll get him back sooner than later, but you do feel good about having somebody that's able to consistently field it like that. You see when the ball is in Cooper's hands, he's able to create and get vertical and he knows how to naturally work edges on people as well."

(On where his team is at as they approach the quarter-season mark and how they get better at making in-game adjustments throughout all four quarters)

"Yeah, I think really you just take it one day at a time. Whether we were 3-0 or 0-3, our approach this week would remain the same. You look at the tape from last week, you figure out what can you do to continue to improve, continue to try to set standards for the things that we deem important. This week provides a great challenge going against an excellent team – really sound in all three phases. They have great players, they're very well coached, a team that went deep into the playoffs last year. They're going to be ready to go and certainly we have to as well. It's just like anything else. I thought our guys did some good things, but as coaches, first and foremost, and then as players, there's things that we can look at and see if we can improve upon on a short week."

(On how he's seen Vikings QB Kirk Cousins grow and change since he last worked with him)

"I think anytime that you're able to get experience at the quarterback position when you're as conscientious as he is, you're going to naturally get better. You take those mental reps, you bank them. Feel fortunate to have worked with Kirk (Cousins). I think he's somebody that the game of football is so important to him with the way that he consistently approaches it. Wants to know all the little nuances, the details. Does a great job with his communication with his teammates. He's able to change the launch point, making any throw. They're able to utilize him in a variety of ways and he's done an excellent job. You're really happy for, obviously the contract, but I think he's in a good place with his family and feeling good about the situation there. I'll be rooting and always pulling for Kirk after Thursday."

(On if he's noticed if the Vikings are doing anything different this year and what he took away from last season's matchup)

"You take away that it was a humbling day for us, specifically offensively I thought they did a great job. Really, after our first drive they regulated us. I put us in some bad down-and-distance situations, didn't make very good calls and Coach Zimmer did and those guys made plays. Really for us, those previous experiences against other opponents or against the similar opponents – or the same opponents in this instance – definitely provides an opportunity to look back. But, there's always going to be things situationally that a team or that a coaching staff will implement. You're still seeing a really sound defense. You're seeing a very sound offense. It's a different play caller with (Vikings Offensive Coordinator) John DeFilippo calling it, but some of the things that they try to utilize their personnel to put them in good spots. They've got the right players to do it and they've got the schemes. So, it's going to be a great challenge for us and we've got to be ready."

(On the things he's done differently as a young coach in the league)

"I don't know that it's really we're doing anything too differently. I think it's that I'm leaning on a lot of people that have more experience than I do. We really, truly try to collaborate as an organization here where – whether it's Reggie and (Director of Strength Training and Performance) Ted (Rath), our strength coach and our head of athletic training, whether it's leaning on Artis or from a coaching standpoint having (Defensive Coordinator) Wade Phillips and (Special Teams Coordinator) John Fassel, guys like (Assistant Head Coach/Linebackers) Joe Barry, (Run Game Coordinator) Aaron Kromer. So, I feel very fortunate to be surrounded by great people that have had a lot more experience in a lot of these situations than I have. That's where you lean on them and you try to make decisions that are best for our players and for our team. That's what we try to do, like I think probably most places, and you use those experiences to try to learn, but it's all about the people that you have around you and that's where I feel lucky to be in that spot."

(On what he takes away from the Vikings' tape against the Bills last Sunday)

"I think the score is a little bit misleading. You don't want to take away from the Bills' performance, but I think there were some off-schedule plays, there were some short fields. You don't take anything for granted. This is a great football team coming in here and it doesn't really matter what they did the previous week. You know they'll be ready to go. They've consistently played well. They have veteran players that have played at a high-caliber, All-Pro level, year after year and they've got those key players at the key spots. That's something that you don't ever take for granted. They're extremely well coached. They're sound, both from a fundamental standpoint and a schematic standpoint. It's something that we've got to be ready to go for. That game is one of them that you look at, but by no means do you think that's indicative of the caliber of football team that's coming in here. Even when you look at the tape, they still did, really, a lot of really good things that provide a lot of issues and present a lot of issues for us. From an offensive standpoint, they've got some great stuff that they can do offensively to give us problems defensively and same thing with our special team."

(On if they feel rushed with the short turnaround this week)

"You mean squeezing six, seven days' worth of work into three? Rushed? Yes. It's a little bit different. The one thing is everybody has to do it. So, it's something that you don't make any excuses. You just handle it because it's something that everybody has to deal with. The Vikings are dealing with it this week and so are we. It's a great opportunity for us to say, 'Let's figure out a way after a good win, gather ourselves together, move forward, get ready to go mentally and see if we can put together another good physical performance against a tough football team.' Then, that'll enable you to have a little bit more of an enjoyable weekend if you can do that."

(On how many hours of sleep he's averaging this week)

"Well, what does it look like? Maybe two? Don't answer that question (laughs). No, I've gotten a little bit less sleep. So, I got a few hours last night."

(On his get-out-of-work-early memo for the fans for Thursday)

"We did. Hopefully we can continue to create those atmospheres and those environments that we've had the last couple weeks. Our fans have done a great job creating a good atmosphere and environment at the Coliseum. Hopefully that'll be the same at 5:20 (p.m.) on Thursday and people will be there ready to go in what will hopefully be a great game that they can be proud of our product that we'll put out there."

(On Wade Phillips wondering if he can also get out of work early on Thursday)

"I feel like I answer to Wade, so whatever Wade wants."