



## LOS ANGELES RAMS

### Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – October 1, 2018

#### **(On how his weekend went)**

"It was good. Yeah, we got to relax a little bit. Went to dinner with my parents and girlfriend on Saturday night and some family friends, so that was nice. Then, enjoyed watching football yesterday. A lot of good games, a lot of good situations that kind of came up that you try to think through, how would we want to handle that with our team. What you also realize, too, is when you see some of these guys get injured, how unfortunate that is – just around the league. You're just watching that and it's unfortunate. But, it was an exciting, good, relaxing weekend. Now it's time to get ready to go for a tough team this week."

#### **(On how well he thinks the offensive line is playing and what he attributes their improvement to over the last year)**

"Yeah, they're playing excellent. I think (Run Game Coordinator) Aaron Kromer does a great job just having them understand the intent of these plays, what we're trying to get done. The communication that is required from that position, specifically, I think (C) John Sullivan does a great job with that communication. Then, I think really both of our guards and our tackles understand kind of the intent of the calls. What are we trying to get accomplished, how do we want to fit certain blocks based on the technique of the defensive linemen. So, I'm not exactly sure the way that they're grading out and some of these other things, but they're grading out pretty well for us. I think we can always continue to improve. But, I think, when you talk about the efficiency of the O-line, ability to handle various play calls – whether that's runs, passes – some of the protection communication that's required, especially against a great team like the Vikings the other night with some of the various looks that (Vikings) Coach (Mike) Zimmer presents in some of those known passing situations. They've done a really nice job and it's been encouraging. We can always continue to take steps, but Aaron Kromer's leadership, really those veteran guys up front, they've played really well. Keeping (QB) Jared (Goff) clean, like he mentioned the other day. We feel really good about those guys."

#### **(On an updates on OLB Dominique Easley and how close LB Mark Barron is to returning)**

"Yeah, so with (OLB Dominique) Easley, unfortunately, he just got surgery this morning. This poor guy. I couldn't be more impressed with just the toughness, how resilient he's been fighting himself, fighting through so many different things with this knee. It's upsetting because of how many things he's had to go through and what a great job he's done persevering to even get to the point where he's playing this year. Haven't made the decision yet, but it's likely that we're going to put him in IR (injured reserve). It's tough and you feel for him. You love him, you appreciate everything that he's done for us and the way that he's fought to get back to even this position and contribute the way that he has. Hopefully, I know he was having that surgery this morning and I'm looking forward to hearing that everything went well for him when I talk to (Senior Director of Sports Medicine and Performance) Reggie (Scott) after this. With (LB) Mark (Barron), he did participate last week and we're encouraged. We're looking forward to seeing how he progresses this week and there's a possibility that he could be ready to go. That's something that we're going to evaluate as the week progresses, but this was kind of always a target date that we had set to really get a chance to truly evaluate him knowing that we had those four games in really a short time span. So, this week provides an opportunity to evaluate him. If we can get Mark back out on the field we'll feel good about that."

#### **(On if Easley's knee injury is to the same knee that he last tore his ACL on)**

"It is. It's the same knee."

**(On which knee Easley had surgery on)**

"You know what, I'm not sure. It's his meniscus. I want to say as I'm looking at him, it might be his left knee, as I was looking at him the other day. When you're talking about just going through his, but poor guy has been through a lot. Really you just can't say anything except for just how impressed you are with the way he's handled this, to get himself into a position to compete. That's why those injuries that you see yesterday, they hit home. Especially when it affects some of your players that these guys mean a lot to you and you hate to see them go through that."

**(On who or what combination would step in to fill Easley's role)**

"A lot of that will be predicated on our game-plan this week. (OLB Trevon Young) 'T-Young' was active last week as a result of Easley being down, so he's the first guy that would be active on your 46 (-man active roster). But I think you could see a combination of things. You look at, really, those guys that are playing the majority of the snaps from that outside linebacker spot are (OLB) Samson (Ebukam) and (OLB) Matt Longacre last week. I think you can expect to see (DL) Justin Lawler maybe get some more opportunities. But they've done a really good job on our defensive coaching staff of mixing up that unit, that lineup and really situationally dependent upon who's coming off that edge. You see (DT) Ndamukong (Suh) has a sack coming from the defensive end situation in the nickel pass rush. You look at (DL) John Franklin (Myers) and then you see (DT) Aaron (Donald) make an impact from those interior rush spots. I think it will be a combination of things, and then really until we get into that full game-plan mode for Seattle, how we supplement that loss is still to be determined."

**(On if he has made any determination on kickers)**

"Yes, we're still evaluating that. I think there's a chance also that (K) Greg (Zuerlein) could be ready to go this week, so that's something that's very encouraging. He had a workout yesterday, did a great job. Like anything else, got a little bit fatigue towards the end, but there is a possibility that Greg could be ready to go. How exactly that's factored in with whether we end up having two or just one. Because we had some injury situations where we had a lot of guys that were able to be active participants the other night, just as a result of some of the guys that we were missing. Whether it be (WR) JoJo (Natson), you're looking at (CB) Aqib (Talib) and things like that. So, those are things that we've been talking about all morning. Really, until you get a little bit further into the week with Greg, with both Mark (Barron) those are things that will be evaluated and will certainly affect how go about our 46 (-man active roster) and figuring out who's going to be active on gameday."

**(On if Natson could play this weekend)**

"There's a possibility. Yes, there's a possibility. He had a good surgery, it is on that left hand so his dominate hand in terms of how he catches the football. Really, how he hold the ball, I should say, is with that right (hand). We'll see how the week goes with him as well."

**(On if everyone got through the weekend without any off the field incidents)**

"I hope so, I didn't hear anything otherwise. So as far as I know, that was something that guys handled it. They came back ready to go and haven't heard anything otherwise."

**(On how the outside linebackers are coming along and if he is looking for any more growth in that position)**

"Yeah, I think you always try to evaluate. I think those guys have done a nice job. I think each game, each situation presents a different way of, how do you evaluate it? We happened to be in a two-minute situation both at the end of the half and at the end of the game against the (Minnesota) Vikings, so that dictated being in a couple different personnel groupings where maybe we didn't play as many snaps of base (defensive package) where you have your SAM and your WILL linebacker on the field as many snaps as you're accustomed to. So, I think each game kind of presents a different way of evaluating it, but the more rush, the more problems that you can create with those guys coming off that edge, just based on philosophically how we want to operate, is something that we always place at a premium. But, those guys are also asked to do some different things coverage whys. We feel good about the way (Defensive Line Coach Bill Johnson) 'Billy' and (Assistant Head Coach/Linebackers Coach) Joe (Barry) have done a nice job helping those guys progress. In (OLB) Dominique Easley's absence, guys are going to be asked to step up and you're certainly always looking for big time production from that outside spot."

**(On if he senses any change from last season going to play the Seattle Seahawks this week)**

"Yeah, I think just like anything else, we've got a whole lot of respect for (Seahawks Head) Coach (Pete) Carroll and this team and really, a tough division opponent. Last year was last year. We're really looking to see what can we do to get better this year, to get better this week and we know that is a very, very difficult place to play. Fortunately, things worked out for us in that game that you're referring to. The other time we played them, we had a tough time taking care of the football - they did a great job finding a way to come away with the win. So, we've got a lot of respect for these guys. We know we need to have a great week of preparation. Our goal is to try to see if we can go up there and accomplish that and do a great job throughout the course of the week, one day at a time. It's going to be a great challenge, it really will be. Really, that's kind of just our consistent approach. I know it sounds cliché, but I think it's kind of served us well and that's really kind of just that singular focus on getting better today and trying to do a great job with our preparation throughout the course of the week."

**(On if he self-scouted this weekend and if the first quarter of the season is the time to do that)**

"Yeah, it is. We try to do that every single week, whether you have a little bit of a break built in or not, always want to try to be mindful. But really, those four games serve as kind of a good break, if you will, in the action to compile enough stats where, I'm sure some teams, they're still going back and they're looking at the tape from last year. But really, a four-game sample size in terms of how we're operating on both sides of the football, does provide enough representative clips of, that's usually what the bulk of the way teams will prepare for you and kind of what they're looking at. So, being in tune with how we're operating situationally, if we have any tendencies that we need to be aware of - those are things that we do try to be aware of week-to-week. But, this definitely does serve as a nice break to be able to be even more intentional about that."