



## LOS ANGELES RAMS

### Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – October 15, 2018

#### **(Opening remarks)**

"Just want to start out by just saying that our thoughts and prayers are with the (Los Angeles Chargers Owner Alex) Spanos and Chargers organization and also, the (Seattle Seahawks Owner Paul) Allen family and the Seahawks organization. Like we said, when we were in Seattle last week, just gives a perspective to things when you're working in football. Those are things that you certainly never take for granted. We wish nothing but the best for those families, they're in our thoughts and prayers. These are things that are always tough and give you that perspective on what's real and things like that. So, from an injury standpoint, fortunately, when you look at the injury to (WR Cooper) Kupp yesterday, it looks bad. You always think the worst right away. Got a little knee sprain right there. He's going to be week-to-week. Most likely, he probably will miss this week's game. Then dependent upon how he responds, it'll just kind of be on a week-to-week basis. But, that's really, fortunate news when you start thinking the best and when you just look at the way that that play looked. (G) Rodger Saffold (III) got a knee sprain as well, we expect him to be able to go this week. (OLB) Matt Longacre had some back spasms, but he should be day-to-day – not expecting him to miss any time. (DL Michael) Brockers as well with his AC sprain. So, positive news. Unfortunate for Cooper that he probably will miss this week. But, thank goodness that it wasn't something that looked like it could potentially be season ending."

#### **(On if WR Robert Woods will fill Kupp's role)**

"Those are things that we're still working through when we put the game plan together. Certainly, (WR) Robert (Woods) will take on a role that he might fill some of the voids that are left by Cooper, like he's done over the last couple weeks. (WR) Brandin's (Cooks) got some position flexibility as well. Then, we've got confidence in (WR) Josh (Reynolds) and (WR) KhaDarel (Hodge). Then, dependent upon what we end up doing, whether you end up getting somebody else in here or not – those are things that are going to be predicated on our game plan. But, it's a big loss however you cut it and guys will be asked to step up and that's exactly what the expectation will be."

#### **(On if being the only undefeated team in the NFL means anything to him)**

"No, it means that you feel good about being 6-0. But, when you talk about it – we've talked about it – who was the last undefeated team last year? I don't know. I just know that guys have played well enough to find a way to win in some tough atmospheres over the last couple weeks and it's a long season. You're six games into it - there's still so much football left. The good teams continue to get better as the season progresses and that's really what our focus and concentration is on. Can't say enough about how resilient and what a great job guys have done finishing out games, finding a way to get wins. But, our focus and concentration is on, now, getting ready for a tough division opponent. They play tonight, so it'll be interesting to see how they do and watch them and get that preparation started and find a way to get better this week and move forward accordingly."

#### **(On if they're in the market or working out potential receivers to join the team)**

"There might be somebody that we have a history with, but we're working through those things right now. So, I wouldn't say 'workout', but there might be somebody that we would bring in."

#### **(On if he can give an indication to who a potential wideout is)**

"I think we'll just wait until we kind of have some finality to that, but there are some potential discussions as far as, bringing somebody in that would help give us some depth. But, we feel very confident in those four guys that I mentioned, but because of the way that we operate in a personnel grouping where we're specifically, in a lot of instances, in some three-receiver sets. It would be more to provide depth than anything else. But, those are things that we're working through and just out of respect for the situation, if something were to fall through or anything like that, I'd rather wait to disclose that."

**(On the if he expects K Greg Zuerlein to come back this week)**

"I think there's a chance. How that affects (K) Cairo (Santos), I can't exactly say. But if he is able to go, we'll be excited to get (K) Greg (Zuerlein) back. But really, I think Cairo's done a nice job over the last couple weeks. He's had two game-winning kicks. We've won by a couple points last week, you end up winning by three yesterday. His production has been instrumental in getting those wins. We're very grateful for what he's done. Whenever Greg is ready to come back, how exactly that affects Cairo, can't say specifically just because of some of the other things that are involved with regards to injuries – the 53 (man roster), the 46 (man gameday roster) – so, we're going to work him out this week and we'll see, but he's making steps in the right direction."

**(On if Longacre's injury is related to the cold weather at all or if he's concerned that it might continue to be an issue)**

"I don't think so. I think it was more of just the result of back spazzing out a little – just getting normal back spasms. He's had some issues with that. I thought he made some great plays – first play of the game, he does an excellent job taking on blocker, coming off, making a play in the run right away. I think it's something that just probably a result of just the back bothering him, but I don't think it was a result of the weather. But, Matt would be able to tell you that better than I would."

**(On G Jamon Brown's performance and why he was put in at right guard as opposed to left)**

"(G) Jamon (Brown) did a nice job. He came in... he's a starting caliber player and we feel like Jamon is a starting guard. Really just because of the way that he's had a lot of reps at that right side, that's what he started at all last year. Then with (OL) Austin (Blythe) having the ability to play really any of those three interior spots, we felt like so that Jamon could play at the spot he's comfortable with and then you get Austin over to that left side because he's some position flex and he's comfortable with that. That's what went into that decision and I thought he did a nice job stepping in and doing a great job in both phases that ended up leading to us be able to get a win."

**(On OLB Ogonnia Okoronkwo being able to come off PUP)**

"So now the 21-day period starts for him where he gets to practice and take part in that, and then we'll be able to make a decision whether you want to make him active or not. We're looking forward to getting that going. I think he's in a good place, and in terms of how that goes over the next couple of weeks, will determine whether he becomes apart of that active roster. Sometimes those things end up sorting themselves out, unfortunately if you do end have injuries or things of that nature, but that 21-day period will start this week."

**(On if after reviewing film he thinks his play-calling was worthy of his post-game criticism)**

"Yes, I just think some of the things that we did in some of the spots. Anytime that you're in the role that I am, our job is to try to put our players in the best spots and you don't want to waste plays. Every play is so important. When you think about a couple of the specific instances... the fourth play of the game, when we end up having (RB) Todd (Gurley) coming across in that motion, we hit it. It's an incomplete pass, but you really waste a play right there in the high red zone where every play is so important, but specifically in those area. My gut told me to take a timeout in that instance and I didn't do it. It ended up leading us to not executing the way that we're accustomed to, and that's a result of the operation that starts with me. That's an instance right there. When you've got a situation at the two-minute, the first play of the drive, when you feel like they're going to play a split-safety match coverage and you call a longer developing play and there's really not an answer, leads to a sack. Those are the plays that I was really disappointed in myself. I thought the sequence when we're up 20-3, we get the ball back, and really, as a result of us not communicating properly. But again, it all goes back to it starts with me and it starts with us as a coaching staff in terms of making sure that, 'Are we getting plays in that we have the opportunity to be able to communicate?' If we're

trying to run two plays, or one or the other, are we being mindful of the atmosphere, the environment? That really ended up hurting us where it ended up leading into a turnover, they get a quick score and get it to a 20-10 game. And then I thought the two plays that we ended up taking sacks, when we were on the 19 yard line. Fortunately, the second one on the bootleg didn't end up hurting us, we were running the ball so efficiently. Then the third down-and-three, where we end up knocking ourselves out of, what you feel like is going to be a good field goal range. So to answer your question, yeah, I'm still bothered by those. I thought that you got to learn from them. I'll move on, but I think it's great. We ask our players to try to learn from some of their decisions or their execution and things like that. It's the same way. Those plays didn't work out in our favor, but they didn't really go in alignment with some of the flow and the feel of the game, with the way we were running the football. Those are the things that, hopefully, you get better with and you learn from experience. But the aggressive nature in which we operate and try to attack people, I'll never apologize for that. It's more of the situational awareness, within the framework of ultimately playing complementary football to win a game and are you really putting your players in some of those spots? I thought I put (QB) Jared (Goff) in some tough spots specifically and then the start of the two-minute drive. Those are the plays that bother you the most."

**(On if he thinks he was too hard on himself last night regarding his play calling)**

"No. You know what, I think that you're so... what I don't want to do is ever take away how hard it is to win in this league. I thought they did a great job. Never do you ever want to take away for the respect and admiration that we have for the Broncos and what a tough place that is to play. What a great job they did with some of the things defensively, offensively, and special teams. It's just too much respect. But, the amount of preparation that goes into the game-plan. When you do things that aren't in alignment with trying to play complimentary football, win a football game within the flow of it. Those are the things that I expect to be a better job for our team. To say that you're not hard on yourself, it's not like there weren't some things that we felt like we did a good job with and that we helped try to put our players in good spots. You don't want to ever seem like you're a negative guy, but I do think that the accountability and always just trying to make sure that you're learning from your mistakes like our players. That's kind of the environment we want to preach. I don't want to be some Negative Nelly either and not appreciative of earning, being able to be apart of a win on the road in the NFL. These things are really hard to do and we cherish every single moment and every single one that we're fortunate enough to get."

**(On issues with pass protection on Sunday)**

"I didn't think it was at all the pass protection, if you look at the individual sacks. It was a great rush by (Broncos OLB Bradley) Chubb on a play action where a tight end ends up – that's a tough matchup where a tight end is blocking him. Had a longer developing play at the start of the two minute. Then, the two plays where it's a quick game on the 19-yard-line on the third-down-and-3 and we end up getting flushed, they make a sack. Then, the other one is a boot leg. Then, the last one on the third-down in the two minute at the end of the first half, they just did a good job. Jared's climbing up in the pocket, ends up losing a couple yards. But, I think the tendency is to have sacks always pegged on the lineman and I really didn't think they were responsible for really any of them –that's the thing. I thought those guys did a great job being able to get there. They've got great players on the perimeter. They've got great edge rushers. (Broncos OLB) Von Miller – we know what a phenomenal player he is. I think Chubb's a top-five pick for a reason. He's going to be a great player in this league. I thought they had a bunch of other guys that affected and influenced the way that you have to go about your plan. I think again, it goes back to some of the selections by me and then just trying to be in the frame work of the timing and rhythm. But I do think it's unfair to the linemen to think that those were a result of their actual production when in fact, most of those to me are pegged on some of the plays and spots that I put our guys in."

**(On how he assessed the play of CBs Troy Hill and Sam Shields)**

"I thought (CB) Sam (Shields) did a nice job. I think there's a couple tough situations where not really sure, but you've got to go with whatever is called. Then, I think (CB) Troy (Hill) – everybody wants to see a couple plays where (Broncos QB) Case (Keenum) makes a couple great throws down the sideline. (Broncos WR) Emmanuel Sanders makes a great play down the left sideline and then you look at (Broncos WR) Demaryius Thomas later on and then (Broncos WR Cameron) Sutton. Those are contested-type plays. It's one thing if you're just getting beat, it's another thing when you've got guys that are going up and some 50-

50 balls. Those aren't plays that you say, 'Man.' Troy Hill is a good player that's made a lot of plays and he's winning those opportunities more times than not. He made some of those plays last week against Seattle. So those plays don't affect and influence the confidence. He's coming up, he's tackling, he's understanding his responsibilities. Part of being a corner – it's the same thing that you guys talked to (CB) Marcus (Peters) earlier. What you love about Marcus, why he's an elite player, is he's kind of got that ability to say, 'Hey, it is what it is. We move on.' Now, I know he used some different language, alright, but the point that I'm making is this: if you're going to be a great player in this league, there's too many other great players. You've got to have a short memory. You've got to have the ability to be mentally tough and respond. We feel like Troy Hill is one of those guys as well. Yesterday where guys made a couple good throws and catches doesn't dictate or determine what type of player he is when you look at his entire body of work, specifically for us as a coaching staff over the last couple years."

**(On what went right in correcting the run defense to holding the Broncos to 3.5 yards per carry)**

"Well, I think the guys did a great job. I thought (Defensive Coordinator) Wade (Phillips) and the coaching staff put together a great plan and I thought we played physical up front. I thought we hit blocks. I thought we were able to gain back guys. You could see a couple guys where they were playing gap-and-a-half technique where they're able to shed and fall back up front. I thought (DL Michael) Brockers and (DT) Aaron (Donald) were really guys that showed up. Then, I thought on the second level you could really see (LB) Cory (Littleton) has done a nice job consistently being involved in the action. I thought our safeties were active when the coverage or whenever that specific call dictated it. I thought it was (S) Lamarcus Joyner's most complete game where he made the plays he was supposed to make, was in great position, did a great job on the sack being able to get there on a fourth-down-and-3. I just think it was all 11 (players) playing together, keeping their gap integrity and I thought we played violent and hit blocks the right way up front."

**(On if he will say anything to the players about being 6-0)**

"You know what, you say to these guys, 'Hey, great job. To be 6-0 in this league is really hard, but we want to focus on our process, our standard of performance and that's focusing on getting better, and getting better as the season progresses.' Nobody stops the season after six weeks. If they did and they said this is when everything is finalized, then hey, we could maybe enjoy it and appreciate that. But, there's a lot of football left. We've got to get better. Other teams are getting better. There's a lot of different things that go on week in and week out. Really, the narrative is written every week. You look at it, just how many different things – you look at some of the scores around the league and the consistency is the truest measurement of performance. We've got to consistently put good performances together, but we've also got to focus on making sure that we're getting better as the rest of the league is. If we do that, we feel confident in the players that we do have and the coaches, but it's really tough and we've got to do it one day at a time."

**(On if he will do anything different this week to guard against fatigue with a third straight road game this week)**

"You know what, not necessarily because of the road but because of some of the guys that we just had from a physical game. Some of the injuries that we mentioned. We could look at potentially being a little bit more walk-thru driven on Wednesday's practice, which we've kind of already started working in that direction. Depending upon how guys are feeling tomorrow and making sure that ultimately the way that this team has been, the way that these guys have done an excellent job of understanding that we can get a lot of work in those walk-thrus and take some of the physical toll off their bodies so that they can end up being as fresh as possible on Sunday. That might be something that we consider, but that would really be it. It wouldn't be exclusive to the road or anything like that. I'd be more of a result of just getting guys as fresh as possible for a Sunday kickoff at 1 (o'clock) in San Fran."