



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – November 28, 2018

(On if the adjustment to the team's practice schedule this week was due to rain in the forecast)

"Yup, that's exactly right. Yeah, because we're playing indoors this week, a lot of the good work that we get is typically on Thursday, where you're getting your full-speed reps and a lot of the things that we wanted to try to get. You'd like to be able to have it on Thursday, but with the rain and the elements, want to try to be smart about what are we playing in this week and how can we get that good work just based on what the weather and what we anticipate the weather being."

(On how he would evaluate DT Ndamukong Suh's play so far this season)

"I think he's done a really nice job. I think the thing that has been impressive is the versatility that he's displayed where you don't often times see guys that have been dominant interior rushers and dominant interior players have the ability to seamlessly transition and do a variety of different things coming off that edge from an (defensive) end spot as well. Those are things that he's done throughout the course of his career, but I think in a lot of ways, specific to certain situations or what we're trying to dictate and how that effects the way that offense adjusts and reacts to what the defense does, his versatility and flexibility has been instrumental. He's made a couple huge rushes in crunch-time situations. Really enjoy being around him."

(On how much Suh's presence has affected DT Aaron Donald's ability to record 14.5 sacks this season)

"I think in a lot of instances, you always talk about the power of the unit. (DT) Aaron (Donald) has done some unbelievable things, but I think he'd probably be the first to tell you that it's a credit to the unit, to the other 10 guys around him that are helping him be able to get to certain situations. There's a lot of instances where a player of his presence does help kind of dictate some things that maybe get you in some favorable spots. Both those guys have done great things – not only this year, but throughout their careers. Really enjoy having (DT Ndamukong) Suh here."

(On if the schedule change impacts CB Aqib Talib in terms of determining whether or not he could play on Sunday)

"It won't. We'll really just kind of move it up a day. With something like that, we can always kind of create some different scenarios to continue to evaluate him separate from what we do with the team. So, it's not going to have any sort of effect. If anything, it'll probably help us get a better gauge earlier in the week than what we maybe anticipated."

(On if he has any caution to a letdown after the amount of adversity the team has overcome in recent weeks)

"No, I don't think so. I think probably, if anything, it'd be the opposite – that these guys show they can handle a variety of different situations and circumstances. I think guys feel fresh and recharged coming off the bye. There's a good energy today. There was a good energy on Monday when the guys came in. I have full confidence in our players' ability to kind of just seamlessly handle however it is that we want to operate and ultimately get ready to go for a tough team on Sunday."

(On if there was anything that stood out to him from QB Jared Goff's performance last Monday night against the Kansas City Chiefs)

"He did a great job. I think you see just the way he responds, too. He took some shots and he just continues to compete. The one thing that really continues to stand out is his ability to respond from if a negative play occurs. In a lot of instances, the way the flow of the game was going, where we kind of had a lead, then you give it back to those guys and they had had some success defensively against our offense. He had such a great demeanor with his teammates. You could see that resonates with them. There's a belief that exists and then they're able to go get it done. But, it was exciting to see him create with his legs off-schedule on the touchdown on third down as well. So, he's doing a lot of really good things. There's always room for improvement, but I think his ability to be at his best in those critical moments was big for our team and really just for the overall feel and then ultimately getting the win."

(On what has enabled the Rams' 2017 draft class to perform at the level they are now)

"I think it's a combination of our personnel staff and our coaching staff working in unison to identify players that not only were very productive, but smart players – people that liked football that possess some of the traits and characteristics within the framework of their position and really, just the overall personality that we like. You see a lot of smart football players. Guys that have continued to grow, guys that like being around football. That's something that's important, but whether it's a first, second rounder, I think we've seen guys that if you redrafted, a lot of those guys would be taken a lot sooner. We feel fortunate to get some of those guys when we did. I remember how highly we thought of a (WR) Josh Reynolds to be able to get him, how highly you think of a (WR) Cooper Kupp. We really like (TE) Gerald (Everett). We liked all those guys that we got. You get a (S) John Johnson (III) and I think for those guys to continue to mature, continue to progress and get better and become intricate parts of this team is a real credit to the coaches' ability to develop and then those players' ability to be able to continue to improve and do it themselves."

(On how difficult it is to identify players between the second and fourth rounds of the draft that have become staples of the current roster)

"I think, really, I would say this – I've been so impressed and appreciative of how thorough our personnel staff is with regards to getting the information necessary and then (General Manager) Les (Snead) and his guys do an excellent job of if we need more information based on our personal interaction – whether it's bringing guys in for a 30 visit, spending some time with them at the (NFL Scouting) Combine. There's some different avenues that we can explore, but I think the attention to detail with how thorough those guys are and then how they're able to communicate that to us, helps us to be able to kind of target those guys and be able to identify players that we feel like we want to be able to work with and get a chance to develop."

(On how he is looking to take advantage of the Lions' up-and-down performance this season and getting pressure on QB Matthew Stafford)

"I think the Lions are a good football team. I know they're extremely well coached. They've got guys that are really dangerous in all three phases and can make a lot of plays. I think, if anything, this league is a week-to-week league. It's just so competitive. I saw a team that played wire-to-wire with an 8-3 football team on Thanksgiving. You see them beat a team like New England and Carolina. So, this is a quality football team that we've got to be ready to go. I know they'll do an excellent job with their preparation. (Lions QB) Matthew Stafford is a great quarterback. You see why he's a No. 1 overall pick. He's got the ability to create in rhythm, off-schedule. You talk about similar to what was so scary about both (Packers QB Aaron) Rodgers and (Chiefs QB Patrick) Mahomes, the arm – the ability for you to really make any sort of throw anywhere on the field no matter whether you get flushed or whether you're in the pocket is scary. He's a great athlete. They've got some guys on defense that are making a lot of plays and they do a great job playing sound systems that you need to have answers to in all three phases. It's not going to take much for us to have a great focus and concentration knowing that we've got to be at our best to go get it done."

(On where run defense ranks in terms of getting better over the next five weeks and what he attributes their struggles in that area to)

"It's a good question. I think the thing that's so complex about that – and we talk to our players about it – each play is its own entity. When there's 11 moving parts, not only on your unit, but then the other 11, with 22 (players) and things that can change and adjust and adapt, then there's great athletes that make some outstanding individual plays. I think you take each play as its own entity and you make sure that,

'How can we play efficient football down in and down out, snap in and snap out?' and then understand within the framework of the situations that arise throughout the course of a game, 'Are we doing the things necessary?' The numbers can get skewed for good or for bad. For example, if you're on offense, we pop a long run where (RB) Todd (Gurley II) does a great job, breaks a tackle and goes down the sideline for 80 (yards), but then the other way, the other 20 carries that we're getting, you can get a skewed perspective. So, it's a matter of what's occurring, why it's not working or why it is working and making sure that we do a good job giving the clarity for our players and then we've got to go execute."

(On if he has primarily looked at what Detroit has done this season while studying Lions Head Coach Matt Patricia or if he goes back to studying New England and what he did there)

"I think it's a combination of both. You can see the imprint that he has on this team. Some of the things that they do schematically that – I got a chance to coach in Washington when we played New England when he was the coordinator there and you see a lot of the same principles where he does a phenomenal job. You can see there's a clear-cut philosophy, there's a clear-cut identity. The players know what they're supposed to do and they do it with some urgency and they're getting better and better. I think you've seen their run defense play really well. So, to answer your question, any time we go into a game, we want to be thorough with our preparation, but it is a fine line of overlooking at things to then where you chase some ghosts. But, certainly you do have a lot of respect for what (Lions Head) Coach (Matt) Patricia has done, his imprint on this football as the head coach, but then also with his defensive background. So, looking at some New England things is definitely something that you explore in weeks like this."