



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – December 10, 2018

(On updates on C John Sullivan and G Rodger Saffold III)

"They should be good. (C John Sullivan) checked out fine. He was just getting checked for a head injury and he's okay. Then, (G Rodger) Saffold (III) had an ankle, but he returned and he should be good."

(On an update on CB Dominique Hatfield)

"Unfortunately, he's going to have to get a similar surgery to what (WR) Pharoh (Cooper) had. So, that's going to mean IR for him. Fortunately, there was nothing with the fibula or anything like that, but just some of the ligaments – got to go in there and get that tight-rope procedure where you get those things tightened up. It's unfortunate for him. He's done a great job for us. Really, a great story when you just think about some of the things that he overcame to become a part of the active roster last year, then he's continued to be a big contributor for us, specific to special teams. That's unfortunate, but that's what happened with him."

(On if RB Malcolm Brown will eventually go on injured reserve)

"He will. He did. That probably just hasn't gone through yet. So, we'll put him on IR and we'll end up activating (OLB Trevon Young) 'T-Young' back on the active roster."

(On if anything on offense looked better or worse than he thought after reviewing the game)

"It was kind of similar to what you felt like after the game. I think the best way I would put it is a combination of, number one like I had mentioned, some of the decisions, some of the spots that our players were put in based on the play selection by me. But then I think also, it was a rare combination of a lot of our guys that are the most accountable, most reliable, having some instances where they made some uncharacteristic mistakes, really. It's one thing if you can try to overcome it when a lot of those occur on one play, but they seemed to kind of conveniently work out where it was on different sets of plays that end up hurting your ability to get into any rhythm, develop any continuity. I think the hardest thing to get into any rhythm was mainly a result of just some of the things that, in the situations they were put in by me. But then our players, they did some things that – we've got a lot of confidence in our guys. Certainly, this is going to be a learning opportunity, but there were some things when you just look at it, you say those are things that we aren't accustomed to seeing from our players. Certainly, the (Chicago) Bears defense had a say and they had a role in us making some of those decisions, but I think a large part of it, too, was somewhat self-inflicted. Those are things that we as coaches can look at doing a better job of and then the players will do the same."

(On why RB Todd Gurley II received so few touches on Sunday night)

"Really, it was a result – we didn't have a lot of plays. Didn't really get any sort of continuity, any sort of rhythm going on any of our drives. Even when we were able to sustain the long drive and kick the field goal, really, you're kind of fighting back-and-forth between getting into some second-and-longs where you're usually accustomed to throwing it. So, they did some different things defensively. Certainly, I would have some decisions back and make sure that you try to be more cognizant of that based on what they were doing. That's something that you try to look at yourself as a coach and be better, but mainly it was a result of doing some different things that we felt like we had a better chance throwing the football. Then, you kind of get behind the sticks if you're not efficient on those early downs when you do throw it. That kind of limits your options and opportunities, but those are things that I have to be better for."

(On if he ever goes into a cold-weather game feeling like he strategically needs to run the ball more)

"No, you have specific approaches that you'd like to be able to carry out, specific to what's it going to take for you to win the game as a team – putting all three phases together. For us offensively, we felt like, certainly when the ball is in Todd's hands, good things happen. That's something that, in hindsight I certainly wish I would've made a lot of different selections yesterday and those are things that I have to learn from too as well. You do have specific approaches and then in a lot of instances, it's predicated on, 'All right, what has that defense done in certain down-and-distances, certain situations and then what do we feel like is the best way to attack them based on our preparation through the week and then being able to adapt and adjust within the framework of the game. I would say that's where, really, I didn't feel like I did a good enough job for us – is being able to adapt and adjust within the framework of the way that game was playing out. Those are things that, certainly, I expect to be better for moving forward."

(On if cold temperatures can do something mentally or physically to a quarterback that might not allow him to play at his top form)

"I think if you said is it easier to throw it when it's nice weather – it's dry elements, different things like that, the ball doesn't feel like the mic in your hand when you catch it or when you're throwing it – I think that definitely does play a factor in just the efficiency at which you're able to throw the football. I don't think that affected him. I think, again, there were some great throws that he made in that game yesterday and then there were certainly a handful of situations where he was put in tough spots. Then, they made some great plays, where they're getting some pressure, forcing some things. I thought they made some great plays to be able to get the ball back for their offense. But, to say that it's as easy to throw it in those conditions, I don't think would be accurate, but I don't think that's the reason why we didn't play as well offensively."

(On being a leader and if he goes to anyone for advice after a game)

"Our coaches are great references and resources. You talk to the players, different people in the organization, in the building and still talk to my dad. It's great to be able to have his advice, his perspective. I've got so many good friends in the coaching business that I've crossed paths with that have been great influences. They can share in the disappointment that you have when you have a big game like that. You feel like within the framework of your role, you didn't do a good enough job. But, the only thing I know how to do is go back to work, work hard, make sure that we don't avoid some of the things that led to us not getting the outcome that we wanted and continue to try to be process driven. Focus on moving forward, improving and getting ready for a tough (Philadelphia Eagles) Philly team this week."

(On what his dad said)

"Well, first of all, he said, 'I love you no matter what, man,' and he just said, 'Hey, these are great opportunities to be able to look at a setback as a setup for a comeback,' like you've heard us talk about before. Just make sure that you always continue to demonstrate that resilient mindset and mentality. These are great opportunities to really be what you say. It's easy to always talk about those things when things go well, but when you truly get tested, or you go through real setbacks and small adversities and how you handle that, often defines what kind of team that you are and really, what kind of leader you are. We certainly expect to respond the right way as a team."

(On losing in New Orleans and in Chicago and if that makes getting home field advantage throughout the playoffs more of a priority)

"I wouldn't say that. I think each game presents a new narrative and really, for us, it's about why did we not get it done in New Orleans? Why did we feel like we didn't get it done last night in Chicago and how can we move forward accordingly? To say that you wouldn't want to have the ability to stay at home and play, that wouldn't be accurate. But we know that what's important for us is that to even have those types of conversations, for that to even be a potential possibility for us, we've got to go take care of business with what we can control and that's getting ready for the Philadelphia Eagles and the defending world champs right now. That's exactly what we're doing."

(On the Rams defense having 10 takeaways in the last three games and what has been working defensively in that area)

"I think they're just doing an excellent job swarming. You see the three interceptions that we were able to get and (S) John Johnson (III) almost got a second – making their opportunities count. I think a lot of those

instances, guys did a great job making the plays when they were there to be made. There's a lot to be said for that with, really, (CB) Nickell (Robey-Coleman), with John and (CB) Marcus (Peters) and all those set us up in positions and unfortunately, we didn't maximize that. That's one thing I think our team has done a very good job of, is taking advantage of those turnovers that our defense has done a phenomenal job or even special teams when you look back to (LB) Ramik Wilson forcing and recovering the fumble against Green Bay (Packers). So, we've got to do a great job of making sure that we use those takeaways as a chance to be able to create points and prefer to come away with touchdowns in those instances. But, I thought the defense played really well against a tough offense – they swarmed. They did an excellent job of being able to create those turnovers and that's something that, really, over the last few weeks you can't say enough about how instrumental that's been to them playing good football and giving us a chance to win and being able to win two of those three."

(On what sticks out to him from last year's game against the Eagles and how the Eagles are different)

"I think, really, in a lot of instances, you're seeing some different things personnel-wise. But, they're still a tough, competitive, team offensively. Any time you've got (Eagles QB) Carson Wentz running the show, it's a tough animal. He does a great job when it's on schedule, off schedule. He can beat you with his legs or with his arm. I think he's an elite competitor. (Eagles WR) Nelson Agholor is a guy that's gotten a lot better and then (Eagles TE) Zach Ertz is on pace to have one of the most prolific seasons in the history of the tight end position. So, they've got playmakers. On defense, they've obviously had a lot of injuries, but you still see elite players up front with (Eagles DE) Brandon Graham, (Eagles DT) Fletcher Cox, now adding (Eagles DE) Michael Bennett, he's been a big presence for them. Then, (Eagles S) Malcolm Jenkins is one of the more complete safeties in this league. He's been that for a long time. He's been an instrumental leader for them. Then, you've just seen them have to mix and match some different things, but (Eagles Defensive Coordinator) Coach (Jim) Schwartz does an excellent job. So, you still see a really good, physical football team. Just went toe-to-toe with a team that's playing as well as anybody yesterday and a couple plays here and there and they come away with a win. So, we've got to be ready to go, but I would say a lot of the same – great competitors, great players and great coaches. It's a challenge."