



## LOS ANGELES RAMS

### Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Conference Call – December 31, 2018

#### **(On his plan for this week in regard to practices)**

"We're going to use this as a chance to get ourselves healthy, but also want to be able to get some work in and really focus on ourselves – the fundamentals, techniques. So, what we'll do is, we brought the players in today just to get a little lift and recovery. Then, they'll be off tomorrow and we'll bring them in on Wednesday to get a workout in – we'll be on the field for about an hour and 15 minutes, do a couple meetings. Then, we'll bring them in on Thursday as well and do kind of a similar deal – it'll be a little bit heavier workload, but a lot of focus on fundamentals, techniques and different things. We'll have some competitive stuff where we're just going Rams on Rams. Then, we'll have Friday and Saturday off for the players and then we will bring the players in on Sunday and do about a 30-minute walk-thru situationally, have some meetings, let them lift again. That'll really be like a normal Monday for us because we're playing on Saturday at 5:15. Then, we'll get into a normal weekly rhythm after that where the players will be off on Monday, like they are on Tuesday. Then, kind of treat the rest of that week as if it's a normal game on a Sunday, but we know that it's on a Saturday."

#### **(On if there is any update on T Andrew Whitworth and DB Blake Countess)**

"Yeah, so (DB) Blake's (Countess) going to be in the concussion protocol. It came in with symptom free today, so we'll have some more updates as he progresses through that. Then, with (T Andrew) Whitworth, he just kind of knocked those knees. He's going to be in good shape, so we expect him to be able to practice this week and thank God it wasn't anything worse than that. We'll get our guy back, ready to roll for the playoffs."

#### **(On Black Monday for coaches losing jobs in the league and if he will confirm Quarterbacks Coach Zac Taylor being requested for potential head coaching jobs on other teams next season)**

"This business is so hard and there's so many people that you care so much about that are affected in unfortunately a negative way where people that you're close with are losing jobs. It just makes you feel so lucky and blessed to be in the situation that we have here and working with the people that we have. But, these days are just gut-wrenching as a coach. It makes you sick and you hate to see it and it's an unfortunate part of this business. With regards to some of these guys getting opportunities, I think that's awesome. I've been so fortunate and blessed to be in this role because I had people that helped me progress and grow along the way. For us having the bye, it's a unique deal where I'm sure there might be some more that come in. But, (Pass Game Coordinator) Shane (Waldron) and (Quarterbacks Coach) Zac (Taylor) have both been requested to interview with the (Cincinnati) Bengals and then Zac's also been requested to interview with the (Arizona) Cardinals. What we'll do is, with our players being off on Friday and Saturday, those teams – if they want to talk to any of our coaches, will have the ability to talk to them here in the L.A. area on Friday or Saturday. You want to do everything that you can to kind of help these guys anticipate some of the things that might come up in these interviews. You'd hate to lose them, but man, I'd sure be so happy for them if that was an opportunity that they decided to pursue and it worked out for them and their families. They've done a phenomenal job with us and I feel lucky to work with guys like that."

#### **(On the plan for RB Todd Gurley II during the next week and how his knee is doing)**

"I think it's been making good progress. He's feeling good. He came in today and everything was positive with what we're getting from (Senior Director of Sports Medicine and Performance) Reggie (Scott). I think we'll take it a day at a time. I would be very, very surprised if he wasn't going to be ready to go for the playoffs, but I think we're going to be smart with whether he goes or not this week with those extra days. We'll still continue to have that same rehab program. He's taking steps in the right direction and I would be very surprised if he's not feeling good, ready to roll for our divisional game."

**(On how much preliminary work they do this week for potentially identifying the one team they think they might play or if they have to do some advance work on all three potential opponents)**

"That's a good question. It's a good problem. The fortunate thing is, with two of the three teams that we could potentially play, we've done a lot of work on Seattle and Chicago just having played those guys this year already. So, we'll kind of do the prep – we'll get ahead and kind of get a glance on all three of those teams that we could potentially play and try to get ahead. But, I think it's also a great opportunity this week to specifically focus on ourselves and really look at some of the things that our opponents are looking at, make sure that we're on the screws with that. But yes, it will be something where any of those three teams that we could potentially play, we'll get an advance jump on looking at those guys. For us, the unique thing is, is two of those three teams we've played, and then Dallas being the only one that we could play that we haven't, obviously."

**(On how he thinks T Joseph Noteboom performed at left tackle after Whitworth left the game due to injury)**

"I thought he did a great job. Came in, you could just see, very seamless for him, great athleticism. I thought he protected really well. He had a good understanding of what we're trying to get done in the run game. It was encouraging for both he and (C) Brian (Allen) to get as many snaps as they did yesterday and perform the way that they did against a really tough defensive front. So, I thought (T) Joe (Noteboom) was great."

**(On if he has any preference for playing a team that they've already played this season)**

"That's a good question. I think the biggest thing is, is whoever we play, it's going to be a really tough game. Hopefully, these teams have done such an excellent job to even get themselves in a position to be in the playoffs. I don't think you have a preference. You know it's going to be a great challenge regardless, but whether you played a team or not – because you say, 'Well, you've got some familiarity with them.' Well, they have familiarity with you. I think it goes both ways. So, the biggest thing is, is whoever we play we've got to do a great job getting ready for them. For us right now, there's a little bit of preliminary work, like you asked about, with all three of the teams that we could see. But no matter which one of them it is, we've got to be ready to go and play a great football game to get it done."

**(On if there are any particular areas that he thinks the team needs to improve on going into the playoffs)**

"Well, there's certainly things you can always improve on. I think you'll hear us continue to emphasize those things that seem monotonous, but we'll continue to preach the little things. I thought we got control of that game yesterday because we ended up getting turnovers, we took care of it offensively and we were able to capitalize on those turnovers with touchdowns. And that's a very, very simple but key formula for success in this year. If we continue to take the football away like that on defense and if we protect it like we did on offense, that's definitely a recipe for success. But, I think it's just about being efficient down-in and down-out, playing smart situational football and continuing to do the things that have gotten us to this point well and make sure that we're not looking, like turning our head towards things that we can certainly improve on. Just playing great complementary football. I would say that there's so many different things it's just about playing efficient down-in and down-out."

**(On how far along LB Cory Littleton has come over the last two seasons)**

"I think he's really done a nice job and I think he's gotten better and better. I also think that a lot of it really is when he gets his opportunities this guy has just delivered on a consistent basis. Whenever he has to step in and play, I mean you look at last year in the Tennessee game filling in for (LB) Mark (Barron) a couple games, he's just making plays. He's a playmaker, he's a great football player. I thought he's definitely taking command and control of the defense, specifically at that Mike linebacker spot where that naturally entails a lot of communication. You see the athleticism show up in a variety of ways, whether that's pick-

6's to the house or whether that's sacks, playing great in coverage, being able to find a way to sift through traffic and make a big-time tackle. He's a great football player and he's certainly gotten better and better. And I think really, you're seeing him show up just because he's gotten the opportunities that he's deserved, and he's capitalized on them."

**(On Littleton being a quieter player and if he's been like that on the field or if he's always been able to communicate the way he would like him to)**

"He's done a good job of communication. I think naturally he's just a more reserved guy, probably just by the nature of his personality. But when you're talking about what's required to get it done as far as what you have to communicate specific to his spot, I think he's done a really good job with that. He's got a nice way about himself. I would say just from an overall personality standpoint he's not shy, he's just a little bit more reserved and kind of a soft spoken guy, but he does a great job with that communication that the Mike spot requires."