



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Seahawks Head Coach Pete Carroll – Conference Call – Dec. 4, 2019

(On if he's surprised that a run-first approach has benefitted other NFL teams this season and if he's ever been tempted to change to a pass-first offense)

"No, I'm not surprised at all. I've always felt like this is the way that gives you the best chance to stay on top and get on top. Really, no, I have not been more challenged to just hold the line and continue to prove that we've got a good formula. I just think from the history of ball that this is the best formula and it's the best way to have your quarterback play at a high level, which is so crucial. It's the best way for your team to have a complementary effect on your defense. No, I have not been tempted to change at all."

(On how he approaches following playoff scenarios and how he advises his players to approach it)

"There's really no place in our approach to talk about it. It just doesn't fit. It's never been part of the discussion, but in that, part of the discussion is to leave that stuff on the outside because we can't do anything about it. The players have been prepared from way back when about how we look at the schedule and the outcome of the season and stuff like that. That has called for, really, not paying attention to what's going on with the playoff system, scenarios and all that kind of stuff. We don't mess with it."

(On if he assumes that players do pay attention to the standings)

"I think that the players are aware just like everybody. It's silly to say they don't know what's going on because you're inundated with the information. But, it's how you use the information and how you let that affect how you think, operate, perform and all that. It's just another form of distraction, it's another form of something that can get in the way of you being tuned in to what's most important. That stuff has nothing to do with what we're doing – doesn't have anything to do with it. But, there's a lot of things that can get inserted into somebody's mentality and their focus and all that. We kind of consider them all the same. That's just another one of them."

(On what he's seen the last couple of games from Rams QB Jared Goff compared to what he saw in the Week 5 matchup against the Rams)

"He's (Rams QB Jared Goff) had some great games and he's had some games, like all players, that aren't the same. He's been back and forth a little bit, he's shown the great player that he's been over the years and his ability to have big-time performances on big stages and all that. The game last week, was almost perfect. He played great football and they played a fantastic game, which was good to see them at their best. He was surely right on top of everything."

(On how important it is guys like LB Bobby Wagner remained with the team during the building years and personnel changes)

"It helps. You do with what you've got. We were fortunate (LB) Bobby (Wagner) and (LB) K.J. Wright have been here for a good while. Those guys have just been pillars of our system and leadership and character and performance. They've just been so consistent for so long. That really helps, it really helps. They really care about the people that they play with, so they look after the young guys, bring them along and make sure that they get it. Also, it forces them to have to maintain a really high standard for themselves, which they are capable and able to do. They've been invaluable. Then, (QB) Russell (Wilson) on the other side,

has been one of those guys that has been crucially important to us, just to keep the message alive and hope alive and all the rest.”

(On what kind of impact does a cornerback like Rams CB Jalen Ramsey have on the Seahawks team in terms of gameplanning)

“He’s (Rams CB Jalen Ramsey) such a dynamic player that you certainly have to know where he is and how they’re playing him in the game that you’re in. Do they match him? Do they play him on one side or the other? Do they do special things with him? He’s an extraordinary player. So just like all of them, they have a number of really highlighted, marquee players that we have to pay attention to and make sure we know where they are and what they’re doing and try to take care of them during the course of gameplanning.”

(On if he has heard from USC Athletic Director Mike Bohn or USC President Carol Folt since they were installed in their jobs)

“No, I don’t know either of them (USC AD Mike Bohn and USC President Carol Folt). Watching this is the interesting part of the whole thing, just because we love the Trojans and all. So, we just watch to see what happens as they move along. I know they had a whole new program going there. It’s good to see that the Trojans have had another good year. Hopefully, they can get in a good bowl game.”

(On nine of their 12 games being decided by seven points or less and being 8-1 in those games, and what has allowed him to execute in those kinds of circumstances)

“Just good execution down the stretch is what’s necessary. It really helps to have good leaders that have been there and can step to the tone for what we’re up against. Russell and Bobby and K.J. and those guys on our team have been around a lot of football and a lot of winning. They know what it takes and I think they have helped other guys maintain a real good mentality about it. We’re very comfortable in those situations, I think that’s part of being successful there. We feel like we’ve been there before and you can execute regardless of what’s going on or what the circumstances are.”

(On his takeaways from their first game against the Rams earlier in the season and what he hopes to go different to make it a little easier for the Seahawks this time)

“We’re not really looking to make it easier, we’re just trying to find a way to win. They’re a really good team and they’ve got players that can make things happen in difficult situations. The coach knows how to call it and the quarterback knows how to throw it and the runner knows how to run it. They’ve got terrific receivers. The defense can do everything that they need to do with rushing and cutting. They’re a very difficult team to play because of scheme and the coaching and also the players. So as we go against them again, we’re just going to try to hold it together and play good football and take care of the ball. See if we can come out on top somehow in the end.”

(On when having a team that has made so many personnel changes, changes his approach to preparing for a team that he is otherwise familiar with)

“A couple of you guys have mentioned about all the changes. This is just living through a cycle of years. We’re through generations of being here, so there’s going to be changes. I’m not seeing those changes as a big issue. We’re just playing football and doing what we do with our guys. It doesn’t affect us, other than when you’re inexperienced, or you haven’t been together long enough. We’ve been together and we feel like we have enough continuity that we’ve been able to adapt as we go along, as the roster changes, and guys finish their careers and move on and all that kind of stuff. I don’t really have much for you – the big issue about us changing. This is just what we do, so we’re at a point where we’re just trying to get better during the end of the season and see how we finish this thing up.”

(On if he was concerned when Wilson got his extension that he’d press in terms of trying to live up to that contract and if that is a concern when players sign big extensions where they feel as though they have to play at a different level)

“Yeah, there’s a lot of guys who get the big contracts and then they hit .198 that next year. That’s always an issue because the effect of a contract in a big statement like that in a guy’s career, in his life, for his family, and in his future, that tends to have a chance to change you a little bit. It could change you in a lot of ways that doesn’t necessarily mean they have to press they could also get complacent. It’s a major shift

in their mentality and their life, and they've got to deal with it well. We gave tremendous contracts to Bobby Wagner and Russell Wilson as much as anything because of who they are and how they handle stuff, and how they do their business, and how we anticipated them staying with that which had made them. Those guys have been great examples of that, but it doesn't always work that way. There's so many examples in sports – guys can't come through after the big change. To think that everything's going to stay the same is wrong. Their life is different and it's how you adjust to it and how do you stay connected to your true identity throughout all of that. That's really crucial and it's a big part of who the people are and who you invest in, I think."