



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – Dec. 4, 2019

(On playing Seattle this week after potentially rooting for them in Week 13 against Minnesota)

"We're excited about just the opportunity to compete against a great football team. It starts today – we've got to have a great week above the neck, physically – all those things – and see if we can put together two good performances. Whoever won or not the other day, it really – in all seriousness – doesn't affect the way that we approach this week. All we can control is trying to play a good game as a team and that's exactly what we're focused on."

(On remaining calm and blocking out outside noise when the team is on the outside of the playoff picture)

"I think it's just focusing on the task at hand. You get ahead of yourself and you realize if you don't take care of your business, nothing else really matters. You start playing the game of who beats who and really, we've got to do a good job of just continuing to stay relevant by playing good football. That's what we'll focus on."

(On the decision to bring TE Kendall Blanton up from the practice squad)

"We felt like we had the guys already on the active roster to be able to fill the need (as returners). Obviously, (TE) Gerald (Everett) has been out – he may or may not be able to play this week. Then, also, (TE) Kendall (Blanton) has done a great job. I think he's earned the right to be able to move up to the active roster and what he's demonstrated week-in and week-out, I think he's earned that."

(On what he's made of QB Jared Goff's season)

"I think he (QB Jared Goff) did a great job last week. Being able to win NFC Player of the Week – I think anytime that we start talking about those things, it's always a collaboration of the team. We've all got to do a little bit better, but I think last week's performance was more of an indicator of what we can hope to see consistently for this last quarter – specific to the offense. I think that was a reflection of all 11 (players) doing what they're supposed to do. Certainly, with the amount of times that the ball is in Jared's hands, you can see he did a great job distributing it. Made good decisions, got us in and out of some of the right checks in the run game and I thought that was a good reflection on him. It's a 'What have you done for me lately?' type-deal and now we've got to stack another good performance this week."

(On how much responsibility is on Goff to overcome moments when the offense isn't executing)

"What we try to tell our guys is that everybody just do their role to the best of their ability, trust your teammates. There are some instances at that spot where you can bring people with you and make some plays that are outside the framework of the design. I would never say that it's just on him (Goff). I think it's always on the unit. Football is the greatest team sport there is and what hasn't been done consistently well enough is a reflection of starting with me and then everybody else. That's where we're going to focus on trying to do a good job of really playing good football this last quarter of the season and building off a good game last week."

(On how he's seen Goff deal with the pressure from his contract extension and the ups and downs of the season)

"I think he's been consistent. He's dealt with it the same. He approaches every week the same. We want that consistency and you can't be affected by the outside noise."

(On what has gone into RB Todd Gurley II's increased usage in recent games)

"Me not being an idiot. I think he's (RB Todd Gurley II) felt good and really, he's done a nice job with that. You look at the Chicago game and then kind of just going from there, you don't want to make the same mistakes that you ended up making earlier on in the season. I think he's done a nice job handling a bigger workload, but then also, you do have confidence in those other guys if they need to give him a spell."

(On if he does really think it was not smart of him not using Gurley II more early in the season)

"I think you're just feeling it out. I think there's some instances where, certainly, you look back and it's always hindsight in terms of, 'What can you do?' I think the Steelers game stands out in terms of where we were running the football well and you didn't really give him a chance to get back going based on how that thing played out. You always try to learn from your previous experiences. I think it's always a reflection of – I think we've been able to – in the games that he's gotten more touches – be efficient when we've been able to give him the ball. That's a reflection of him, but also the guys blocking. Again, goes back to whether you're talking about Jared, whether you're talking about Todd – two premier players that have been outstanding for us. Their production is because they're great players, but it's also a reflection of the other 10 (players) around them."

(On if he was trying to keep Gurley II fresh for later in the season incase there was a playoff run)

"No, no. It has nothing to do with that. It was really just, you're just kind of working through the 2019 season – the best way to utilize all of our plyers and figuring out what our identity is. I think we're still working through that, but didn't have anything to do with (load management). Shoot, we're just trying to win a game. So, certainly it wasn't ever with the mindset of looking ahead before anything was accomplished."

(On the Seahawks, Ravens, 49ers are all the three top-rushing teams in the NFL and if that surprises him at all given the way the league has gone more pass-oriented)

"Not really. What they've been able to do is, those teams are also efficient when they decide to throw the football, I think it goes hand-in-hand. They can control the clock, they have really good defenses that are opportunistic to take the ball away. I think, really, the time of possession, being able to maintain. Then, those teams that are winning games usually get a chance to get more rushing yards off because you are in those four-minute situations where you're able to get more attempts and things like that. I think that's always a reflection of winning football. Usually, you're able to run the football more, but I think it is also a reflection of keeping your defense off the field. Then, when they do have to throw it because they're efficient running it, they're in third-and-manageable situations where you're able to regulate some of the defensive structures because they are worried about stopping the run. Then, okay, what does that mean in terms of how it opens up some of the lanes in the pass game?"

(On Ravens' QB Lamar Jackson's success against the defense by being fast and elusive and then having 6.0 sacks on Cardinals' QB Kyler Murray who is also a fast and elusive quarterback and if there were any adjustments they made and if so, how does that apply now to Seahawks' QB Russell Wilson)

"The guys played great. I thought it was a good plan by our coaches. I thought, ultimately, it was about the players executing. There was just an energy, there was a way that they came out ready to go. I thought they weren't going to be denied, and you could feel that. I think that was a reflection of really all three levels of defense. So, that was a real positive. (Seahawks QB) Russell (Wilson), he's a great player. You look at all the things that he's done throughout the course of his career, he's a great challenge. What he does such an excellent job of is the off-schedule stuff whether it's in the pocket, out of the pocket, buying himself some time, eyes down the field. Those guys at receiver and tight end are really trained to work off-schedule for him. He made a handful of great plays against us the last time we played him. He's consistently done that, really through his career, but then especially through this season. He's definitely somebody that we've got to be aware of. You look at how well they're running the football, so they're one of the best offenses in the league. It shows up when you just watch the tape."

(On how much different the team is now with Seahawks WR Josh Gordon and Seahawks RB Rashaad Penny in the mix)

"You add two big-time weapons. Early on in the season, they had (Seahawks TE Will) Dissly making a bunch of plays for them, (Seahawks WR DK) Metcalf, you were just starting to feel him. (Seahawks WR Tyler) Lockett has always been a great player. The ability to get a couple different backs going, you see the way that he spreads the ball around, he makes great decisions and he gives guys a chance to create after the catch. It's a great challenge. (Seahawks Offensive Coordinator) Coach (Brian) Schottenheimer does a great job of putting them in good situations as well. Our guys are excited about the challenge and ready for the opportunity this week."

(On his approach when he is going against a team he is so familiar with, but there has been so many changes in personnel for both teams since the last time he saw them)

"The personnel is a huge part of it. It's a players' game. Then understanding, 'Okay, what are some of the things specific to scheme that maybe have adjusted or that still remain foundational elements of what they want to do?' Then how can we make sure to put ourselves and out our players in good spots to be able to execute at a high level? You look at it, this is a very competitive football team. They're one of the best teams in the league. I'm really impressed with just how they play in crunch time. I think that's a real reflection of what kind of team this is. I think it's a reflection of their head coach and just their overall mindset and mentality. I think that's something that everybody would want to display – what they've done this year."

(On his reaction to the former Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera situation)

"In my interactions with (former Panthers Head Coach) Ron (Rivera), he's been great to me. You hate to see that. That's what's so difficult about this profession, is that, changes are inevitable. He's a guy that's had a lot of success. He'll continue to have a lot of success. I can do nothing but wish him the best and I have an appreciation for how he's treated me in the interactions that we've had. It's the unfortunate part of this business."