



Rams DL Aaron Donald—Media Availability – January 6, 2021

(On what makes this defense special)

“We are just playing consistent football. I think it comes down to guys just making plays and it isn’t just one or two guys, I’ve been saying it all year. It’s guys stepping up in a big way, at any time and making plays to help us win games. When you tend to do that week-in and week-out on a consistent basis, and there aren’t too many drop-offs, that’s what it’s about. You can’t just dominate one week then have three weeks where you fall off. I think this year has been different from this defensive standpoint just because it’s been consistently dominate. The guys have been consistently making plays week-in and week-out. That’s why we are in the position that we are in today.”

(On comparing how he’s feeling going into playoffs this year versus two years ago)

“Confident. I think we have all the pieces to the puzzle. I think we are playing lights out on defense and our offense is doing things to a point where they can manage games and still make things happen to help us win. So, when you have that, you’re definitely going into it confident. I feel like we’re in a position to get to where we want to get to, we just have to go week-by-week and just dominate.”

(On if it feels similar to the 2018 season)

“Yes, but it’s a different team. So, you’re still confident, but I will say the confidence is in a different type of way. I think the defense we have now is a little bit more stout, a little bit more consistent. Not taking anything from the defense we had in 2018, it just comes down to being consistent. That’s what it’s about in this league. You have to be consistent. You have to do it week-in and week-out and I think we’ve been doing that. So, having a group like that, that’s be doing that going into the playoffs, it makes you that much more confident.”

(On if not having fans evens the playing field for a playoff road game)

“It’s going to be like it has been all year. I kind of wish there were some fans you could feed off when you make plays – even if they’re booing or are mad about it, you kind of feed off that. So, you miss that, but it’s going to be like it’s been all year. We just have to feed off each other’s energy, pick each other up and we just have to go out there and play ball.”

(On if he has a preference for starting quarterback)

“No. Whose ever out there, I’m trusting that those guys are going to get it done. I know whoever is at the quarterback position is going to help us win. So, I’m confident in either way they go. All I can do is control what we can control on defense. That’s preparing, getting ready to try to play a dominant performance, a dominant game and trying to help this team to win so we can continue to play.”

(On why he wanted to play Seattle in a playoff game)

“Well, that’s a divisional game, we play them twice a year. We won the first game and they got the best of us the second game, now it’s more like the tiebreaker. They got the division and they were happy about that. Now they have to see us again for a third time. When you’re playing a team that you played twice a year, you kind of have a feel for each other, they know what you’re going to do, we know what they’re going to do. It’s pretty much man-on-man now and the best team is going to win. So, you wouldn’t want it no better way than that to start it off.”

(On if familiarity was a factor in why he wanted to play Seattle again)

“Yes. Then they beat us last time too. So that just makes me want to play them that much more.”

(On what OLB Leonard Floyd is like off the field)

“He’s a cool dude. Quiet guy keeps to himself, but definitely a cool dude that you get along with, that understands football. I definitely see him every day, as far as working his technique and things like that to get himself better. He’s easy to get along with. He knows football, he knows how to rush off certain guys when he’s rushing with them. If it’s him rushing wide to open up something to help me, or if I’m getting wide and he’s playing off me to make a play inside, that’s the type of guys you want to go out there and perform with because he’s football smart, you tend to win games and guys continue to be productive.”

(On if he is different during playoff time)

“I think everybody’s different come playoff time. Your mindset is always going to dominate, no matter if it’s regular season or playoffs, but this is win or go home. You have to give it everything now, you can’t leave nothing behind. So, you have to go out there every single play, every single down, like it’s your last, because it is. If you lose, you go home, if you win, you continue to play ball. So, that’s the mindset. We have to dominate. We have to try to find ways to be consistent, not make mistakes. If we do that, I think we’re in a good position.”

(On why they’ve had so much success sacking Seahawks QB Russell Wilson)

“Guys just doing what they need to do. It comes down to being coached well, practicing well, having a game plan, sticking to it and guys doing what they need to do. If one guy’s getting high, another guy is wrapping in and making right to the point where you can step up and make things happen, make him feel uncomfortable. So, that’s the best thing. We talk about consistent play. We talk about guys that’s out there with us, that are football smart and understand how to play with each other. So, when you have a group like that, it kind of makes our job easier, as far as doing what we have to do to bottle a good quarterback up like that and trying to make him feel uncomfortable.”

(On if he feels like he has done enough to win the Defensive Player of The Year Award)

“I’m worried about the playoffs and the Seahawks this week. So, that is what it is. My main focus is the playoffs.”

(On where he developed his work ethic and the mentality to always dominate)

“I don’t know, I guess the way I was raised. Just playing the game so long, you just tend to – I don’t know. I just go out there and my main job is to try to make as many plays as I can or effect the play as best as I can and trying to help my guys to win. I just go out there and play hard because I want to be productive. I want to win games and I want to get to a certain point where at the end of the year, we can hold up that trophy. That’s the ultimate goal and for us to do that, it’s not just me, but everybody has to have that same mindset to dominate, effect plays, want to make plays. When you have guys like that that’s flying around, good things happen.”

(On is there any aspect of Wilson’s game that has evolved and caused him to change his approach to how he plays against him)

“Well, I’ve been playing him for seven years, so you kind of have a feel for what he does, the certain ways he wants to roll out and certain things he can do, as far as when he wants to pump fake and make you jump to the point where he can roll and see the field more if he wants to run or throw. When you play against a guy for seven years, twice every single season, you get a feel for him. He still can make things happen and hit you once and get rid of the ball or things like. But we know what we have to do to get to him and try to and affect him.”

(On is he excited for the possibility of OL Andrew Whitworth to return this week and if it inject energy to the team)

“Well, he’s a veteran guy that’s been playing this game a long time. He’s a leader. If you can get him on a field playing, that’s going to definitely be a plus for us, as long as he’s healthy, he feels good and we feel like he can go. I know he can go out there and he’s going to dominate. He understands certain things just from his experience he has, and I know he’s going to be amped up, if he is back on the field playing. When you get one of your leaders back, a guy to look up to, that’s definitely going to be a plus for us.”

