



Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – January 14, 2021

(On injury statuses for Saturday)

"So, won't see (QB) John (Wolford). John is going to be out for the game. He will be out and we're still planning on traveling him. Then, (WR) Cooper (Kupp) and (OL) David Edwards, we will monitor. We will be smart and they won't practice. We're going to get them as much treatment as possible and see what their game status looks like after we kind of get through the day."

(On where QB Jared Goff is in his recovery)

"He's good. He's done a nice job throughout the course of the week. I think he's been able to get a lot of good individual work with (Offensive Coordinator) Kevin (O'Connell) and then we had a little bit of physical work yesterday. He's making good progress. I think just the further you get away from that, I think the more normal. I know he's been pain-free. But, I think the more functionality, like we've talked about, you'll get from that thumb surgery and feeling like yourself, as far as getting the grip throwing the football and all the different things that that position entails from a ball handling perspective."

(On if it's fair to say QB Blake Bortles will back up Goff, who will start)

"That's fair. Then we'll see about possibly (QB) Bryce Perkins as well. We might have him up as our third quarterback."

(On if the wind conditions today were the reason to alter practice)

"The answer is yes, because obviously with the amount of work that we get done today, didn't feel like it would make sense to travel all the way down to SoFi (Stadium). Being this late in the year, our guys do such a great job of being able to handle these jog-thrus, while still getting a little bit of individual work. That was kind of what went into the decision-making process. But in a lot of instances, it was kind of decided for you because of what that restricts you, in terms of being able to throw and catch and get some of the things that involve the timing and rhythm. And mostly, it affects the offense, but still what the defense trying to get a look in the pass game, some of those looks are minimized as well. But hey, this has been this year. Whether it's the wind, cold, or whatever it is. It wouldn't feel right if we didn't have something to deal with."

(On maintaining Goff's confidence as the starter)

"I think it's you go about your business the right way. Jared and I had great conversations last week. There's a lot of different things that go on and in our building, day-in and day-out that you navigate, you negotiate through it. But that's part of being able to work together, figure out how we move forward from whether good things or if there's somewhat of a setback. I thought he handled last week really well. I mean, you think about the circumstances that he dealt with, coming off the thumb surgery, going against a defense of that caliber, not getting really any reps during the course of the week. Then you're thrust into the game in the first quarter and do a great job of having a clean slate with the turnovers. He prepared himself this week as if he was ready to go. So, I think there was a little bit different mindset and mentality. What I learned as much as anything was his ability to be able to handle a difficult thing where, 'Hey, I'm going to do everything in my power to get ready for my teammates if they need me.' Well, it just so happened that we did, I think it's a credit to who he is as a man, that he can be able to step in, do what he did, and now this week has represented an opportunity for build on last week, get another week removed from that thumb injury. Like I'm sure he'll tell you guys later on, he's played in a lot of big games and this is a great opportunity for us. With him leading our offense, feel great about the chance."

(On if OL Andrew Whitworth and DL Aaron Donald are tracking to play Saturday)

They are, yes.”

(On appreciating matchups such as CB Jalen Ramsey and Packers WR Davante Adams)

“I think there are certain situations in the game where you get opportunities to truly evaluate them, where maybe you're in a man coverage and you do get an iso between them. I think what everybody knows, is it is still 11-on-11. There's a lot of different moving parts. Both of those two guys are at the upper echelon, if not the best at their position in the league. When they get a chance to match up against one another, that's a great deal. But just because (CB) Jalen (Ramsey) is lined up across from (Packers WR) Davante (Adams), doesn't mean that it's all right, those two are on a one-on-one matchup. There's a lot of different things. That's what makes this game so fun is with the 22 moving parts on every single snap, are you in a zone, are you in a man, what are the types of principles that the offense is activate that elicit a certain response from the defense? I think what I appreciate is greatness, these are two great players. I've kind of always kept up with the Packers on offense, just because they're doing such good stuff. Then, you always know that you might have a chance to pick some good stuff that (Packers Head Coach) Matt (LaFleur) and (Packers Offensive Coordinator) Nate Hackett come up with. You watch the rapport that (Packers QB) Aaron (Rodgers) and Davante have, especially, as you kind of wrap up the week. Usually, the red zone is where you kind of wrap that up from a game-plan perspective and you see the different things that these guys have done. You see why they're one of the best, if not the best, red zone offense in the history of the league with the efficiency at which they're operating with right now. And it's a dang joke, watching how good these guys are. How comfortable they are with one another. It is fun to watch. I just have a lot more fun watching when it's not going up against them. Hopefully, they'll continue on that theme next season and it doesn't keep going his week. But two great players in Jalen and Davante to go back to your original question. There'll be some ops and it will be really fun to see them go against one another potentially. Then you got two great players that are playing on great units and they're huge pieces to those puzzles on those units.”

(On if he often sees QB Jared Goff have an edge like he did after the Seahawks win)

“I think it's good. As a competitor, there was reason to have edge. I think there's always merit, if you try to look at it through an empathetic lens of how would you feel if the roles were reversed, and whether it's from a competitor getting a chance to go back two weeks later or as a competitor wanting to have an opportunity to play from the very beginning of that game. I think that was a good edge and I think it shows his competitive side. I like seeing that.”

(On if he has had any communication with Packers Head Coach Matt LaFleur this week)

“I have talked to (Packers Head Coach) Matt (LaFleur) this week.”

(On what him and LaFleur discussed)

“We actually told each other the whole game plans (laughs). So, I gave him our openers. I gave him what our defensive plan is, and he gave me the same thing and on special teams – (laughs) no. We talked. We keep in touch regularly, but it's more just kind of catching up. We didn't talk about the game, that's kind of understood. We will get back to the talking ball with one another after we play one another. We did connect, but it was nothing with regards to anything football related, just kind of checking in and it's saying, 'Hey, it's pretty cool and crazy that we're getting a chance to do this.' We'll let it all hang out on both sides.”

(On how to go about winning the line of scrimmage to stop the run and put pressure of Packers QB Aaron Rodgers)

“It's a great challenge, because they are so balanced. They do so many different things that can really stress you, but I think it's about the defeating blocks one-on-one at the point of attack. Playing with the right technique. These games come down to execution. These are great players on both sides of the football. It will come down to execution and really the ability to focus and concentrate snap-to-snap, because the margin for error against an offense like this is so minimal. I think it's really whether you're stuck trying to stop the run and get them in some of the known-passing situations, but more importantly, it's really just stringing together good snaps, trying to get off the grass and get the ball back for the offense. It's a great challenge, but it is about the focus, the concentration, the execution, and just the overall technique and

toughness, snap-in and snap-out. You're going to get stressed more than ever, and it's going to be our greatest challenge, but I know the guys are excited about it."

(On what he's learned about Goff since his injury that has allowed him to coach better)

"I think different situations offer the opportunity to learn things if you haven't necessarily been through it before. Certainly, this was the first time Jared has been healthy. He's started every game, unless there was a decision that we were resting guys, like the last week of the season in '17. So, this was a new situation, it was the first game that he's ever missed in his football career, as a result of injury, or was planning on potentially missing if John didn't get hurt. So watching those things, seeing how guys handled different forms of adversity, you can look at it from a bunch of different directions. I think it's just going through those experiences and being able to just work through things, being able to have that open communication. Those things sometimes provide open opportunities to be able to strengthen the bond and the relationship."

(On if Goff's injury has any limitations on his play calling)

"I think he's throwing the ball really well this week. I think we will see how the weather is really affecting the conditions overall, but I don't expect it to be a factor. And really, I think probably a more appropriate way of articulating it was, I thought there were some throws that he's typically fairly automatic on, that maybe he missed. Now whether that was a result of the thumb injury or not, he's the one that would probably be able to better answer that. But I do know this, when you watch him throw last week to this week, it is definitely trending in the right direction that's more in alignment and really, it looks like the Jared that we're accustomed to who has always been a natural thrower of the football. He's been blessed with that ability since he was young. You can see he's able to drive intermediate-deeper breaks and can definitely throw the football down the field. So, I don't think you're limited in any type of throw, based on what we've evaluated this week, which is a real positive."

(On what he has discussed with the team about the weather conditions they may face in Green Bay)

"I think in a lot of instances, we've got to be able to handle it seamlessly. The important thing that we've really emphasized is understanding the importance of the cleats, because especially if it does snow there, you put a tarp over, it increases the moisture. It makes it a slippery surface, but those are the things that are really important, making sure that we've got the right equipment in terms of our footing, so that that's not a factor. I know they heat the field and how that can fact the surface as well. So, that's been the important thing and then I do think it's on us as coaches specific to the ball handling and things of that nature. If the weather is affected, based on how you can throw the football and some of the different things with the ball handling things of that nature, but the footing is the big thing that we've talked about."

(On how excited the team is and how he keeps them calm)

"Yeah, I think they're excited. I think we've got a mature team. We've got a lot of young guys, but we've got great leaders that set the tone and the tempo for every day. Guys that have been in these types of games, and I think they understand you don't want to peak too early. You want to maximize every opportunity that you have with the preparation leading up to it, so that you can go compete with a quieted mind and if you could do that, go compete to the best of your ability, you can have no regrets. You see guys like Aaron, (WR) Robert Woods, (OL) Andrew Whitworth, (DL Michael) Brockers, who have been in these games before, I look to them and that's what a lot of our young players have done. I think that's given them a good peak that we want to peak at the right time."

(On if he was hoping Wolford would get to a place this week where he could keep it questionable who was going to start on Saturday)

"I don't know about that. I think you were hoping just for him that the neck injury didn't restrict his availability to potentially compete for us. That's what you feel bad about, I just hate for any player, whether it was Jared having his thumb surgery, whether it's John with a neck, Andrew with his knee earlier this year, Brockers and Cooper missing games because of COVID, when they never ended up having any symptoms. You feel so bad because of how much goes into it for these players, that if they are restricted with their availability, because of some things that are out of their control, that's what I'm most concerned about."

(On losing Director of College Scouting Brad Holmes)

"Well, I think the first thing is, really happy for (Former Director of College Scouting) Brad (Holmes). I probably should have started out, (Senior Director, Communications) Artis (Twyman) and I were actually talking about that earlier. Brad is a guy that does a great job. I think his ability to connect, the command he has over the draft and the ownership of the different players and how hard he works to be able to study and do all his due diligence. One of the things I've always really liked about Brad that I think is a great skillset for any leader to possess, he's got great emotional intelligence. What I mean by that is, he's got such a great way about, even if he might not agree with you, it never feels confrontational. I think that's why he'll do a great job in Detroit, building safety amongst the people that he works with, where you've got to be able to have the comfort to be able to disagree, but work towards solutions. I think his even-keeled demeanor, disposition, how just steady he is, will be a real winning edge. He's a great worker. I think he sees the game outstanding. Then he's got the humility where he's always trying to learn, learn more about the game and he and I developed a really good relationship since I first got here. I was just always impressed with, he's got such a great feel for the players in the work that he does specific to the college scouting, but then he was still always asking so many good questions to just get better at his craft specific to seeing it through a coach's lens. He'll do a great job. I got a chance to talk to (Detroit Lions Special Assistant to Chairman and President & CEO) Chris Spielman about him last week and really happy for Brad. It's a loss for the Rams, but similar to when we've seen coaches go on and get better opportunities, that's what you do it for. That's what it's about and I think that's a great reflection of some good things going on in the Rams organization, when you lose great people to jobs that are kind of at the pinnacle of what you're trying to achieve in your career."