



**Rams Special Teams Coordinator Joe DeCamillis – Media Availability – February 11, 2021**

**(On the process to become the new Rams Special Teams Coordinator)**

“Obviously, we had the rough year in Jacksonville, but I kept in touch with (Head) Coach (Sean) McVay over the years. Ton of respect for him. (The Rams) have built a great thing out here and I was really jacked up to be part of it. So, worked out great and got a lot of respect for a lot of people in this building. It’s been built the right way.”

**(On if he’s connected with any of the special teams players)**

“I’ve talked to (P) Johnny (Hekker). I’ve talked to (K) Matt Gay, (LS) Jake (McQuaide) and then a couple of new signings. I’m going to try to work my way through the rest of the team, but saw (DL) Aaron Donald today, probably the greatest player in the world, which was awesome to see and hopefully start to make connections with some of those guys.”

**(On what he feels has attributed to his success as a coach)**

“Well, I’ve been doing it a long time, obviously. I would say the secret to success is, my father-in-law is Coach Reeves, Dan Reeves. So, that was a long time ago, but he told me to be myself. That was one of the biggest things that we talked about. So, I’ve tried to follow that as much as I can. Be as passionate every day as I can and just enjoy the job. That’s really what it’s all about. I don’t feel like I’ve worked a day, so it’s been a great ride and hopefully we continue it right here and get another Super Bowl win. That’d be nice. I’d like to get one of those again.”

**(On the foundational principles that has led to his success)**

“I think, just like offense and defense, it’s no different from the standpoint of the quality of players you have, the more talented, the better player you have out there on Sundays, the better chance you’ve got of success. So, that’s the first thing. It’s all about the players. The NFL is a players’ game, no question. It’s to field as much as we can in coverage, which means just trying to put it in small areas, which we’ve got a great punter do that. The kicker, I think it’s going to get better as we go. Then, the return game, you want to spread the field, make it as wide as you can get as many gaps as you can for your return team and then get a great return. We’ve got to get a guy that can ring the bell and drop the ball over the goal line...”

**(On what role Senior Assistant Coach John Bonamego will have on special teams)**

“I think that’s probably a question for Coach McVay. That’s something that I’m sure he’s working through. I have a ton of respect for Bono (Senior Assistant Coach John Bonamego). I’ve known him a long time, so that’s probably a better question for (McVay).”

**(On his evaluation of P Johnny Hekker’s performance this season)**

“Yeah. I still think he’s, if not the top, punter in the league, he’s one of the top punters in the league. Sometimes, you just get in situations where you may be in different parts of the field where you’re not able to drive the ball as far as you did in certain other years. So, that’s part of it. We’re going through all those stats and all the all those metrics right now, trying to figure it out. But, I think he’s a great punter and hopefully next year he has a better year. That’s my hope. That’s what our goal is.”

**(On developing the return game and qualities he looks for in potential players to develop)**

"We're still evaluating the return game. It's just me right here now. But, I think one of the things that you got to really evaluate as much as anything is the better the blocking schemes are, and the better holes you have to run through, the better the return is going to be. Now, where you get special is when it's a guy that has (former KR/PR/WR) Devin Hester type-ability. Those types of things, that's where you can really become special. But, we've got to make sure that we get the holes open at the start and then hopefully we can get the right guy back there and it might be the right guy that we have right now. He's a young guy and hopefully we can get him up to speed and get him a little bit better than he was last year."

**(On how he achieves a buy-in from young players)**

"It starts with the organization. It starts with the guy at the top and with Coach McVay here. I know how important it is to him, you know? But, I think you just have to develop a relationship with the players, which obviously that's a little bit harder in the Corona (COVID-19) days right now. But, it's definitely doable and I think you can get a relationship started with them, get them to trust you. Then, all players want to have success. All players want to be shown how they're going to be more successful, whether it's for a team success, whether it's for individual success, no matter how you do that, a player is going to respond to that. Some of the guys that are younger at the start won't get it, but they will. I can promise you that."

**(On the challenges of virtual meetings last season and the likely scenario of it returning this season)**

"It was tough. But, you just have to make the most of those times that are on the field. Your drill work, all your technique work has got to be spot on. It's got to be really focused and you got to get those guys going in the right direction. But, just like everything else, if you're successful at what you do from a coaching standpoint, you figure it out. I'm 55, but I can run the zoom pretty well and I can figure out how to meet with them on the on those platforms. We'll figure it out."

**(On whether his surgery following the Dallas facility collapse changed his approach to life and coaching)**

"Do I have lot of metal in me? Do I have some stuff that it's tough to deal with? Yeah, but a lot of people do. So, that part of it I'm not too worried about. I would say probably that experience made me enjoy coaching even that much more because they told me that there's a good chance you're not going to walk and good chance you may not be able to coach anymore. So, getting out of that and seeing the world on the other side, it gave you a good, fresh perspective. Hopefully, I was a better coach, a better husband, a better father. You see things a little differently when you go through some tough times like that."

**(On how difficult it would be to potentially work in a new long snapper to the special teams unit)**

"Well, unfortunately, and fortunately, the last two years I've had to go through that with snappers. We got a young guy two years ago, and then we got another young guy in Jacksonville this year that actually beat him out. So, I just think you really have to get the right one. You have to do a hell of a job of making sure that the personnel knows exactly what you want and get the right guy. Hopefully, we'll be able to get through that. On the other side of it though, Jake (McQuaide) is a great long snapper in this league. Part of the reason that Hekker's been successful, part of the reason that (Cowboys K Greg Zuerlein) was successful here, was because of him. So, a lot of respect and again, the finances, they'll just have to work those things out and hopefully he'll have a chance to come in here and compete because I think he's excellent."

**(On if he will implement any 'trickeration' in the special teams play as seen in the past with former Rams Special Teams Coordinator John Fassel)**

"That's a great word by the way. I like that. I'm going to steal that for sure. It depends on the situation. I think it depends on what the head coach's plan is, what your team plan is. You want to play complimentary football as much as possible. Sometimes, they come up. Sometimes they don't. In Jacksonville, we were very successful the last few years doing that and I know having the talent that (Former Rams Special Teams Coordinator) John (Fassel) has, I hope we're able to continue the 'trickeration.' That's what I hope happens. So, we'll see what happens."

**(On his time coaching CB Jalen Ramsey in Jacksonville)**

"Well, he might be 1-A and 1-B as far as the greatest players in the world. But, he's a great dude. I mean, I know he's passionate and he wants to win football games. That's what (CB) Jalen's (Ramsey) all about. I

know he'll do whatever we ask of him and he'll do it as hard as he can as fast as he can. So, I love Jalen. I'm glad to be back with him."

**(On what attracted him to coach special teams early in his career)**

"I really thought I was going to be a strength coach. That's really what I thought I was going to be when I started. Then, we had some stuff in the staff in Denver, the first time I was in Denver that we had a guy that was doing some other jobs and that's when Coach Reeves said to me, 'Hey, I want you to try to start helping out a little bit.' And I was more like a GA (graduate assistant) really my first few years. It just went from there. I went to the Giants as the special teams coordinator. And after that, it's been quite a ride. But, I would say the first thing is Coach Reeves. He really paid a lot of attention to it and was instrumental in getting me started that way. A guy named (Former Special Teams Coordinator) Mike Westoff, that was one of the famous special teams coaches, he's actually writing a book right now, that I've read a few chapters in. But, he was probably the one that helped me the most as far as schematically. Then all the way through, there's a lot of guys, Joe Avezzano, was a big help to me. A lot of the older guys shared and hopefully I'll be able to share with the young guys the way it is right now too. Just not too much, you don't want to give them everything."

**(On what he feels makes a good special teams coach)**

Well like I said earlier, players, the better your players are the better coach you're going to be. I don't care what position you have. But, I think the passion part of it needs to show on the field on Sunday. They need to feel that. Your players need to feel that and they need to buy into what you're selling. You've got to be a great salesman and hopefully we can get that done here and get this thing cranking in the way it needs to be."