



Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – February 25, 2021

(On opening statement)

“So first of all, very, very excited about the coaching staff. I feel really great about just the quality of men, the character that these guys have, the way that they communicate, the way they develop and build relationships with the players, with the coaches. I think our staff comradery is something that's going to be instrumental in how we progress and how we continue to evolve and improve in all three phases. I feel great about the leadership on this staff. Guys that I'm excited to learn from. Some guys that have been here, some guys that haven't been here, some guys have worked with some guys that I haven't worked with. I think there's also been a lot made about losing seven great coaches. What I think is a great reflection of those men and really a lot of good things that have gone on here, is six of those seven guys are really getting opportunities to move forward. Five of those are coordinator-type roles. (Chargers Head Coach) Brandon Staley gets a head job. I think that's as important as anything, is being in a place where guys can develop, but there's also opportunities for growth, whether it's in-house or out of house and that's something that's been consistent for the last four years. I feel really good and excited about working with this group of coaches, with nine guys on offense, seven on defense, two special teams, and then John Bonamego in his senior coaching assistant role. So, really looking forward to that and with that open up for questions.”

(On what he learned from watching the Buccaneers win Super Bowl LV after previously beating them)

“I think what stands out about that is the resilience of that football team. I mean, you think about how they respond from a tough game on Sunday Night Football against the Saints, they had the loss against the Chiefs and they played their best football when it was necessary. I think that's a real credit to (Buccaneers Head) Coach (Bruce) Arians' leadership. Obviously, (Buccaneers QB) Tom Brady has an amazing influence on that team, but I thought they peaked at the right time. They found a way to stay together, really find their identity at the right moments and then they played their best when their best was required. You look at that sequence at the end of the half against Green Bay, just finding ways to win football games, making crunch-time plays. I thought really just from a coaching perspective, they did an outstanding job of being able to adapt and adjust their philosophy. You saw some of the things that (Buccaneers Defensive Coordinator) Coach (Todd) Bowles did defensively that really minimized some of those great offenses that they played and it was really impressive. You see the impact that a guy that's won, that's done it, that people can look to and say, 'Hey, this is what it looks like.' For him to win his seventh, nothing but respect for Tom Brady and you're just kind of just sitting there in awe. At this point I don't think you can say you're surprised, but you just want to say, 'Hats off to you for another job well done.'”

(On how he can add explosiveness to the offense outside of the quarterback position)

“I think it's guys that can make things happen with the ball in their hands. Certainly, I know we talked a lot about it throughout the season, plays down the field, I think there's different ways of creating explosives. It's a collaboration of, certainly I have to do a good job of giving us opportunities and then the players are the ones that end up making it come to life. That's always going to be a big part of it. I think when you have to go 12, 15-play drives consistently, your margin for error is so small. The level of competition is just so great that you have to be able to find ways to continuously create explosives, give yourself a little bit of margin for error, that it's not always taking that many plays to produce points in this league. I think, any good offense, anyone that's at the upper echelon of the league, that's usually something that you can probably check the box on. I think that's something that we've definitely got to do a better job of starting with me this next season.”

(On Defensive Coordinator Raheem Morris)

“(Defensive Coordinator) Raheem (Morris) is a special coach. I think when you guys got a chance to speak with him or anybody that knows Raheem – my dad says it best about Raheem, he has a zest for life. You never leave Raheem Morris not feeling better about yourself. But the capacity, the command that this guy has, I think the charisma and the presence. When you're looking at what you're looking for from a coach, he checks all the boxes. He has an incredible ability to communicate and to relate to so many different types of people, I think he can help them reach their highest potential. Even just watching the way that he's leading these staff meetings with the defensive coaches, where there are a couple of new faces and then a lot of continuity from the previous staff, he did a great job. There's a real connection and a collaboration. Guys are enjoying doing football together and I think that's a huge credit to Raheem and his leadership. I think the players are going to love working with him and what he brings. He's been a big brother in a lot of ways to me, from our relationship dating back to even Tampa, and when we work together in Washington. So many of the things that I know, especially from the defensive side of the ball is a credit to learning from Raheem. I can't say enough good things and how excited I am to be able to reconnect with him. He's just going to affect our team and our building in so many ways. You talk to people that aren't even involved in coaching, and he's already made an impact. You certainly always feel when Raheem is in the room and I think that's a great thing. I'm really looking forward to watching him lead this team.”

(On his impressions of RB Cam Akers this past season)

“I thought he did a great job. You guys have heard me talk about (Running Backs Coach/Assistant Head Coach) Thomas Brown, what a special coach he is, what a great job I thought he did consistently pouring into (RB) Cam (Akers) throughout the season. Really if it wasn't for that setback that Cam had in the Philly game – I think that rib injury kind of set him back a little bit. You saw (RB) Darrell Henderson (Jr.) step up, (RB) Malcolm Brown was really consistent throughout the year, but Cam hit his stride at the right moments. You could see he's always had a real and authentic confidence, but then as he's getting more and more comfortable for the different ways that we were able to utilize him, I think he can come alive in the pass game. I think he can continue to play at a high level. Really, I think he's an every-down back. I think he's a special player. I think that's a real credit to Cam, but also Thomas Brown's leadership and just pouring into him day in and day out and him being receptive to that. Then you see the benefits and how much it kind of came to life towards the latter part of the season and we expect them to pick up where he left off.”

(On when his assessment of former QB Jared Goff changed)

“I think that's a really tough thing to answer. What I think is important to make sure that I mention is the amount of good things and really great leadership that he provided since I got here as a head coach. There's been a Super Bowl appearance, there's been a Conference Championship win, there's been two division titles, there's been three playoff wins that he was an intricate part of, there's been three playoff appearances. So, what I'd rather focus on are the things that I think he did a great job of to establish himself in this league. The way he handled himself consistently day in and day out and all I can do is just be appreciative of that. That's kind of what I would say on (QB) Jared (Goff).”

(On what led to parting ways with Run Game Coordinator Aaron Kromer)

“It was a mutual conversation. (Former Run Game Coordinator) Coach (Aaron) Kromer has been a very, very valuable part. I've really enjoyed working with him over the last four years and I'm looking forward to continuing to work with (Offensive Assistant) Zak Kromer, who's really developed into a really nice coach. Coach Kromer, the development of our offensive line, really helping us to establish the way that we've operated offensively, I think that's well-documented and he did a great job for us these four years. Now we are excited about the opportunity for (Offensive Line Coach) Kevin Carberry to lead that group. He's a guy that I have worked with before. I've been really impressed. He's been mentored by some really special coaches and then seeing what he's done and the growth that he's experienced with the three years that he spent at Stanford, you talk about with (Head) Coach (David) Shaw leading the way, doing football at a high level. Some of the things that you see reflected on their tape, the different ways that they were able to attack people running the football, how they protected, how they were able to screen people, I really was impressed. And then when you get a chance to spend some time with him – and it was really a gauntlet, the interview that we put him through. He got exposure to all of our staff and he handled himself really well.

I think he's going to do an excellent job leading that group up front and guys will be excited about working with them."

(On promotions on the current coaching staff)

"The coaches that we have that have been in house that are remaining here that are getting opportunities for growth. I think starting out, you look at (Running Backs/Assistant Head Coach) Thomas Brown assuming the assistant head coaching role. I could go on and on about him, what he's meant to me, going back to our relationship, even competing against one another in high school, but he's got such a refreshing security about himself, ability to command the room, communicate. I think what I've always appreciated about our interaction in the last year that we've spent together, he's always going to tell me what I need to hear, not what I want to hear and sometimes that's hard to find as a head coach. He's very decisive, but then he's also open-minded. He's got just such a great grasp of this game and a great ability to relate to people, to bring out the best in his group when you see what he did with the running back group in particular last year. He's going to do a great job assuming more responsibilities there as a great leader of this football team. Looking at the defensive side of the ball, really every single coach that is still here is, is really receiving a promotion or more responsibilities. You talk about (Defensive Line/Run Game Coordinator) Eric Henderson, what he's done over his first two years with the defensive line, helping (DL) Aaron (Donald) continue to be at the top of his game, continuing to get better. You watch the way that he handles Aaron. I think Aaron can talk to you guys about how much he respects him. Watching what even a (DL) Michael brokers has done under Coach Henderson's leadership and guidance, where I think you're seeing him continue to take his game to a higher level. Then you see the development that's like (DL) Sebastian Joseph-Day. I think that run game coordinator will he'll really head up a lot of the front mechanics, the different things in terms of how we want to defend people in some of those run-downs, is going to be a real big deal and a real credit to what he's done. (Secondary/Pass Game Coordinator) Ejiro Evero taking over leading the whole back end, assuming the pass game coordinator role, where he'll really work in unison with (Linebackers Coach) Chris Shula on the coordination of the back-seven and how we want to defend people really in all parts of the pass game, He's looking at that back-seven, but that's not exclusive. I think you want always have all three levels tied in. It's a credit to what he's done, his development as a coach. Then Chris Shula will oversee all of the linebackers, but what's really unique about it is it also provides an opportunity for (Assistant Linebackers Coach) Thad Bogardus to take a step in the right direction, being able to have chances to oversee some of the outside linebackers on the field, in those meetings if Chris is with the inside group. Then being able to add (Assistant Defensive Line Coach) Marcus Dixon to work with Eric Henderson will be a big addition. He and Eric have a previous relationship. He's got a special story. He's a special person, really being able to get to know him has really been enjoyable over the last couple of weeks. And then (Assistant Secondary Coach) Jonathan Cooley, who I think is another young, sharp up-and-coming coach has a great command of the game working as the assistant secondary coach, where he was kind of a quality control, defensive assistant last year. I think when good things happen, when you're as good as we were on defense, (Former Defensive Coordinator) Brandon (Staley) gets a head job, you're able to bring in an amazing leader like (Defensive Coordinator) Raheem (Morris) in and then keep a good amount of continuity so that everybody takes a step in the right direction, that's pretty special. That's why I'm so excited about that group. And then to the offensive side of the ball, when you look at (Tight Ends/Pass Game Coordinator) Wes (Phillips) being able to assume what (Former Pass Game Coordinator) Shane's (Waldron) previous role was as the pass game coordinator, I think it's just a reflection of the caliber of coach that he is, the command that he has on all 11 offensively and the different ways that we want to be able to attack people. I think he and (Offensive Coordinator) Kevin O'Connell will really work well together, figuring out the best ways to attack people specifically through the air."

(On what changed with McVay and the organization regarding QB Jared Goff)

"I think what I would say that I've learned over the last handful of years is things change by the day. And you probably want to be careful making blanket statements when you can't predict the future. Again, all I can go back to is appreciation for the times that we did have and wishing him nothing but the best moving forward."

(On if he has had any conversations with Goff since the end of the season)

"I have, yeah. I think Jared and I had a lot of conversations. We had one that I want to keep that between myself and Jared, but I don't want to get into the specifics of those types of things. But when you look back

on the four that we did have together, there's a lot of times you can smile on. And I would say there's a lot of things that, you know, when I self-reflect, I certainly wish I was better for him in some instances. And those are things that think you have to acknowledge, move forward and make sure that, that you learn from every mistake that you make. And certainly, I'm not going to run away from the things that I could have been better for him as a leader and as a coach. There was a lot of really good things that occurred from 2017 and on that I think we can eventually really have a much better appreciation for. We have had good conversations that were healthy. And I think we were able to both communicate open and honestly with one another, but those details were to keep between us."

(On if any internal candidates were interviewed for the defensive coordinator position)

"I think when you're currently on a staff, you're almost interviewing every single day for opportunities. All those guys that you mentioned are phenomenal coaches. It's not because they're not capable, and I didn't think that they couldn't be an unbelievable defensive coordinator for the Rams. It just so happened that you got a chance to reconnect with Raheem Morris. I think you see it reflected in all the opportunities (Former Cornerbacks Coach) Aubrey (Pleasant) is going to do a great job. I mean, you guys have seen when you've come out to practice the charisma, the presence, the ability to communicate with the players, the energy that he brings. Aubrey and I have a standing relationship going back to our days, as really young coaches, were still young coaches, but really young coaches in Washington. It was amazing to be able to bring him and, you know, to have him come here with me in 2017 and watching his growth. I think he's going to do a phenomenal job as the pass game coordinator in Detroit and add a huge amount of value to them. You see Joe Barry, going in and connecting with (Packers Head Coach) Matt (LaFleur) in Green Bay. I know he's going to attack that opportunity. I know how excited he and his family are. I got a chance to talk to him actually the other morning, driving in. Joe is another guy coming from Washington, was the assistant head coach. We've had a special relationship going back a long ways and he's, he's going to do a really good job with those guys. And then with the Coach Evero and I got a chance to really work together my first year in coaching in Tampa developed a special relationship when he was working as a defensive assistant quality control coach under Monte Kiffin, one of his mentors was Raheem Morris. And so those two working together, even watching them collaborate on how we want to operate on the backend has been pretty special. I think it also provided a unique opportunity for growth for Coach Evero to really step up, become a pass game coordinator. He got an opportunity to interview for the Packers defensive coordinator job, which I know he was really impressive in his interviews from speaking with Matt. I think there's a lot of good things going on for all of those guys, but you interview every single day, every day is an opportunity to continue to really challenge yourself to be better than you were the previous day. All three of those guys have really demonstrated that over the course of working with them. But ultimately, I felt like getting Raheem in here was going to be what was the best decision for the Rams and I'm excited about that."

(On the process of hiring Assistant Defensive Line Coach Marcus Dixon considering his journey)

"Yeah, it's an amazing story. It's a really unique opportunity to see people respond from some setbacks, with a resilient mindset and mentality. You hear us talk about that and I'll mention that a lot when we get a chance to connect. Having some tangible evidence, where you're going through some real things and then you come out on the right side of it, I think is a real credit to the human being. This was Eric Henderson. Eric Henderson and (Assistant Defensive Line Coach) Marcus (Dixon) had a previous relationship going back to when he did an internship or really part of the fellowship program with the Chargers. When we knew that there was going to be an opportunity for somebody to work with Coach Henderson, that was the first guy he wanted. It's really important to me to listen to our coaches, because I think they deserve and earned that respect and I trust their judgment. We got a chance to connect with Marcus. It was unanimous when the defensive coaching staff and myself connected with him, getting a feel for him, what we were looking for from that role, somebody to come fit into the culture that's been established from those guys. Especially, I think Eric has done a really unique job of establishing a culture in that defensive line room. You know, the 'Dawg Work' that you guys had talked about. Being able to add him, I think he'll add tremendous value. But that was Eric Henderson and his preexisting relationship, how we found out about Marcus. It's a great story of overcoming some things and really excited to see what he does for us in his role as the assistant D-line coach."

(On how much he values new perspective in a coaching staff)

"It's something that you think about a lot because I think, it's really important to establish, especially when we've been able to have some success, the opportunity for growth from within. There's certainly been those opportunities, you guys have seen that reflected. Then, I think there are some rare circumstances where a Raheem Morris, who you've worked with, who provides so many different things of value that kind of goes against where, in an ideal situation, you're building, you're developing, you're able to promote and continue to grow from within, but then there's always those exceptions. I think it is a good balance. I think being able to bring new people in, keep that positive pressure on the coaching staff to continue to stay up to date with what's going on, new trends and different ideas. I know it's been something that I get excited about because you know, it's a never-ending learning process with what's going on and how you can stay up to date and different ways of looking at things. Some of these new faces in here will provide tremendous value, in addition to the guys that are continuing to grow from within. I think when you look at it with where our staff's at with the guys that we do have, I think it's a great balance. I really am truly excited about watching that collaboration, watching the connection of those guys unfold, because if you get the coaches, the camaraderie, the connection is right, then most importantly, those players, they feel that. If we're all on the same page, we're going in the right direction, we're able to establish the right rhythm and routine and processes and standards with how we prepare, how we practice and then ultimately how we perform. As Coach (Bill) Walsh would say, 'The score takes care of itself'. I feel really good about what we can control up to this point. I think it's going to be absolute bananas when the league year starts watching how everybody kind of figures this thing out with what the salary cap ends up being and try to put together the most competitive roster that we can to work with these coaches, or really the coaches to work with these players is the most important."

(On what he feels he needs to see differently from the quarterback position in order to reach the Super Bowl)

"I would say this, I think as a team going back, you kind of just bring it back to being in that Green Bay visitor's locker room after the game. What I think is so hard is that when you fall short or when you lose in the Divisional Round, or when we lost in the Super Bowl a couple years ago. What you don't appreciate until you accumulate enough experience to really apply tangible evidence is how difficult it is – when you really say, 'Hey, you start over.' You don't just show up where you fell short the following year. It's so difficult to get yourself in a position to win your opener, to then follow that up by winning your second game, putting yourself in a position to win a division, potentially compete for a first-round bye, get into the playoffs, win in the playoffs. So, there's so many things that we just want to take it one day at a time, be totally and completely present. I think it's really all-encompassing to coaches, offense, defense, special teams – everybody can do their job at a little bit higher level. If we do that and we continue to just build and peak at the right times, you give yourself an opportunity to be relevant. Kind of like what I was saying earlier with the Bucs, they peaked at the right time. I think they showed that they can handle some adversity, I think a lot of people were probably counting them out after we had a game on Monday night, where we won, then they lose to the Chiefs the following week. But they had a late bye, they did a great job of rallying the troops and peaking at the right time. So, we're really just focused on what we can control right now and that'll be an ever-evolving process as we're gearing towards whoever we open with and trying to really start 1-0."

(On OL Austin Blythe and the importance of retaining consistency at the center position)

"He really has done a nice job. It's funny that you mentioned that, because we were talking amongst coaches and with (General Manager) Les (Snead) and his group over the last couple of weeks. We've talked about the importance of that center position, having the command and the capacity that you're looking for because of the amount of responsibility that you put on that specific individual with where the communication starts, he and the quarterback working in unison. Looking at what (C) John Sullivan was able to establish his first couple years. Then seeing (OL) Austin (Blythe) start to play in the latter half of 2019, then watching where he took it and ran with it last season was really impressive. He did a great job and he's definitely somebody that we appreciate, we value. I think there's going to be a lot of things that we've got to really navigate through as we're trying to figure out the best way to put our team together as we figure out what is that cap? What does it look like specific to some of the things that we're in the midst of trying to figure out? You even talk about restructuring, some of the guys that have some of those bigger deals and where we can find some of that money. There's a lot of layers and a lot of numbers that (Vice President, Football & Business Administration) Tony Pastors is a lot smarter than me on that hopefully we'll be able to figure out to put together the best team."

(On the offensive production and how they have adjusted since Former RB Todd Gurley II's departure)

"I think anytime that you can really be a threat, where you're efficient in both phases and everything did center around (Former RB) Todd (Gurley II). I think, especially when you look at the 2017 season, he was Offensive Player of the Year. You could make a case that he should have been MVP and he was really peaking at the right moments. I thought he affected and influenced the game in the run and in the pass, and because he was such an efficient runner and because he was able to make people pay. Well then it forces and dictates different things that open up some pass windows. So, I think it goes hand-in-hand. I think you did see some of the things that (RB) Cam (Akers) was able to do towards the latter part of the season enabled us to operate, I don't know if you would say the same, I think you've always got to evolve, adjust, and adapt and certainly, it's about winning and losing games. Last year in particular, when you look at some games, I was just talking about this with the staff before I came in here, when you go up 24-3 against the Bears at the end of the third quarter, ultimately the goal is to win the football game. And so you might be a little bit more conservative. What I'm interested in, is how can we win games consistently. Week in and week out there might be a different approach, but those things in 2017 and 2018, Todd was a very, very big focal point. You could also argue that Jared played at a Pro Bowl-caliber level as well and that was a reflection of why we played so well offensively. Then over the last couple years we're looking at, 'Hey, how can we continue to improve? What's the landscape of the league defensively,' but ultimately as a head coach, my job is to figure out how we put all three phases together week in and week out and come away with that win, because there are no style points in this league. It's about winning and losing games."

(On elaborating on the changes that occurred around Goff)

"I think the unfair narrative has been that some of our decrease in production is exclusively on the quarterback, that's not true at all. I think certainly, I have a big hand in that. I have to be able to look myself in the mirror and acknowledge and be able to evolve, improve and take ownership in that. I do know that the head coach and the quarterback are the ones that always, sometimes you get too much credit or too much blame, but I'm not going to run away from the blame that's deserved on my end. What I do think is important is that the narrative becomes, all right, this is the outlet for why the offense wasn't what it was, that's unfair to Jared and I think it's disrespectful to what he's done over the last four years. There's a lot of things. Football's the ultimate team sport. That quarterback position is vital to your success, but it's not exclusively the reason for, or the reason not. There's an element that absolutely, it's about the ten around him. It's about what kind of things are we doing to put our players in the most favorable spots? And when you go back and you watch, and there's a lot of layers to every single snap, every single play, it's not exclusive to the quarterback and there's a lot of times when I'm looking at saying, 'Man, I've got to do a better job, or we do collectively as a staff,' and then there's somewhere we're saying, 'We've got to execute. Whether it's from upfront, tight ends, receivers, running backs or the quarterback.' That's what makes football such a unique game, but I do think that's what goes back to it being the ultimate team game because it takes all 11 to be able to operate at an efficient level. It takes coaches and players being connected and being on the same page."

(On acquiring veteran players)

"I think it's always about a collaboration. When we have acquired those players in the past, I think the coolest thing is, is there can be a level of ownership and truly it's the coaches and players on the same page. But whether you're talking about the (former safety) Eric Weddles, the (former OLB) Clay Matthews (III), (OL) Andrew Whitworth, when he comes in. What I can't talk about right now, all those things are exciting, but until you can truly forge and build and develop that relationship, I don't think I can fully answer that question. Those are all things that you hope to project, but possible things that maybe we could talk about March 18th. I don't know, maybe then."

(On Brandon Staley's departure and how to make sure the Rams stay the number one defense with a new defensive coordinator)

"Well, first of all, I would say that I'm not surprised at what happened with (Chargers Head Coach) Brandon (Staley). He did a great job. He came in, made a huge impact and I thought it was a great reflection of he and the defensive coaches and then our players ultimately making it come to life, being able to figure out how to navigate through some of the obstacles specific to COVID, when you're making a transition with so

many different things that we did schematically. Brandon deserves a lot of credit, as do the assistants and the players ultimately for making it come to life. But I'm not surprised. I thought that was the direction that it was going, honestly, and you knew that if he got an opportunity to compete for a job where the guys had an open mind that he would do really well because he's got a big-picture perspective, he's got such a unique ability to see the game, both from an offensive and a defensive lens. He's got a unique perspective on the kicking game. That wasn't something that I would say I was shocked by, that he ended up getting an opportunity to go lead the Chargers. With that being said, really happy for Brandon and we'll probably, hopefully, if we get back to practicing and doing the things that a normal season entails, we'll be able to compete against those guys in some training camp practices and stuff like that. But with Raheem, being able to bring him in, I think what's so unique about Raheem, is his wisdom, his experience, and also his humility. He knows, 'Hey, there's a lot of good stuff that's been going on,' So, let me come in, let me really work with the Eric Henderson's of the world, Ejiro Evero, Chris Shula, Thad Bogardus, Jonathan Cooley, the five guys that were on this staff last year, let's find a way to collaborate and then ultimately be able to build the best defense for the 2021 Rams. That's what we're looking to do, but I think it starts with the leadership. Raheem is a unique leader. He's got a great humility about himself. His ability to listen, learn, and then lead, I think is a really special quality that he has. I've witnessed it already in these staff meetings, but then also he's got a bunch of great experiences and big-time defenses or teams that he's been a part of where he can impart and have his influence and that's what makes him special and that's what I'm excited about seeing come to life with his leadership and the rest of our defensive coaches."

(On how to make sure the culture stays the same with new coaches)

"I think it's always about connecting and really building and developing those relationships. Spending time together, being able to do football together, being able to get to know their families. Even when we got a chance to interview a couple O-line coaches last week, being able to bring a couple of those coaches out, where we're going to dinner with them and some of the fellowship that occurs in those moments. That time is the most valuable thing and I think there's a consistent alignment of the values and the things that are important to us. It's your families, it's your football. It's being able to continue to challenge one another in a way that's reflective of a healthy, competitive atmosphere and environment amongst our coaches, where we're trying to help our players reach their highest potential. We're trying to do it with an urgent enjoyment and these guys reflect exactly what's been right about things here previously. I think they're even going to build it to make it even more special than it's been in years past."

(On elaborating what he could have done better for Goff)

"I think it's just the consistent and ongoing communication. You pride yourself in those types of things and I think I could have been much better about those real-time communications. I'm not going to make any excuses about it, but there's a lot of things, even some of the decision-making in games, you know. Are you consistently putting him in the right positions to be successful? As a coach, as a leader, your job is to try to make situations and people that you're around better and there were certainly some moments that I know I could have done better really for our team and Jared in particular."

(On blocking O'Connell from leaving for another offensive coordinator position)

"That is accurate. Kevin's a great coach. He's our offensive coordinator. He has a huge say and a huge influence on how we want to operate, and I think even more so moving forward. I was really excited about the opportunity to be able to work with him in year two, continue to collaborate, learn from him. He understands how valuable he is to me and to the Rams and we talked about all those things, but I think it's a credit to the respect that he's garnered around the league. What I would say is he's our OC and that's why we blocked him (laughs)."

(On if O'Connell will potentially have a chance to call offensive plays)

"Yeah, and those are things that you always talk about. I think each situation is independent. I don't think you ever want to pigeonhole yourself into. Kevin and I had a lot of great dialogue and I'm always going to listen. I'm not interested in losing a coach to go do that same role and I'm not naive to the fact that the play calling, and those things are very important and when that situation came up with (Packers Head Coach) Matt (LaFleur), we talked about that. Kevin and I have had great conversations, but I would like to think that anybody that's been a part of this Rams' building knows that there is an investment in us trying to help guys continue to grow and if opportunities that they have outside this building don't exist in-house, then usually

that's when we're going to let guys go, even if it doesn't help the Rams and that's kind of been the approach. Kevin and I had great dialogue, I think I want to understand what's important to these guys and that's where you listen and then you make decisions accordingly, but we've had a bunch of great conversations. I would like to think that he and I both are really excited about the opportunities that we have moving forward working with the offensive coaches, these players and what next year can look like for us with him leading the way offensively."

(On if he knows a coach will fit in with the culture when he is interviewing them)

"I think so. And then you do a lot of vetting and in a lot of instances, there are some circumstances where you're really saying, 'Okay, what did the interview process really look like with Raheem Morris?' Well, we've already worked together. You know who he is. He has a pre-existing relationship with so many of the people in our building already and so it's more about kind of talking through some things. Where are you at? Here's what we're doing, as opposed to the interview that maybe we did with Kevin Carberry to be the offensive line coach. Each situation and circumstances unique to that. But I think you can feel, it's almost kind of like an intuition and really, as you get to know people, 'Hey, is this a fit? Is it not?' and all of these guys that are coming on here, I feel really good about the fit and how they'll really continue to just raise the level of standards and expectations that we have specific to how the coaches can influence and affect good stuff for our players and ultimately reaching their highest potential."