



**Rams QB Matthew Stafford – Media Availability – March 19, 2021**

**(On his message to Rams fans)**

"I'm just excited to be here. Obviously, this is a huge opportunity, not only for me, but for my family as well. We're excited to be out here, excited to take on this next chapter in my football career and in our family's life. Hopefully it comes away with a bunch of success on the football field and not only for me personally, but more importantly for the Rams."

**(On playing in the NFC West and the level of quarterback play)**

"Luckily for me, when I play, I'm not playing against the other quarterbacks, because there are some great ones in this division, there's no question. The biggest thing for me right now is trying to make sure I dive into this offense, learn it as quickly as I possibly can, get to know my teammates and make sure that when we hit the ground running, I'm ready to go and I can play fast and free and play to my highest ability."

**(On if he has talked to anyone currently on the Rams roster)**

"Yeah, I've talked to a few guys. I've talked to (WR) Cooper (Kupp) and (WR) Robert (Woods) a little bit, 'AD' (DL Aaron Donald), and 'Whit' (OL Andrew Whitworth). I've talked to a bunch of the O-linemen. I've talked to a few guys here and there. I've had some good conversations, really just trying to get to know people. It's an odd time. Obviously, I don't know what's going to happen with our offseason program, but I imagine it's going to be limited in some capacity, if not all the way. So, it'll be an interesting opportunity and a challenge for me to get to know these guys as fast as I can and make sure they get to know me so that we can go out there play as a team and win some games."

**(On his impressions of Kupp and Woods)**

"From afar, they just do an outstanding job of getting open. It's pretty impressive to watch those two guys go. They both do it in their own unique way. Both have an understanding of the game that's pretty impressive. You can just see it; it jumps out on the tape. It jumps out from afar when you're watching TV and then once they get the ball in their hand, they do a great job of running after the catch, which is huge in this league, and those guys do an outstanding job of that."

**(On if it's exciting to be in the same city as Dodgers Pitcher Clayton Kershaw)**

"It's great. I'm excited to watch him do his thing. He's obviously been a great player for a long time. I'm excited to hopefully get out to Dodger Stadium and watch him do his thing and be in the stands for that."

**(On if he prefers Matt or Matthew)**

"Matthew, please."

**(On what steps need to be taken to get a contract to be a long-term Ram in writing)**

"As far as in writing goes, I'm not too worried about it. My job No. 1 first and foremost, is to play at a high level to help this team win football games. That's what I'm focused on at the moment. I've got a lot on my plate, to be honest, with trying to learn this offense and learning the team. So that's the biggest and most important thing on my mind. All that other stuff will take care of itself. At the moment, I've got two more years left on my deal, so I'm just going to play and let all that other stuff take care of itself."

**(On if there is a possibility of restructuring his contract to be under the salary cap)**

"You're going to have to ask the guys in the Rams front office on that one. That's above my pay grade. I'm just a player trying to do my thing, but obviously I'll do whatever I can to help the team."

**(On the challenges of coming to a new city)**

"Obviously, I had a bunch of familiar faces and I knew the city of Detroit like the back of my hand. So, it's going to be a new city for me. Like I spoke to earlier, with probably limited, if not zero offseason in-person style, that's going to be a challenge for me. I'm looking forward to it. Everybody in the league has different challenges. There are new players coming into new positions all over the league. So, we're not unique in that, but at the same time, I'm going to do everything I can to make sure I am face-to-face with these guys if I can be and if I'm not, I'm doing everything I can to reach out and get to know them so we can play together and play well."

**(On how much of the system Darrell Bevell runs is similar to the Rams)**

"I don't believe it's too similar. I think they're pretty different. I think just watching them from afar and then obviously trying to get to know it a little bit here and there if I can, it's going to be different, it's going to be a new language for me. I bet it's going to probably be a little bit of a different style of play, but at the same time, that's something that (Head Coach) Sean (McVay) and I will talk about to kind of figure out where my strengths have been in the past and where his strengths are as a team and as a play caller and we'll blend some together and make it work."

**(On his excitement to play in McVay's offense)**

"I'm really excited. He has a great track record as a play caller and as a coach. I think quarterbacks have played at a high level under his tutelage. So, I'm excited to get the opportunity to play for him and for this team. Part of what makes him a great play caller and all great play callers is having trust in the quarterback and hopefully I can build that over time, and he can trust me to go out there and make plays."

**(On where or who his toughness comes from)**

"I don't know. I think more than anything, just a respect for the game, a respect for my teammates. The quarterback probably gets a lot of attention when it comes to those things, but there's guys up front blocking for me or playing defensive line or linebacker, whatever it is, guys all over the field are battling through things that a lot of times don't get talked about. So, I just walk through that locker room Mondays after games and see guys beat up and know that they're going to be out there on Sunday and if they're going to be out there, I sure want them to know that I'm going to be out there as well. As far as getting out there and making sure I'm ready to play, I'll do everything I possibly can. Then once the ball is snapped, then it's just do anything you can to help the team win, that's running or throwing. Whatever needs to be done, I'm willing to do it and happy to do it because this is a great game and a great team game. I just want to get out there and lead by example when I can."

**(On what he was looking for in his next team after deciding to part with Detroit)**

"I mean, obviously, it was a tough decision to come to. Obviously, the Lions were amazing to me and we worked through this thing together, which was an outstanding thing and pretty uncommon I feel like. I got to give a lot of credit to the Lions for that. Then, you never know what's going to happen after that. Once you do that, you open it up to kind of a bunch of different places. We had kind of spoken about trying to get to a place where the team was ready to have success in short time and obviously, the Rams are a team like that. They've had a bunch of success as a team, it was something that attracted me to them. There were other teams that were possibilities, no question. It just happened to work out the way that it did."

**(On what other teams were a possibility)**

"You probably have to ask Detroit's front office for that. They got more information than me. I was just along for the ride."

**(On what it feels like to be in a facility and a new stadium)**

"Yeah, it definitely felt different. There's a lot of change. I'm not only moving myself, but my wife, my four kids, a bunch of people, so it's a big process. going and seeing the locker room and then seeing the practice facility where I'm going to go to work most days is something that's different, but it's exciting at the same time. It's something that I hope to make home really quick and hopefully for a long time."

**(On the evolution of McVay's offense)**

"I think Sean does a great job of kind of adapting to who he has on that has on the team. You look back a few years ago, there was a bunch of receivers and it got to a little bit more two tight end stuff. There's a new back in town, so there's a bunch of changes that happened. And that's the NFL. I think Sean does a great job of seeing who he has available, who can make plays and getting those guys to football as much as possible. This league has changed a lot in the 12 years that I've been in it, both offensively and defensively. It's a constant challenge to make sure that both sides of the football are staying up to date on what's the best and what's the newest and how teams are attacking us. So, I feel comfortable with where he's at, where he is as a play-caller and then making sure he's going to get us into some great plays."

**(On his mindset and approach to fourth-quarter comebacks)**

"I mean, obviously all of them are different. I think the biggest thing is knowing the situation and knowing how to attack that situation. Sometimes, you need a field goal, sometimes you need a touchdown. Does the kicker like the ball on the left hash, the right hash? Our guy in Detroit, (K Matt) Prater, he loved it on the left hash. So, if we were just trying to get a field goal, I was always trying to get on the left-hash for him late in the drive. All those things go into it. Make sure if you're playing another team with a great offense or a great quarterback, you don't want to get into the ball back with too much time as well. There's so many things that go into it. But I think it starts with knowing the situation and then No. 2, just having a great attitude when you go out there and understand that you're going to have the confidence, not only in myself, but in my teammates to go out there and do whatever the situation needs to be done. So, it's knowing the situation and I think having a bunch of confidence as a team that no matter what the situation is, we can go get it done."

**(On if there is a specific fourth-quarter comeback that comes to mind)**

"There are a couple. We were playing Minnesota, in Minnesota a few years ago. I think we had 27 seconds left and they kicked it out of the back of the endzone. And in two plays we got down in field goal range for Prater. He hit a 58-yard and went to overtime and ended up winning that game. That's a big one. And then, I'll just go with that one right now. There's quite a few running through my head. But, that one and Washington was good. That one's a good one, because it was against Sean. They ran a little zone read with (QB Kirk) Cousins and he walked in and I immediately thought they'd left us too much time, which was great. We got to get down there and about four or five plays later, threw a touchdown and Anquan (Boldin) at home. So, that was a fun one."

**(On if he had a prior relationship with McVay)**

"No, just I think a mutual respect from afar and then obviously kind of shaking hands here and there after games. But, as far as before now, there hasn't been a relationship to speak of."

**(On being on a team with a deep postseason run potential and experience)**

"Yeah, it's exciting. It's something that drew me as I guess tradable asset at some point, that the Rams were the team that were proven winners, had done it quite consistently over the last four or five years. So, something that was exciting to me. Obviously, being on the other end of that, not having too many playoff chances under my belt is frustrating. It's tough. You play this game for success as a team. You want to you want to win games and be in those big moments. I'm excited to hopefully have that opportunity. That isn't guaranteed to us, just because it happened in years past, doesn't mean it's going to happen again. We've got to go out there and earn it and I'm going to do everything I can to make sure we earn it."

**(On how the initial conversations went McVay when talking football and McVay's excitement level)**

"Yeah, that's about right. You've got it down. That's kind of how it was. Obviously, the first time we got to sit down and talk, it was a lot of him asking me about games that I've played in and vice versa. I think there was a mutual appreciation for what the other person had done, him from a coaching standpoint and me from a playing standpoint. So, that was fun to talk back and forth and see what the other's perspective was on certain things that had happened in both of our careers. It was cool and obviously looking for a bunch more of that to help us get to where we need to be."

**(On if he has given his age and continuing to play any thought)**

"I don't want to put an age on it. I feel like I'm so far from that right now. I'm only 33. I'm a young man. So, I'll figure that out when I get there. I don't see the end right around the corner or anything like that. I feel like I can play this game at a high level for a long time. So, I'm excited to get the opportunity to play, hopefully for a long time for this franchise and bring a bunch of success here."

**(On specifics of the offense that he feels will enhance his skillset)**

"I think Sean does a great job of designing plays. He does a great job of moving in and out of formations, creating difficulty for the defense. That's the name of the game on the offensive side of the ball, is to try to give the defense a bunch of things to think about, make them play defense and let us play offense. So, I think he does a great job of that. Obviously, we are going to work together I'm sure and figure out, 'Hey, what have I done well in the past? And what do the guys on this team do a great job of, and we'll blend it from there.' It's exciting, a lot of guys in my position have played at a high level under him, so I'm excited to get my chance."

**(On if he is here in Southern California)**

"I'm on the West Coast, yep."

**(On what excites him and his family about moving to California)**

"I mean, the sunshine's not bad. That's a good thing. My little girls don't really know what's going on, so we had to trick them and tell them we were moving to the beach. Not really the beach, but it's closer to the beach than we've been in the past, so they're excited about that."

**(On how long it takes for him to feel comfortable in a new offense)**

"It's a good question. They're always different. Each offense kind of has the things that are easy and normal to it and that are a little bit more difficult, so I'll figure out what those are for me and go from there, but I'm not too worried about it. Like you said, I've done it before and I'm excited to get to do it and it's a new challenge for me, especially with new teammates, like you said, and then an offseason that's probably going to be limited, if anything. They're definitely challenges ahead, but I'll do my homework and make sure I'm ready to go."

**(On managing the pressure of leading the Rams to the Super Bowl)**

"For me, it's playing this position for 12 years, that's your job every year. I don't care what team you're playing for; your job is to try and get that team to the Super Bowl. Obviously, didn't get it done in the first 12 years of my career. I've got a new opportunity to come out here and give it a shot. I'm going to do everything I possibly can. As far as, what was in the trade, what was not in the trade, what our team is, none of that matters. I'm part of the L.A. Rams at the moment and we've got to do everything we can as a team to get ready to play at the highest level. That's what we expect out of each other. That's what I expect out of those guys, I know they'll expect it out of me. So, I'm excited to get that opportunity and sometimes feeling that pressure is a positive thing, I love that. I want to be playing in those big games and in those big moments. So, for me, it's an opportunity more than anything."

**(On not being a Hollywood guy and if he has had any celebrity encounters or has he been star struck by anyone)**

"I'm sure I will be. But your observant, I am not a celebrity, Hollywood type of guy. But listen, I'm going to be focused on football when I'm here. If I run into somebody cool, I'll let you know."

**(On how long it takes for him to feel a part of the team culture)**

"Obviously, I think that kind of comes from the top down. I've had opportunities to meet some guys in the front office, the head coach, the owner, all that kind of stuff and you can feel it from there. But I think once I get around the guys, and who knows when that's going to be with the state of things at the moment, but once you get around the guys as well in the locker room, I've heard nothing but great things. The guys that I've talked to on the team have been awesome guys and guys that I've been fans of from afar for a long time. So, hopefully it'll click and happen fast. I'm just excited to get that opportunity to get to meet everybody face-to-face."

**(On when it hit him emotionally that he was leaving Detroit)**

"Yeah, that's a good question. It's kind of been a back-and-forth, I've been flying out here and flying back and doing all these kinds of things, just trying to get ourselves as a family settled, still trying to do that. So, that's part of a process, but probably, honestly yesterday or two days ago, whenever it became official, was a big day. That was kind of like the point of no return and you knew that the trade was going through and I was going to be an L.A. Ram and Jared (Goff) was obviously going to be a Detroit Lion and that was a big moment. I was happy to do that video that I got to do for the Lions, that organization and those teammates, coaches, front office and ownership mean a lot to me, always will. The people that were fans of me when I was there are people that I'll appreciate and know and love for a long time. So, it's still something that I'll think about. We got them on the schedule this year, so it'll be fun to reconnect with some of those people. But I'm really excited about this opportunity. It obviously feels really real to me at the moment and I'm just excited to get going."