



## **Los Angeles Rams Transcripts - Head Coach** **Sean McVay - Monday October 31, 2022**

### **Head Coach Sean McVay**

#### **(On WR Cooper Kupp's injury)**

“Fortunately, just a little lateral soft tissue swelling in that ankle. I think he's going to be okay. You guys all know how tough he is and so really just kind of managing that swelling, but fortunately, there wasn't anything structurally wrong, and so that's very positive news for us.”

#### **(On if there's a chance RB Kyren Williams will be activated this week)**

“Yeah, he made really good progress last week. There is a possibility of that and then like anything else, I think using the practice opportunities as a chance to evaluate and kind of gauge where he's at will give us the clarity that's necessary to make that decision.”

#### **(On what needs to be seen from DT Bobby Brown III before he gets activated)**

“I think it's really just figuring out what's the best way to get our most competitive 48 up and sometimes that's a production thing, sometimes that's a result of some of the guys that do provide some depth on the D-line also contribute on special teams and so (DT) Bobby's (Brown III) done a nice job. It's great to be able to have him back out there with us whether that means he'll

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actually be active this week is, again, something similar to (RB) Kyren (Williams) that we'll wind up working through."

**(On if he anticipates Kupp playing against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers)**

"I do, yes."

**(On if there were any other injuries)**

"Yeah, (TE) Tyler (Higbee) got banged up on the one screen that he caught, but he came back, returned to the game, just kind of your typical bumps and bruises, but really Cooper is the only one that will probably hold out of practice on Wednesday just to kind of get that thing under control. We'll probably be limited with his practice this week, but if we are able to manage it like we expect and anticipate, we do expect him to be able to play but that'll be something that I'll have updates as the week goes on. Everybody else should be good to go."

**(On if RB Cam Akers will be on the roster when the team returns to practice on Wednesday)**

"That's a good question. Those are things that I was kind of talking with (General Manager) Les (Snead) about a handful of things earlier today and really just now before we started up with you guys, something that we'll work through and probably won't have the finality to that until kind of the next 48 hours. So, that's a very fluid situation. There's really kind of no news to update on that and just because of some of the things as this deadline's approaching and the different things that can occur, that's a fluid situation for us."

**(On positions the team might be looking to upgrade with the deadline approaching)**

"Yeah, I think you kind of know, it's tough. So much of it is, it's not exclusive to the position, but it's also the player that's involved as well. When you look at some of the different scenarios that have come up for us, these have been

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pretty special players that have presented opportunities for us to aggressively pursue with a long-term vision. I think a lot of it is, as the deadline gets closer, you get a little bit more, and I don't want to say truth, but you get a little bit more clarity from some of the teams with who would be available based on the way they see some of their decisions that are looming as it relates to, 'Alright, is this guy in the last year of his contract?' Things of that nature. So, to identify any specific positions would be hard for me to say. It's more about the player and the possible players that could be available, I should say, that would dictate any potential movement on our end."

**(On if coming off a loss and the current standings have an effect on what they are looking to do at the deadline)**

"That's a good question. The answer would be, yeah, you always want to take into consideration any of your moves, not only for the given year, but for the long term, and so any of the moves that we've made hasn't just been exclusively for that year in particular. There's been long-term vision for those players that we've acquired not exclusive to just that year alone. So, there's a lot of layers to it, but I would ultimately say that that is certainly a factor in it. But any of these players, especially if you're talking about giving up major compensation to acquire them, you don't want it to just be for ten games that you're guaranteed remaining. You want it to be something that you have a long-term vision for as it fits for your team. As you guys know, there's so many layers to these decisions and the compensation that you have to give up or whatever is their compensation just on their overall salary that you're taking on. What are they asking for in return? Is it a player? Is it picks? So, a lot of layers to it, but that is certainly a factor just based on where we're at in the season and what it looks like for us. Those are definitely factors that weigh into all of our decisions."

**(On why RB Ronnie Rivers was the lead running back)**

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“(RB) Darrell (Henderson Jr.) was having some breathing issues to start the game, just feeling some symptoms from the flu and so that was kind of what it was. It was a running back by committee approach as you saw yesterday. Even though (RB) Malcolm (Brown) had a little bit less snaps than what Ronnie and Darrell had, what we're trying to figure out is the best way to utilize those guys and it takes us getting into a rhythm and a routine and having some drive continuity which we saw in a couple series. But for the most part, a lot of those things, whether it's getting skill players involved, getting running backs involved, it takes offensive production and it just hasn't been consistent enough for us to unfold in the way that we'd like really throughout the course of the year, but in particular those four games. I thought the first half was some bright spots, but it was more a result of Darrell didn't start the game because he was having some breathing things just to start out. I thought Ronnie did a nice job with the things that he could control. He's a young player that's only going to get more confidence as he gains experience. Darrell did a couple decent things, and then I liked some of Malcolm's contributions. But the space was limited as it relates to just the run game in general.”

**(On WR Van Jefferson's return from injury, why he didn't get any targets, and what he saw out of him)**

“I think it was good to get him out there. I think it was good to get him back. He did a good job of opening up some opportunities where it's a kind of a 1A and 1B. They played some things deep to short, but you could still feel he opened up (WR) Cooper (Kupp) on that deep crossing route. It's just good to get him out there. He's worked through a lot to get himself available at this point. He played around 30 snaps. (You) always want to increase that workload, but I think it's more about just getting his feet wet and getting out into real game action. I think we can kind of build on that. Obviously, you want to be able to get him more involved, but the way that kind of the thing unfolded, there was some limited opportunities and we did want to be mindful of his count, whether it was

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the 30 to 40 or right around what his normal workload was, which I think was around a little over 50 snaps a game. We'll work up to that. I was pleased with Van, but you do want to try to get him more involved. But like I said, there's a lot of elements that that go into that."

**(On why he felt multiple players lost their cool during the fourth quarter)**

"I think it's an emotional game. That can't happen, but clearly, we got outplayed in the second half. This is an emotional game, tempers can run hot in those types of situations and those guys would be better equipped to answer it. But we got outplayed and didn't win the game and I think the amount of energy and things that go into trying to get a different result leads to some frustrations but we have to be better than that and can't let that occur."

**(On if he had a chance to talk with WR Cooper Kupp on his decision to target him late in the game, leading to an injury)**

"I followed up with him right away. I just said, 'That felt like that was the best chance to just be able to try to end the game on a quick hitting screen.' I was trying to play it safe, in hindsight if you said, 'Would you do it differently?' A hundred percent I would. I'd probably just run a standard offset gun run. What I didn't want to do was have to punt the ball and I felt like that was the highest percentage chance to just get a play off or to catch and run. Typically, there's not some of those things that leave yourself susceptible to that, but like I said, I've made a lot of mistakes and I would do that one differently if I had a chance to do it again and not even leave him possibly exposed to that hit. We didn't have to wait long, I said that to him right away when I walked out on the field to see him. You know Cooper, he's such an incredible human being that he would never be upset, at least I hope not. I do feel bad about that."

**(On if they have thought about overhauling the process behind the run game in terms of player selection and coaching tactics)**

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“I could spend a lot of time because those are things that I think about a lot. I think as a result of all the different moving parts, there's kind of been an overhaul on what we thought we'd be able to operate with philosophically, not exclusive to just a turnover up front, but the skill on the perimeter and really as a result of, without getting too deep into the schematics from a competitive perspective... the answer is you think about all those things. There's been a lot of different things and some of the solves that we've had in previous years to try to be able to do that, it's not even available just because of the amount of injuries. You definitely want to do some different things schematically, but just based on sheer numbers, sometimes those options aren't even at your disposal. So the answer is everything is on the table. We try to explore all avenues. I feel like however I answer this question is going to come off as an excuse, but if you said what we had envisioned in terms of how we wanted to activate certain things relative to the personnel that we were projecting and what we thought it would look like, not exclusive to the run game, but just philosophically offensively, that has been an exact opposite. If you said, ‘Hey, has this been challenging? Is this what you expected through seven games?’ No, it's nothing like what we had expected, but this is where we're at and there's a constant evaluation and there's got to be an evolution and an adaption that is absolutely necessary. It hasn't been good enough. I take a lot of responsibility in that, but there's been a whole lot of moving parts that have contributed to that. The answer is yes, everything is up for discussion and it hasn't gone the way that we wanted. There's a lot of reasons for it, none of which are anything other than an excuse, but these are things that we're dealing with.”

**(On if finding the ‘right guy’ in a possible trade is not the only answer to improve their team overall)**

“Yeah, I think it always starts with the players and that's always what it is. And then you got to ask yourself, ‘All right, well what do they do best?’ I think the

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narrative is sometimes when you know so many different things that maybe you've been exposed to and that you've done with some of our coaches or even in my experience, whether that be here this being my sixth year or even the previous experiences in Washington, there's a lot of different personnel groupings, a lot of different schemes and you got to say, 'All right, well does this fit for us?' Because there's a lot of ways that you would love to try to attack people but you got to ask yourself, 'Does that fit within the framework of how we can execute it at a high level?' Not just, 'Does it draw up and does it sound good at a coaching clinic when I install this thing?' And that's been the problem solving that we're really trying to work through is some of these guys we're just learning about and figuring out what they can do that are being asked to play. You're looking at a couple of our guys up front that are in positions they never anticipated. They weren't even in camp, or even on our roster a couple weeks ago. We're playing with backs that got here midway through the season. And so, all I'm doing is giving you excuses right now but all of this stuff is up for debate and we're constantly trying to problem solve. I can understand probably the crazy looks from you guys, and probably what I would imagine would be some of the frustration from our fans and just from the expectations that we have. We have those same things and we got to figure out a way to do it better and it's coaches and players and we're in it together and we're connected. And that's why you go back to work and you try to figure it out. But to say that it hasn't been challenging, wouldn't be accurate. It certainly has been."

**(On why their offense was not using options like jet sweeps to improve the run game)**

"Sure. Yeah, we ran a couple of them. We ran two to (WR) Cooper (Kupp) yesterday. They would've been targeted as efficient runs. There were some more opportunities. There was limited play (opportunities) ops. You look at it just in the first half alone, where you end up saying, 'Okay, you go three and out in the first series, then you have two touchdown drives. And then the last

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sequence, where we were just really running out to half and then it's 14 to 10, go three and out to start. Our first possession, you go three and out. And then really, they did a good job of sustaining possession and then there's just not a whole lot of opportunities. And then before you know it, kind of towards the latter part of the game, it's a different type of game in terms of the way that they're defending you structurally because they're playing with a lead and then they know they force you to be a little bit more one dimensional. So I did like the flow that we had in those two touchdown drives. And then as a result of the way that the game unfolded, there just wasn't a whole lot of opportunity be able to see that. And I think that's kind of a team deal where their offense did a good job of sustaining some drives. And then when you're not efficient or you're not converting on some of those third downs and then they are able to control the ball and score points and then you're playing from behind. There's just not as many ops. So, in an ideal situation in a scenario, you're efficient on those early downs, you're getting more play opportunities, and you're able to present some different things to the defense. I think you saw that in the first half. Then in the second half, your margin for error is smaller and if you don't execute and convert on some of those third downs, then you're really minimized once they end up scoring some of those drives into touchdowns and you're playing from behind.”

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