



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – January 2, 2019

(Opening statement)

"With us from an injury standpoint, (DB) Blake Countess is still in the concussion protocol. (S) Lamarcus (Joyner) and (RB) Todd (Gurley II) are both making very good progress. We expect those guys to be ready to go on Saturday (January 12, 2019) at 5:15 (p.m.) a couple weeks from now, but they are making good progress. (T) Andrew (Whitworth) is going to be good. He's going to be able to get going and get some stuff. I think he'll be on the field tomorrow. So, other than that I think we're in pretty good shape."

(On if this week is similar to minicamp because the opponent and installs are still unknown for next week)

"Really, it's been a great opportunity for us to kind of look at ourselves. We try to be cognizant of that as the season progresses week-in and week-out with the self-scout, but really, you get a chance to focus on the fundamentals, the techniques. Almost kind of like a phase two day in the offseason program where a lot of individual work, some of the things that are specific to each position group within the framework of the runs, the protections, routes, different things like that. So, it gives us a chance to just work on some of those little nuances within the framework of each position. We'll do a little bit of work, mostly that'll be exclusive to situations though – not really knowing who we're going to be playing, even though you know it's one of the three teams. So, it's going to be about focusing on ourselves, really, these next couple days. Then, on Sunday, we'll come in again and we'll get a chance to do some situational work and some stuff that's relevant to us no matter who we play, that are kind of some of the foundational things of our offense, defense and special teams."

(On if they'll take it slow with Gurley during the next week or so)

"We will, yeah. I think the next couple days we'll really get a chance to see how he's progressed. Whether he's actually a full participant as early as practice starts when we get our normal preparation in that week leading up to the game. But, he is making good progress, moving around pretty good. Saw him on the AlterG (treadmill) earlier today. I think he's feeling good."

(On the balance of wanting to promote current coaches or allow them to interview and take other positions, but also wanting to keep continuity for QB Jared Goff with his quarterback coach)

"It's a great question. I think one of the things that I've been so fortunate with is that you're not far enough removed from getting an opportunity to go through some of these different things, and you don't want to ever forget it's all about people. You want to be able to invest in helping them grow. If that's the case where guys are getting opportunities to grow and interview for head jobs, that means that things are going, most likely, pretty well here. When you do that – and I think when you demonstrate an investment in the people – I think you create an atmosphere of loyalty to this organization, but also knowing that we're going to try to help you grow your career. I think it would be hypocritical of me to not try to help people do that when I was fortunate enough to be exposed to people that did that for me. I think that was one of the things, just going back to the influences that you have. My grandfather's history with the (San Francisco) 49ers, there was so much success that they were able to sustain over time and I think a large part of that was credit to the success, but also them being invested in attracting good coaches because of the way that they help them grow. You see a lot of guys become a head coach from kind of that (Pro Football Hall of Fame Coach) Bill Walsh tree. Certainly, I'm not making that comparison by any stretch, but I think it is about the people."

If that's something that they feel like is best for their family, that's just what we know is the right thing to do. Now, do you want to make a habit of losing coaches? Selfishly, no. But, I think it's the right way to go about it and we've got great coaches in this building. Hopefully, if we do have to replace those guys, we'll be able to promote from within or attract really good coaches that are out there. We'll see how that goes."

(On the Denver Broncos wanting to interview Quarterbacks Coach Zac Taylor for the head coach position)

"Yeah, that's true. He's going to talk with them as well. So, (Quarterbacks Coach) Zac's (Taylor) got a full docket this week. He's going to talk to three of the teams. He's a great coach. He and (Pass Game Coordinator) Shane (Waldron) both. We've got a lot of great coaches on our staff. But, certainly it's exciting for those guys to get the opportunity to go compete for one of these head (coaching) jobs. If it works out for those guys, we'll be very sorry to see them go, but very excited for them as well. Just looking at the career trajectory and the success that these guys have had and how influential they've been on some of the success we've had here."

(On what he thinks he learned from the playoff game against the Atlanta Falcons last season)

"Well, I think, really, every game offers a learning opportunity. I think that atmosphere was certainly something that was special. I think there were some similar ones, but you can never truly mimic and emulate those playoff game-like atmospheres. I think for us being a young team, specifically my first year in the role, you certainly can learn. I think there was a lot of things that you can draw on that from a positive to be able to play a home atmosphere, play a playoff game in that home stadium and be able to use those things to learn from. But, I would say that, really, each season's such a new deal. I think what you learned is, you get valuable spots, specific to Jared and some of our other key players that have played in these games. So, it's not the first time. I think they'd probably be able to better answer that question from their perspective. But, I know for me, it's about doing the best that you can, getting guys ready to go and try to put them in good spots. Like any other game, I think you can learn from those. But, it was a great atmosphere and an environment – something that we're excited to hopefully have the same type of feel when the divisional round comes around here in a couple weeks."

(On if all players made it through the holidays safely)

"Yeah, everybody's been accounted for, everybody's in good shape. So, this New Year's been good to us so far."

(On if there is anyone else on the coaching staff that has been requested for interviews)

"Not to my knowledge, no. They go through and they request those things, but those are the two guys that have had some permission slips sent in so far."

(On USC Offensive Coordinator Kliff Kingsbury being his friend and the reports about him being requested for interviews for head coaching positions and if he thinks Kingsbury is ready to become an NFL head coach and the advice he would offer him)

"I think he's a great coach. I just think in terms of – it's all about surrounding yourself with good people. In terms of, is he capable of being a great leader of people that's consistent, that knows the game, that's been in that role before? He's done all those things and he's got a nice presence about himself. Even when he came here this offseason, just watching him interact with some of our guys, it's not really anything you can kind of put your thumb on, but you can just – when you're around certain people, you could just get a feel, that guy's kind of got some stuff to him where people will follow him. You can just see there's a nice way that he carries himself that I think would make people want to follow him. So, I've got a lot of respect for (USC Offensive Coordinator) Kliff (Kingsbury) in that regard. As far as the specifics, I haven't talked to him about those kinds of things. But, I would say that the one thing that, if you've learned anything – you certainly learn a lot every single day in this role – but, the one thing that I think has helped us have some success over the last couple years, we've got great staff. We've got great people on our staff and we've got great coaches. When you marry that with great players that are willing to get better, be coachable, be accountable and play for one another there's a lot of power in that. That's the biggest thing is, if you feel good about the people that are going to be around you and that you can lean on, specifically for me – he's got a lot more experience in a head coaching role than I do, but I know for me, being able to lean on people and do it together and not feel like you've got to have all the answers because there's other people that are there

with you that have been through things that you just haven't been through. But, I do think he's capable of it. I think he's been a very good head coach. I think he's demonstrated the ability to do a lot of different things at a high level and he's got a great offensive mind. So, if that's what he wants to do, then that'll work out for him and wish him nothing but the best."

(On if he remembers how Goff felt after the loss in the playoffs last season)

"I think you guys know with Jared, he's pretty consistent – never gets too high, never gets too low. I think he knows that there's some things that we can all learn from, that when we get an opportunity in those settings, in those situations again, we expect to be better. I think he's done a great job being able to use the reps that he's had, whether it's against Atlanta or whether it's the 16 games that we've played this year to get better and be intentional about using them the right way, whether they were good reps or bad reps. I think even the last couple weeks specifically, he's done an outstanding job just playing within himself and distributing the ball, getting a variety of playmakers involved. I thought he's had excellent command of the run game. But, I remember him being very confident. I think we were all disappointed with the result, with what an abrupt ending it was to such a great season last year – such a fun season. When it ends, it just happens so abruptly. But he was great about being able to watch the tape, we learned from it and I think some of those things that happened in that game, you've seen him improve on it. Specifically, when we've seen some of those defensive structures."

(On how he would evaluate DL John Franklin-Myers performance this season)

"He's done a really good job. He was one of those guys that you could always see the raw athleticism, the talent, he's got great length, got just a natural feel for how to work edges on people. I think he's around some special players in that defensive line room that have really put their arm around him and invested in him and helped him grow. (Defensive Line Coach) Billy Johnson and (Defensive Quality Control) Thad (Bogardus) have done a great job as well. But, (DL) John (Franklin-Myers) has made a lot of big time plays, specifically in some of our four-man rush packages and the known passing situations, the third downs, some of the two minutes. He's around great players. He's gotten better and better. When you look at some of the things that we give within the framework of the team at the end of the year, he was voted Rookie of the Year by his peers, which is a great compliment and a great testament to some of the things he's done. There's still a lot of room for growth but we've enjoyed being around him and he's definitely done a lot of good things for us this year."