



## LOS ANGELES RAMS

### Rams Defensive Coordinator Wade Phillips – Media Availability – January 17, 2019

#### **(Opening statement)**

"I have a history with this team also. It's pretty much up all of them. These guys, obviously scored 45 points the first time we played them. They got two great running backs, all-time great quarterback and the leading receiver in the League. A really good offensive line, so it's going to be a big challenge for us. But like I said last week, each game is its own entity. Everybody said, 'You all can't stop the run. You aren't going to be able to run on them.' All those things. Whatever happens this game is going to happen. I feel like we've been playing better defensively as the year went along and we played well last week, so that's what we expect"

#### **(On if he agrees with head coach Sean McVay that DT Ndamukong Suh played his best game against Dallas)**

"I do. Especially with the head coach. I don't want to (inaudible) with him. That's why I'm here now."

#### **(On what made Suh so successful against the Cowboys)**

"Well, he just played really well. He used his talent. He's got great talent and he utilized it. Hopefully we put him in a position to make some plays, but, it's the players themselves. I think he was really motivated to play well and he did. We were pleased with that and we expect more from him."

#### **(On how having CB Aqib Talib back changes the defense)**

"Well it changes – as you can see, since (CB) Aqib's (Talib) been back, we haven't given up a lot of big plays in the passing game. He helps out there. He helps with communication, he helps with his talent and we don't have to change people around to cover up for a guy that hadn't been playing. It gives us a versatility that didn't have when he wasn't in there and I think we've played better since he's been in there."

#### **(On if it took a while to figure out how to best work Suh and DT Aaron Donald in combination)**

"I think it's the whole defense. That's what you do, is try to get a feel for what they really do well and what their real strengths are, and if they have some weaknesses, try not to put them in those situations. I said earlier, I did that with (CB) Marcus Peters. I did a disservice to him in that first game because he didn't have any help with the receivers. We learn as we go. I'm just about to get experienced enough to learn how to do it. That's what our job is – try to get them in good position to make plays."

#### **(On having a fully integrated OLB Dante Fowler Jr. this time versus the Saints)**

"Yeah, I mean (OLB) Dante (Fowler Jr.) was new with us last time we played. I think he's a lot more comfortable with the defense. He's made some big plays since he's been with us. The more he learned, the more we were able to learn what he could do. We expect him to have a good game."

#### **(On Talib's leadership)**

"He's a natural leader. He was that way in Denver, the same way. He was a real driving force in our playoff, championship and Super Bowl win as a leader, also. He played really well, but he was a big factor. There were a lot of things that came up in the locker room, all those things, him helping prepare the team just like coaches do."

#### **(On teammates naturally gravitating to Talib or is he proactive about it)**

"He's pretty proactive about everything. He's a big personality so you can't help but be drawn to him. I tell him he always takes the other side. Whatever side you take, well he's going to argue the other side and those kind of things. You know, that's him. He gets going, he gets excitable about a lot of things and he's a lot of fun to be around. And he made me 'drippin' in the Super Bowl so that was nice."

**(On how Talib's ability to be proactive help from a communication standpoint when facing Saints QB Drew Brees)**

"(Saints QB) Drew Brees is not only one of the greatest of all time, he's having an even better year than he had last year when he set the record for highest percentage of completions. He's a tremendous quarterback. He knows what you're in most of the time, so you got to be able to play whatever your technique is and play it really well when he does know what you're in. We still try to disguise things and certainly we are going to move around on him, but it's hard to catch him not knowing, basically, where the weakness of the defense is, or where his one-on-one situation with (Saints WR) Michael Thomas. If he sees that, well then he's going to try to hope his guy can beat your guy – he knows that. It goes to him in those situations. If you double one guy, then he knows to go somewhere else. And if you're playing zone, he knows the weaknesses and sweet spots of the zones are."

**(On similarities he sees between Saints head coach Sean Payton and McVay)**

"Well the big things, obviously. They're well-disciplined in what they do. They know what they're doing and know how to take advantage of defenses. When they see something that you're in, they come back with something that will hurt it – those kinds of things. Coach McVay is not only a really good offensive coach, he's a heck of a head coach. He helps us on defense, too."

**(On what he recalls seeing from McVay that really made him believe that he wanted to coach on his staff)**

"Well it was mostly my son, Wes (Phillips), who worked with him, you know, with the (Washington) Redskins. Wes told me all about him. I had met him (McVay) before, but Wes told me all about him, all the great things about him. Wes had already said he thought he was going to be a great head coach and he has great command of the room and all those things. So it was really from Wes. Wes is a young, offensive coach that knows Sean McVay, just if anyone is looking for a head coach. He knows him real well."

**(On his son, Wes, not being wrong about McVay)**

"Oh no, Wes was absolutely correct, which he usually is, and that's why he's a really good coach."

**(On how tough of a matchup Saints RB Alvin Kamara is)**

"Yeah, he's a matchup problem. I go back to the old days, (Hall of Fame RB) Marshall Faulk was that way. He could run with the ball great and you could put him out as a wide receiver and he could run wide receiver routes or he could beat you out of the backfield. You know, it's the same type of guy with great ability. I'm not going to put him in the Hall of Fame yet, but he has a lot of similar traits that are hard matchup problems for you."

**(On the challenges Saints QB Taysom Hill presents)**

"They've utilized the ability he has, certainly. Special teams, he's a good special teamer, but he's got a lot of speed, he can throw the ball at quarterback. When you throw a guy in that can play tight end and all of the sudden he's playing quarterback, he's very versatile. It causes you to say, 'Hey, you know if he's playing tight end you do this, if he's playing wide receiver you have to do this, if he's playing quarterback you have to do this and even running back.' It makes you prepare for a lot of different things and you have to be real sound in what you do. So, they utilize him really in that way."

**(On if he was surprised by all the talent acquired on defense – Talib, Suh, Peters – during the same offseason and how to get them all acclimated)**

"That's what (Rams GM) Les (Snead) and Sean do, is try to get talent. They go out and do a great job of it, obviously. We are 14-3 now, so we got a lot of talent. It's not all coaching. They do a good of acquiring players and those two guys are veteran guys that have played really well in the league and are smart players. I think that bodes well for any team."