



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – January 18, 2019

(On if there was a specific reason why the team elected to travel to New Orleans on Saturday and if the team would normally travel on a Friday)

"We would. Really, because kickoff is going to be at 12 o'clock on our time zone – like in our head – we didn't feel like we wanted to travel two days out. Wanted to try to stay here as long as possible. That was just something that we felt like was going to be best for our players for just the overall operation. Because of when the kickoff is, and really, it's two time zones as opposed to sometimes when you're traveling from West coast to East coast time. So, that was really kind of what went into the decision."

(On some of the keys that allow his team to play so well on the road)

"I think, really, our team has consistently played well, whether we're playing at home or whether we're playing on the road. I think it's a credit to just their ability to be able to lock in, focus on the task at hand. When you go into some of these environments where the crowds are great, they've got a huge home field advantage, I think that's kind of that 'us against everybody else' mentality. The guys kind of embrace that. Ultimately, it's about trying to win a football game whether we're at home or on the road. Certainly, you'd love to always be playing in the Coliseum if you could, but it's a great opportunity for us nonetheless."

(On how the week of preparation has gone)

"It's been exactly like a normal week. There's a couple more people here this week, got to do a couple more things with regards to the media. We try to keep the same rhythm and routine. It's a big game. We don't shy away from that, but I think it is important to be able to keep that regulated rhythm for our players and for us because you don't want to try to make anything up. You don't need to do anything different than what we've done, other than play at our highest level. It's a great opponent, but it's a great opportunity for us to go try to be our best on the road for a conference championship. It's exciting."

(On if he is feeling the love from L.A. and anything he wants to say to the fans of L.A.)

"They've been great all year. I think we've really felt the love from them all season. I think it's kind of been a buildup. Certainly, that Kansas City atmosphere was really special on Monday night when we were able to play here in spite of some of the things going on in the community, watching the players rally together. That was a special feeling. But, this city has really – in the last two years since I've been here – I felt extremely embraced by this city. We love it here. Want to continue to try to do a great job putting out a product that these fans want to come see and that it's something that they can be proud of with the way that our team competes. Hopefully, we'll get a chance to get it done and keep playing."

(On if he has given much thought to what he will say to the team before Sunday's game and if it will be any different than any other week)

"Not really. You have things that you focus on in terms of the 'what it takes for us to be able to go get it done', but we stick consistent with our themes, some of those core values. But, our players, their leadership, is what's special about it. In terms of the motivational tactics, different things like that, the motivation is to be able to go win this game and then what the opportunity – what's next, if you're able to do that. But, these players have done a great job. We're just focused on what we can do to put our players in great positions. But in terms of kind of thinking about those things, a lot of times it ends up being just kind of organic, of if

something comes up that you feel like is relevant to address or that will hopefully help us play better. But, these guys, they motivate themselves and they'll be ready to go."

(On if the injury report was clean following today's practice)

"Yeah, it's been great. Really, I think it's, again, a credit to (Senior Director of Sports Medicine and Performance) Reggie (Scott) and (Director of Strength Training and Performance) Ted (Rath) and their staffs and what a great job they've done, the players buying in. For us to be able to be this healthy this late in the season is something that is a huge advantage to us and something that we certainly don't take for granted."

(On how much of their ability to stay healthy can be contributed to mental toughness)

"In a lot of instances, I think it definitely is that. I also think it's a credit to having people that can help you kind of – help us set up a structure and a weekly rhythm that keeps our players as fresh as possible while still getting that physical work that we need to continue to get better. Then also, the players' buy-in. There are certainly things, too, where you can't really avoid anything about a (WR) Cooper Kupp-type injury, with what happens to (RB) Malcolm Brown. So, there are some unfortunate instances that occur where you lose some really valuable players, but I think in terms of the soft tissue injuries, the things that kind of come up as a result of, 'Alright, what can we do from a preventative maintenance standpoint?' Our guys, our players, Reggie (Scott) and his staff and Ted (Rath) – they've done a phenomenal job and I think it's a huge credit to them."

(On the players being loose during practice and what it says about this group being able to keep that mindset going into such an intense game)

"Yeah, I think it's great. I think because that's really what this team's personality has been. I don't think we want to change at all. I think they do a great job of enjoying it, but also knowing, 'When is it time to lock in and focus?'. You always want to be able to enjoy what you're doing. Not at the luxury of where it takes away from our focus and concentration. I think these guys have done a great job being able to kind of have that great balance that's true to this team's personality all year. It's really been a lot of the same and that's what you want to see from your guys."

(On if RBs Todd Gurley II and C.J. Anderson have some freedom to dictate when they come off the field when they're tired or if its run by himself and Running Backs Coach Skip Peete)

"If one of those guys needs a blow, absolutely, they'll say I need one. That's kind of the standard operating procedure, really, for how we just rotate in general offensively. So, if one of those guys needs a blow, absolutely. They have the luxury to be able to say, 'Okay, give me a breather' and then they'll go ahead and kind of spell each other naturally. But, there is something that we try to talk about going into it from a communication standpoint – here's how we anticipate it going. You don't ever want to catch anybody by surprise, but like you said, you've seen these guys do such a great job of supporting each other. This experience gives you even more of an appreciation for how special of a player and person (RB) Todd Gurley (II) is. Then, I also think he's such a smart player. He understands that he's helping us out. He's helping our team out. He's helping our offense. In a lot of ways, Todd is fresher where he's still getting a good amount of work. You know he's going to be a big focal point of what we're trying to get done, but (RB) C.J. (Anderson) can come in and play a nice role and I think that's kind of that perfect balance. But, they do have the ability to spell themselves, for sure."

(On if QB Jared Goff's completion percentage numbers not being as high is representative of the offense's aggressiveness and willingness to make difficult throws)

"Absolutely. Yeah, I think the completion percentage can get a little skewed because sometimes you can inflate those numbers by doing a lot of just completion, getting the ball out of your hand-type plays. In a lot of instances, he is making challenging throws where it's some of the down-the-field throws off the play-action game or where you're changing that launch point in some of your boots. So, I definitely don't think that – sometimes the lower completion percentage is really a result of the way he's delivering the ball. I think it is more of a product of some of the plays that we're calling, when the ball is being thrown and how they are a little bit more difficult. He's done a great job and we expect him to do the same this week."