

**Rams Head Coach Sean McVay
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019**



Opening Statement

Congratulations to the Steelers. They did a good job today. Our guys continue to battle, and it wasn't good enough. All we are going to do is continue to fight and figure out what we can do to get better. That's everybody to a man. That's all we know how to do, and I can't wait to get back to work.

What was wrong with the offense today?

I think anytime that you're one for 13 on third-downs, you're never going to give yourself a chance to stay on the field. We had some self-inflicted wounds, some penalties. I think it was a collaboration of everybody can be better, and we have to go back and look at the tape, and that's something that we're going to do. We have to be better for our team.

Did you sense anything going into this week that your guys were unprepared?

No not at all. Really, I don't think it was that guys weren't ready. I think there were some things that happened. You give them credit for forcing some of those things that we didn't in terms of keeping our poise. That's a good, tough defense, but we make no excuses as to why we didn't play better. We're going to go back to work and try and figure this thing out.

Re: Status of offensive line after sustaining some injuries

We had some tough injuries today, and it's one of those things where we are going to go back and see how these guys are. You know, Brian Allen and Rob Havenstein both left with a knee. Some younger guys, Austin Corbitt just getting here a couple of weeks ago, and Coleman Shelton and those guys just kind of having to step in. That's a big challenge - Austin Blythe having to move to the center position. A lot of moving parts. No matter how you cut it, we have to figure out a way to get it done. There's no excuses from our end. We just have to find solutions and go back to work.

Re: Cooper Kupp's lack of production

We just have to go back and look at it. There were some different things. He's a guy that's going to get some attention which might open it up for some other guys. We weren't really productive as a whole offensively which is obvious. Some of those things are where I need to do a better job for all of us, and we all need to figure out how to be collectively better, and part of that is getting Cooper more involved.

Re: Todd Gurley not playing the first two series of the fourth quarter despite his production

Yeah that was just kind of the rotation. Sometimes I'm on both sides of the headset. There's a lot of trust for our coaches that have some content to be really able to say, 'Alright, who's in?' Then I will be able to click back on, and then we know what we are going with. I thought Todd really had some tough-earned runs. We got drives going, but at the end of the day, we ended up being in some two-minute situations at the end of the game. It was kind of hard to get back into any sort of flow around the football.

Did Jared Goff's fumble look like an incomplete pass?

You know, that is what the hope was for us. They get a chance to go back and look at it. Those are their calls to be able to make, and I'll go back and look at it. When you see it in live action that was obviously the hope. That is what it seemed like, but again we don't question any of their calls. They get a chance to look at it, slow it down, and I didn't really see it close enough to be able to say.

Did the injuries along the offensive line change your play calling?

Oh yeah, it does. You just have to be mindful of some of the plays in terms of the timing, the rhythm, how long you have for those things to be able to develop. So, it absolutely does.

Was this the first game that your guards have switched sides?

It was. It was just something we thought over the bye. Kind of looking into it, playing Austin [Blythe] on the left and being able to put David [Edwards] on the right. David had played on the right side for the majority of his college his college career, even at the tackle position. That was just something that we felt like was going to be a helpful move, and we didn't really get much of a chance to see how it play out just based on some of the injuries.

Re: Jared Goff's lack of rhythm

I think it was everybody. I really think it was just our offense as a whole. There were so many stoppages. However, you want to cut it, we didn't allow ourselves to get into a rhythm. There was really no flow. We didn't convert any of the third-downs, so myself, everybody really, wasn't good enough today. That's what we will look back on and figure out how to be better.

Do you feel like the playoffs are slipping away?

We aren't really thinking about that. Whether we had won today or whether we didn't get the result that we wanted, it's about going back to work and figuring out how to be better. There's still a lot off football to be played, but really, we have got to figure out how do we play more efficient, specifically offensively. To sustain drives to convert on third-downs, and to give ourselves a chance to finish in the red zone. We didn't really do a lot of that today.

What happened on the challenge that was not allowed?

There was a little bit of a mix up there. They said because it was a turnover, those go to the review, so they gave me the challenge back, but they still used the timeout. Really, that responsibility falls with me, but there was just a little bit of a mix-up there.

Is there something wrong with Jared Goff's confidence?

I don't. I think he's a confident guy. I think Jared knows that. He is going to find a way to fight through this, and we are all in this together. There's been a lot of things that have gone well. There's been some recent adversity. Anyone that's had any success finds a way to fight through it, keep scratching and clawing, keep doing whatever you can to look inward, and not allow those things as long as we are solution oriented to affect our ability to move forward.

What caused Jared to come out of the game?

We just had Blake [Bortles] coming in. That was a play that we had designed for Blake. It wasn't anything where Jared – he was good. He was OK. That was play that we were going to get Blake involved in, and that was part of the game-plan.

Re: The defense

They were great. They got a safety. They got a touchdown. I mean, what else can you say about the defense today? That's what's tough, but that's why we are going to stay connected as a team, because I think there are some positive takeaways. That's where we just figure it out, and ultimately, it's about the Rams putting all three phases together. I was really proud of the way our defense battled today.

**Rams QB Jared Goff
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019**



Was it something the Steelers were doing, or you guys couldn't get going tonight?

Yeah, usually it's a little bit of both. Tonight was no different. We weren't able to execute on some things and they did a good job on defense. They did a really good job, and presented us with a lot of challenges that, unfortunately, we weren't able to overcome.

How much does the offensive line disruptions change what you guys can do?

I don't think it changes what we're able to do, as far as play calls go, but it does change just that overall gelling and chemistry. I thought those guys played great though, the guys that stepped in. I mean, Austin [Corbett] had never played with us before, and [he] stepped in and did a great job. I thought Coleman [Shelton] did a great job as well. [Austin] Blythe had to move down to center. It's tough, but it's part of the game. It happens every week, and this week it was us, and we were really close to overcoming it, and almost did. We came up short.

Are you concerned that you guys are falling out of the playoffs?

No, I don't think so. I think we're in a place where we're still good. We've got some time to make up some ground, and of course. That's the ultimate goal, but we've got to win a game one at a time. That's where we're at. I don't think we're looking at standings or how many do we need to win. We can't. We need to win one at a time, and this week it's the Bears, and we need to take care of business.

Do you put any extra weight on your shoulders, being 5-4?

No. I just do what I do every day. I don't try to make anything more than it is. 5-4, we'd like to be 9-0. Unfortunately, we're not. We've got some things to battle through. We've got some stuff to overcome, and like I mentioned, we almost did it. Hopefully we'll get better from here and move on, and I will be better. We all need to be better. I need to be better, and we will be.

What did they do to take Cooper Kupp out of the game?

They did a lot of things. They doubled him at times. They didn't double him at times, just played really good coverage. They did a lot of different things. I think their pass rush did a great job, and again though, it wasn't anything that we can't overcome, anything that we haven't overcome in the past. It's just something we need to consistently execute and be better.

Is that what you try to hang your hat on – that you've done this before?

Yeah. We have the guys. We've done it before. We've got the coaches. We've got the right guy calling plays. It's all there, we just need to execute and be who we know we are, and again there are some tough situations that you need to overcome, but that's every week. That's this League. That's how it goes, and tonight we had to overcome some stuff, and just couldn't. Like I mentioned, we almost did and were really close to doing it. Unfortunately, couldn't do it.

Did the fumble feel like an incomplete pass?

It did. I haven't seen a replay though. So I don't know. Once I see a replay, I'll let you know, but it felt like I threw it, but who knows. I haven't seen it.

What did you see on that last interception?

Just trying to find a way to get it down the field. I think when you have no timeouts and you're running out of time, you kind of have to force some things in, and I thought Joe Haden played a great game. Joe Haden did a great job and was making it hard on me all night, and that was another play he made. Tipped it right to Minkah [Fitzpatrick] and made a great play. Obviously, we'd like to complete that and throw a better ball there, but they did a good job defensively, and just trying to take a shot there.

Did you get the wind knocked out of you that play that you came out?

Yeah, I was fine.

Was bringing in Blake Bortles by design to run that play?

Yes.

How does that sit with you as the starting quarterback?

It's good. I'm not happy that it didn't work, but if it worked, it's totally good. I've been in situations before where we've done that and it worked, and it's good. Obviously, it didn't work, so you're not happy about that, but it's part of what we were doing this week and wanted to try to add a guy in the run game with Blake. It just unfortunately didn't work.

Was the failed fake punt indicative of how the game went?

Yeah, it was just a tough play for them. It was, I think, the look they wanted and just unfortunately couldn't make it happen. We had a lot of opportunities tonight and just didn't take advantage of them.

Do you look at cut-ups of the Bears or sleep going home?

Yeah, I look at a lot of stuff. I'll watch this game. I'll talk to the TI's. I may sleep, but I'll definitely start working on the Bears and just get ready to go next week.

Rams Locker Room
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019



OL Austin Blythe

On silencing the game and going to center

Again, it kind of is what it is. I have taken center reps in practice still, just in case a scenario like this. Again, it just falls back on being a professional, being ready, and doing what the coaches ask. So, that is what I was doing.

Re: Is it hard not to panic a little bit at this point?

No, I don't think so. I think we have to look inward. You look around the League today and it just shows the parody that the league has. We just have to stay the course and focus on what we can control. We just need to get better as a football team.

Re: How do you feel as an offensive line you handled the reshuffling you were dealt with tonight?

Obviously, we didn't win the football game, so there are going to be things the offensive line could have done better. The defense played lights out and they gave us a chance to win the game after everything that happened on the offensive side of the ball. At the end of the day, like I said look inward and get better as a football team.

DT Aaron Donald

Re: How did it feel to get back here and play in front of the hometown fans?

It felt good to be back home playing. The outcome wasn't what we wanted but I felt we played four quarters trying to win the game.

Re: Are you concerned about how the division is going, that you guys might be falling off the pace too much?

We just have to try to play ball. We can't worry about that, we go week to week trying to find ways to win games. That is what it comes down to, and that's all you have to do.

Re: How do you think you and defense played as a whole?

I feel like we played well as a defense. We scored points, made turnovers, and made big stops. There is always room for improvement, but I felt like overall I was proud of how the defense played today.

DL Michael Brockers

On preparing the offensive lineman in practice

It is hard when you have three offensive lineman that go down in a game and you throw some young guys into the fire. It is tough especially in this atmosphere and this game. It was a lot. During the week, it is perfect because everyone is in. We do a good job at coaching the young players. I think it was a little difficult, when you have a bunch of guys go down in the game like that and our offense is based on a systematic. It is hard to get that when you have new guys in the game.

On having six or seven left guards

It's crazy, right? You can't make any excuse for it, it is going to happen. It is the game, it's the game of football. You definitely want to improve from it, and we will be better from it.

Head Coach Mike Tomlin
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019



Opening Statement

That was fun. That was mean, but it was required. You have to give their defense credit, too. We didn't do much on the offensive side. It was one of those hard, defensive battles and maybe a play or two in [special] teams were going to be the difference. I thought we stood up in that area. But I just can't say enough about the fight of the guys. It wasn't as fluid on offense, but there was some plays and moments that those guys seized. I really thought James Washington rose up big tonight. But it was a lot of people. Just an unbelievable team effort. Not ideal, not perfect. We will evaluate tomorrow. But today we played, and I thought they played and played to win without fear. When you are playing a good opponent like the L.A. Rams, that is how you have to play. Thankfully, we are able to get a victory. Got a couple injuries. [Ryan] Switzer's back is being evaluated and Ola's [Adeniyi] hip is being evaluated. We work on a short week. We have to go to Cleveland for Thursday night. No rest for the weary. It is good to prepare on a short week with that good, tough victory. That was a tough football game, tough team. I tip my cap to those guys. Just thankful to get it done.

What went into the offensive line shuffling this week?

We just wanted to get the best pass protecting group out there. Essentially, we had three tackles out there. Matt Feiler is a very capable guard, but he has been standing up at tackle. He is a good pass protector. We thought that was the best mix under the circumstances to give us a chance. We will evaluate tomorrow. Those were our intentions going into the game. We proceeded and we proceeded without fear. We will see what it looks like from an evaluation standpoint.

What is the confidence you have in that defense to make plays?

I was confident tonight, but each week is anew. We have to get in the lab and see what Cleveland does and see what Cleveland does and how we match up against it and what the issues are. Our confidence is steeped in preparation and understanding each individual match up. I felt good about the things that we needed to do against this group. Obviously, it started with minimizing [Todd] Gurley, and for a while there we had a tough time doing that. We settled that down and got back to where we wanted it.

Are all the takeaways this season a mental or physical thing?

It is all of the above. We have been open about that we need turnovers. Great defenses get themselves off the field. Great defenses stand up in the face of adversity when put on a short field. We have worked hard in that area. It starts first with the acquisition of guys that are capable in that area. Can't say enough about Minkah [Fitzpatrick], for example. The tear he is on is what it is; he needs no endorsement from me. But it is also our approach and who we work in the environmental element of our preparation. We just have to keep grinding.

On Jordan Berry

Jordan has been rock solid for us not only tonight but all year. Significant. Just like his maturation and the way that he delivers, particularly in the got-to-have-it moments.

How were you able to take away Cooper Kupp so effectively?

We doubled him a lot. He is the number one receiver in the NFL on third down. All our third-down discussions started there. Minimizing his ability to impact the game in that way and then working out from there.

How do you keep Minkah Fitzpatrick in this zone?

Minkah is a level-headed guy that his play is steeped in preparation. I haven't been around him very long, none of us have, but we all know that he has a love for football, and it is displayed in the urgency in which he works daily. Not only on the field, but in the class room. He is just very professional. It is football justice as far as we are concerned. It is not anything mystical. He doesn't have a rabbit's foot in his pocket. He is preparing and taking advantage of opportunities. It is reasonable to expect it to continue, provided we are in an environment where those plays happen. You are up on people, you get them one-dimensional. You get more opportunities for those type splash plays. It is not occurring in a vacuum for him. It is part of how games are unfolding as well.

Will you take us through the decision to go for it on fourth down on the field goal drive?

We are just playing to win. Sometimes you have to take calculated risks. Sometimes it works out like it did in that instance. I am also the guy who called a play-action pass on the minus six and got a sack for a safety. You win some, you lose some. When the guys are playing with that amount of energy and urgency, as coaches you have to support them and how we support them is being aggressive.

What are you most proud of at this point in the season?

I am proud we have won today. [We are] not big picture people. We are not cumulative people. We played today, we will evaluate it in the morning. I am proud of the efforts tonight.

Mason Rudolph
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019



Do you feel like the trust factor from the coaching staff to you is increasing?

Yeah, I think so. Every week, I think it is. I think the trust factor with the offense, with the running backs, with Trey Edmunds to go make that catch on whatever it was, fourth and one or two. It shows you that depth and the development of running back position and trusting to put the ball in his hands in a crucial situation. Hats off to Trey and Tony (Brooks-James) and the way they stepped in, and Jaylen Samuels in their upgraded load they've been taking the last couple of weeks, filling in for James Conner. They've done an awesome job. Great attitudes, and that's what you want from those guys to be able to step up in any given situation.

What's the reaction in the huddle when you get that fourth down call?

I was excited that we were going to go for it. I felt like we had some momentum on that drive and had been moving the ball well. We just needed a chance to keep it rolling. The reaction was, there was no reaction. Obviously, we were excited that we were going for it, but you know, calm, cool, and collected man and just go execute the play just let we do in practice. Let the chips fall where they may.

Is there any extra pressure you put on yourself when the defensive plays so well, and the offense takes some time to get going?

We felt it all year. Just the fact that they're playing the like '85 Bears. It seems like every week, they are forcing turnovers every other series it seems like. We understand it's a team game. It's a process; I think we're getting there. Today was a big step. The timing factor with the receivers and some of the guys and moving in the right direction. But, yeah, we want to have their backs more often. We want to be able to back us up when they get us a fake punt interception in the end zone, we have to turn that into seven. So, it's an ongoing effort to back them up because they've been playing unbelievably well.

You talked Thursday about 50/50 balls, and maybe taking more one-on-one chances. Did you today?

I think Eric Weddle, great, savvy player at the safety position. He roams pretty well. He plays my eyes, we know that going in that he was going to follow a young quarterbacks' eyes round. I tried to manipulate him a little bit, and we had our shots at times, but they did a good job at coming out of the end zone. When we were trying to take a deep shot there, he basically doubled the same receiver. Yeah, I think being tougher about it, I think we did a better job at spreading the ball around. Not allowing them doubling JuJu, to make that, other guys have to step up and make plays.

Re: James Washington

Doubling JuJu. He knows he's going to attract that attention from those kind of flies during the game. We understand that someone else has to step up. Diontae Johnson has been doing it all year for us, and James has been coming along the last couple of games and making some big-time conversion catches. I think he just allows us to be more threats 3at the receiver position. Maybe not allow them to go double JuJu, understanding Johnson, Vance McDonald, Washington make a lot of plays for us. If you're going to take two, and cover somebody, then you better make sure it's tight on the other end. I think that's going to help us get the ball into 19's hands, which is the top of my to do list every week.

Does it feel like you're back in Oklahoma State at all when you have those connections with James Washington?

Well, I think there's obviously five, six years of reps there. Yeah, it's great to see him make those plays, and to step up, like I said when there's two guys on our number one guy and as long as we keep doing that.

Last week, it was Jaylen Samuels, Nick Vannett, Vance McDonald, all of those guys had to step up. We understand that there will be a week when they double him on a possession downs and other guys have to step up.

How are you able to stay positive when things aren't going your way offensively?

I think since high school, my head coach always talked about playing the next play and not allowing yourself to go in the tank and influence the game because of bad play early on. Put it behind you, wipe the slate clean because your body language is going to mean a lot to the huddle and the offensive team. You can't let anything shake you off of your course. I thought our coaches understand that, that is the culture we have built here, that is the culture I had in college. You see that from every position in the ebbs and flows of the game, they don't let it affect their psyche.

On the safety, was the idea to take a deep shot to Johnny Holton?

That was the idea. A couple other people in the progression, in the concept. Johnny was something we wanted to try, and we had been running the ball out of that set a whole lot and we thought we could sneak one on them. I was trying to get the ball to the check down, but I didn't even want to take my arm back into that motion because I felt the rush. I knew we were losing two points, but I didn't want to give them seven.

On the offense struggling but still winning games

It is encouraging to know that we are winning games and still leaving points on the field and we are making mistakes. You expect to make mistakes, we are all perfectionists and that is the way we operate, but we understand that there is going to be learning opportunities week to week. Coach Tomlin talks about finding a new problem. Don't let an old problem continue to rear its head. Put that to bed and find a new problem, so I think we are doing that as an offense.

Is it easier to try and improve when you are winning?

It is, but like I said, our defense is playing lights out. There is going to be a game moving forward where maybe they are not going to be able to put seven points up for our team. We have to step in, and we have to produce more. It is a team game, yes, but we have to have their backs more moving forward and we are going to continue getting better and I thought tonight was a step in the right direction.

Steelers Locker Room
Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Los Angeles Rams
Heinz Field • November 10, 2019



CB Joe Haden

What has been the change now that you guys are finishing drives on defense?

I don't know but I think we are just talking it up. We keep talking it into existence; like we are going to win this game for the team. We are going to get the ball back to the offense. Let's score. If you listen to the chatter on the sideline everyone is up. I'm looking at players saying, "It's me." Then others say, "No, I'm about to make it." So, everybody is just feeling it and knowing that if everyone is on their game, we can make plays.

How much fun are you having?

I'm having a ball. That was a good win and last week too off the missed field goal. It's so good to come into a locker room after a win, when we started off 0-3. We weren't feeling too good, we were a little down on ourselves and just being able to fight and get ourselves out of that hole.

Re: Confidence on the defensive

I feel like everybody feels like they can make a play. I think everyone of the 11 people out there think they are going to get a strip-sack, a pick or punch the ball out. Like I said, the pass rush works with coverage and those dudes are really helping us out to get to the quarterback.

Why so good on third down tonight?

We did a lot of doubling on [Cooper] Kupp. We were making sure that he was the number one threat down target. So, we made sure that he wasn't going to be the one to get us. That way everyone else that wasn't guarding Kupp knew that we were in the kitchen. So, we were just locked in making plays.

S Minkah Fitzpatrick

Why were you guys so good on third down today?

We knew what they were doing. We went out there and executed our game plan.

How big was limiting Kupp part of that game plan?

It was a big part of our game plan. On third down he's the leading receiver in the League. So our game plan was to go out there and stop him on third down and that's what we did.

How much confidence is this defense playing with right now?

We are playing with a lot of it. We have a talented one-on-one defense. We have older guys that lead as well. We execute very well from a coaching standpoint. So, we will keep on going out there and building confidence and keep getting better.

You held them without an offensive touchdown what does that say about your defense?

We are a good defense. We have been playing very well week to week and their offense was a challenge for us. We could have done some things better. But we are a good defense.

RB Trey Edmunds

Were you surprised when the call came in that you were going to go for it that deep in your territory?

Not necessarily. You know how we are. We take chances and I love it. We knew we wanted to get that first down to keep the clock going and the momentum going. Coach [Randy Fichtner] called it and the offense executed.

Re: Faith in running game on the fourth down conversion

Not necessarily. I wasn't shocked. That's our motto. We take chances and we live with it. We practice them all week, so it wasn't anything new to us. We go through this stuff every single day at practice we've done it numerous times, but this is one of those times that it was counted.

Re: Mason's presence as a leader in the huddle

He's shaping himself into a leader. He's gaining the respect from everybody and everyone trusts him no matter what happens. We know how long this game is. We know that you must play four complete quarters to come out with a win. So, we are with him every step of the way. He made some really huge throws today, stepping up in the pocket and slinging it deep. To talk about our defense, they were just playing remarkable. They were creating so many turnovers and making so many big plays. We are just happy to have them for sure.

Re: Showing off those old linebacker skills

I tried to. We were studying it all week, so I was just happy to make the play.