



**Rams General Manager Les Snead and Head Coach Sean McVay– NFL Draft Day 2 Availability –  
April 24, 2020**

**(On the general thoughts on what was accomplished)**

**Snead:** “General thoughts was, we had a game plan to start today and the good thing is our first two picks were the first two picks that we wanted to get done. That doesn’t happen all the time, but as we prepare for this draft, plan for it, I felt like that those two players were realistic targets for us. Felt like they would definitely help (Head Coach) Sean (McVay) and his offense. I always say, ‘Get yards, first downs, explosives and touchdowns, score points.’ We all know when you have more points at the end of the game, you’ve got a good chance of winning.”

**(On if he had a good idea that he wanted to pick a RB in the second round)**

**Snead:** “We had identified specific players that we would definitely take with one of those picks. Like any draft, sometimes it doesn’t work out because I always say, ‘The enemy has a say as well’ and they can pick your players before you. We definitely had some other players identified that if we didn’t get let’s say, (RB) Cam (Akers) we might have to come back and figure out another way to fill that need for us.”

**(On what he thought of the day and the picks that they got)**

**McVay:** “I think it was a great day. I think to be able to come away with four players, all players that we had a real high appreciation for and they also happen to fill some needs that we had kind of felt like were things we wanted to try to address going into this thing. To be able to have the players that were there at 52, 57 (overall) in the running back, receiver spots were instrumental to start the day off on the right foot. To be able to get (OLB) Terrell Lewis, a guy that we had really had a lot of appreciation for his skillset. He’s had some injuries, but I think they’ve been some freak instances. You look at when this guy is able to play, he’s healthy, he’s ready to go. I looked upset on that because I had the wrong draft day (phone) number, it wasn’t because I was not happy about him, I was really excited to be able to get him. I said, ‘How the heck is this guy not answering the phone, we just got off the phone, told him we’re going to pick him and I’m the idiot calling the wrong number.’ I forgot the dang recording thing was on, so I was excited about that. To be able to get (S Terrell) Burgess at the end, just the makeup of the human being, the versatility of his skillset, I think it’s huge. Especially, when you look at (S) John Johnson (III) and (S) Taylor Rapp, feel really good about those guys, but there’s a lot personnel groupings you can activate defensively where you’re playing with three safeties. When you’ve got a guy that can play safety, or really that nickel spot based on his athleticism, it’s a really exciting thing to be able to add to that group. Our coaches, scouts felt really good about all four of these players and that’s instrumental in having a good day. Tomorrow we expect the same.”

**(On what separated Akers from the other running backs on the board)**

**Snead:** “First of all, go back to high school, he runs like a warrior, he runs angry, he runs like he wants to punish a defense. One of the things you really appreciate about him is, they struggled a little bit at Florida State these last few years, wasn’t as stout upfront on the OL. He was one of their better players. A lot of teams went into those ACC match ups saying, ‘We’ve got to stop that man.’ They had a hard time stopping him, so you get an appreciation for someone who looks like he’s enjoying running into, I call it a lot of defenders. A little bit more defenders than maybe guys at Clemson run in to based on the skill they have on the field. I think that’s the thing other than, ‘Hey, this is a big man that’s fast and explosive and powerful and looks like he has fun punishing defenses.’”

**(On how Akers fits in at the RB position)**

**McVay:** "I think it's to be determined. I think what he does is he adds great value to that group. That's where we're looking at it right now. We've got two guys, (RB) Darrell Henderson had some instances where you see the flashes of why we liked him so much coming out of Memphis last year. Really excited about the opportunity he's going to have to earn some more carries and touches - same thing with (RB) Malcolm (Brown). Then, I think what Cam brings to the table, everything that (General Manager) Les (Snead) just talked about is what's so exciting about it. I think when you just look around the league and you're always trying to learn and grow. We feel we've got three really good backs. What does that mean in terms of the distribution of carries? I think that's to be determined based on how things play themselves out and when we get a chance to actually compete in practice and in those live opportunities."

**(On McVay giving Cardinals Head Coach Kliff Kingsbury's backyard a run for its money)**

**McVay:** "Yeah, but you saw all of (Cardinals Head Coach) Kliff's (Kingsbury) though. I could of done – Kliff had that thing set up like it was a movie for himself. I was killing him about that last night, like he was trying to film a movie about it. I said, 'You were trying pretty hard there, bro.'"

**(On WR Van Jefferson and where they see him fitting into the offense)**

**McVay:** "Where I see him fitting in, is a guy that adds value just like (RB) Cam Akers does to the running back group, same thing with (WR) Van (Jefferson). What you feel really good about is, three players that are starting players in our offense that come from that receiver group and I think Van really provides the opportunity to play all three spots. I think he's a really polished route runner. I think one of the things that you look at, you say, 'All right, what is a receiver supposed to do? Separate and catch the football.' I think this guy does this as well as anybody in this draft class. He's a coach's kid, he plays like a coach's kid that's been around NFL caliber players. He looks like he's been running routes in training camp since he's 10 years old. The way that he just understands the nuances of the game, has a great ability to get parallel at the line of scrimmage and work edges against some elite corners that he went against and we're really excited about him. He's a competitive kid and I can't wait to get to work with him."

**Snead:** "I have to say this because he (McVay) said he was a coach's kid. A long time ago when I was probably an entry-level, probably in this business, scout with the Atlanta Falcons – maybe that's what made me move up with some responsibility – but we had his dad (Jets Wide Receiver Coach and former NFL player Shawn Jefferson) in Atlanta and you talk about a warrior. So, it was pretty cool, I had a conversation after we drafted Van tonight and Shawn was just like a dad was like. Just know this, that kid was raised right. He's going to work. It was great to hear from him (Shawn Jefferson), it's pretty cool when life comes full circle."

**(On if the players they drafted today were from their target position groups or if there were other possible groups they wanted to focus on as well)**

**Snead:** "There could of been a couple of things different, but I do think since the season ended, since we hired (Defensive Coordinator) Brandon (Stanley), adjusted the defensive scheme, got on the same page and worked through this process, we definitely had a good feeling that on both sides of the ball that this is where we would attack. We definitely wanted to address these positions as we went through this process."

**(On how they describe the adjustment of the defensive scheme)**

**Snead:** "Sean will probably be a lot better at that than myself, but what we try to do on personnel is now sit with Brandon and the group and go, 'Okay, at this position maybe in the past we needed this skillset to perform the optimal job and there are some nuances and maybe some different skillsets from each position that's a little different than what we needed last year.'"

**McVay:** "Yeah, really what it boils down to is kind of having a vision for everybody that you onboard. The first step of that is let's evaluate our own personnel and see where we're at. How do we want to operate in an ideal setting? You truly can't figure that out until you get out on the grass with the players and you're giving them an opportunity to really compete, so in a lot of instances it's projecting. There'll be a lot of similarities in terms of the traits and characteristics that you're looking for in those interior players, for the outside backers coming off the edge, for your inside backers and then for your secondary. I think it's, 'Okay, how do the players that you have in place, how do we see them fitting into those adjustments?' And then, what are we looking to do with some of the losses that we had and can we address those needs whether it

be through free agency? You know, when you sign an (DL) A'Shawn Robinson, re-signing your own and then what does the draft look like to be able to address those things to ultimately fill out what you think gives you the best chance to have the most competitive group whenever it is that we're able to get back at it."

**(On if S Terrell Burgess will also play at the slot cornerback position)**

**McVay:** "I think that's an ideal situation. I think when you look at some of these versatile safeties, you think even just in our division, you look at what (S) Jimmie Ward is able to do for the 49ers where he has great range playing in the post, but then in some of those known-passing situations there's a confidence to drop him down and cover on slots. The more nuances that you have to your game, if you're a guy that can match up, but then you can also play in the deep half or the middle of the field and show some instincts and some awareness and understanding of angles. This guy (S Terrell Burgess) is tough, he's smart, he picks things up quickly, he's got all those intangibles that you're looking for and then he's got the make-up athletically, so there's a lot of things you like and the more you can do the more of a weapon we can utilize you as on the defensive side of the ball."

**(On if former Rams S Eric Weddle provided any insight on Burgess)**

**McVay:** "Oh, yeah. He (former Rams S Eric Weddle) played with (University of Utah Football Defensive Coordinator/Safeties Coach Morgan) Scalley their defensive coordinator, so he's got some great insight. He still follows that program really closely, so it is good. Eric and I got so close and to be able to get his perspective to where he's going to be honest, he's going to very thought out with his evaluation and then he's able to give great insight on to, 'All right, how does it fit in?' Especially in a player that's playing a similar role to what he did for us and he kind of understands the make up of the room and some of the guys that we already have in place."

**(On if they can walk media through their phone call with WR Van Jefferson and the excitement from his entire family, including the image of his father, who coaches for the New York Jets, getting on the phone)**

**Snead:** "I know this, probably, I know Van was excited, because I think growing up probably in this business – a little closer than most people – you taste it, you feel it, you smell it. Then when you actually get some good genetics that mom and dad provided and you get this close to like, 'Wait a minute, I might actually be able to do something that my dad did.' It's something that it's one of those .001 percent type of opportunities. So you can feel that emotion from the house, I know on the call I was on. I didn't see the video you're talking about, so the script or timeline may be a little off. But I could sense, through all these years of probably growing up very close to a dad who played and coached, there was an element of sincere emotion fulfilling and getting the chance to take the first step toward fulfilling those dreams."

**(On what the plan is for tomorrow if there are guys still available that they are interested in)**

**Snead:** "You know what happens tonight is, the answer is yes, you see some guys that are still available that you like and then you go, 'Ah, jeez. We're picking (No.) 126 and you know that there's going to be good many football players between the first time you get the pick.' So, I think that's the emotions that you go through tonight. I think what we'll do eventually in the morning is, like you said, target and you come up with a stack of names, 1 through however many and this is the pick you go with based on some well thought out discussions on the role they can play."

**(On what this virtual draft is like for them)**

**McVay:** "It was a smooth process. The good thing about it, is that there was a lot of work done before, whether it's going back years for our scouts and our personnel group, and then the collaboration between the coaching staff. So, in a lot of instances, this went kind of exactly how we thought in a lot of ways, where you've got plans, you've got contingency plans. The only thing that I think probably was a little glitch is the service Les had in Malibu that I think he probably almost lost his mind and put his hand through a screen before we picked that (No.) 52 (laughs)."

**Snead:** "Yeah, we did lose internet here, full-service internet and it was gone. It was wiped out. But you know what, (Rams Manger, Information Technology) Jeff Graves, I know they did a Sports Illustrated article on him, I give him credit. I looked over and he was, I don't know how he did it, but I did find out that there was a truck at the end of the night parked outside of my house pumping, I guess service to us. But it was funny. We were getting close to making the first pick and hadn't had trouble at all, through all these

meetings, about a month of meetings, every morning getting on this technology. But about 10 picks away we lost internet. But it was good.”

**(On when the internet came back)**

**Snead:** “You know what, I really don’t know. I do know this, I went to my phone and I was able to call in and just make sure I knew what was going on here and then it worked out. So, I don’t necessarily know the timeline, someone said 30 minutes, I don’t think it was that long. It might have been a 30-minute type deal to get it all truly back, but it did seem like I was back to chatting with the group online.”

**Media Member:** “By the time you made the pick?”

**Snead:** “Yeah, definitely by the time we made the pick.”

**(On if it was Snead’s internet service that caused the wi-fi glitch)**

**Snead:** “Yeah, it was not anything to do with like the NFL.”

**McVay:** “It was user error (laughs).”

**(On what Snead was in the middle of doing when his internet went down)**

**Snead:** “What I do remember is on the chat similar to this, but it’s Microsoft Teams, it’s not Zoom. We were probably, it was probably a little closer to the pick than 10, and you’re discussing whether you make a move up to go grab the player you want. You’re trying to figure out, looking at team needs and things like all the data that you have, will the teams in front of you pick the player? You’re making phone calls to teams, trying to figure out if you can move up or not, all the things you do right before a pick. So, probably not the ideal time for the internet to go out.”