



Rams Head Coach Sean McVay – Media Availability – August 26, 2020

(On if DL Aaron Donald was given a veteran’s day off)

"It's a vets day off. We needed to give some of those interior linemen a breather."

(On what will be focused on and emphasized in the upcoming scrimmage)

"What we'll do is, we're going to do everything that the 12th of September would entail in terms of — we'll go the new team hotel, that'll be new this year. Getting the players familiar with driving to the stadium so that by the time the (Sept.) 13th rolls around, there's at least a comfort and try to establish a form of normalcy with their rhythm and routine at a new stadium. So, we'll do all of that. We'll go through our normal pregame warmups, we'll get to the stadium early like we would for the 5:20 p.m. kickoff against the (Dallas) Cowboys. We'll do it at 1 p.m., though so we're not waiting around for it. Then, we'll get a bunch of different situations. We'll get a lot of our first group guys a lot of that work early on in the scrimmage and then really focus on getting some of our other guys we want to evaluate that work towards the latter half. So, it'll be a little bit different format than what last week was, but it will mimic and emulate truly what a game day will feel like in terms of getting to the actual start of it with the warmups. You even take something for granted, like just the pregame warmup routine warming up on one side of the field and guys knowing where to go and what to do and how to handle all that. So, try to make the 13th as seamless as possible by going through a dry-run like this."

(On if there is a message to the young players about the importance of this scrimmage)

"I don't think you really have to. They understand everything is evaluated. Everything that we're doing is evaluated and we try to create very similar situations in practice every single day. Especially, when you're in training-camp mode and mentality. The only difference that the scrimmage has is we've got a couple of those periods that, like you saw last week, are live where some of these younger guys are tackling. But, everything that we're doing is evaluated. It's important. The thing that the preseason, or even practicing against somebody else — the monotony of going against the same guys and seeing some on the similar schemes, that's what makes it a little bit more difficult to evaluate. It certainly isn't an excuse, but the benefit of going against other opponents, whether it be through practice settings when you get together with another team, or just the preseason games — that's what's beneficial. But, it certainly isn't going to be an excuse for us."

(On if the scrimmage will be more like a real game situation)

"It won't be quite as long. We got more plays that I even hoped for last week. There will be a little bit less action, but it will be a sharp, crisp operation. Like I said, the main difference that you'll notice is that the majority of our guys that are in that starter kind of mode, will end up getting a lot of their work early on. We'll try to get them a bunch of snaps early on in the scrimmage."

(On if he's noticed about any intention about Defensive Coordinator Brandon Staley is about his language in the meeting rooms)

"Are you talking good language? Bad Language? (Laughs) This is a sensitive subject in the McVay household given the fact that I get reamed by my mom every single week when Hard Knocks airs. I take that very seriously, I'm trying to watch it. To answer your question, I know what you're asking. When you talk about a coach, you're really a teacher. Great teachers are great communicators. That's not just exclusive to transmitting information, it's listening as well. One of the things that I think is really special about (Defensive Coordinator) Brandon (Staley) is he's got great capacity and great ability to communicate

with what he's looking for and give that clarity. But, he's also very intentful about listening to the players. When you've got guys like the (CB Jalen) Ramseys, the (S) John Johnso's (III), (DL) Aaron (Donald), (DL Michael) Brockers, you know (LB) Leonard Floyds, that have played a lot of football, their ownership is very important and I think he does a great job of being able to balance exactly what he's looking for, while also trying to see it through the lens of the players."

(On how confident he is that a new deal will be in place at the start of the season for CB Jalen Ramsey or any concern if there wasn't one in place)

"I think those are things that we're working through. He's got a great agent that has been really good to work with. Obviously, Jalen is focused on playing football. Those are things that we're trying to handle kind of behind the scenes if you will. But the one thing I think we all know is, Jalen is so refreshingly secure in himself and confident that it would be great if it gets done, but also, you know this guy's not going to be distracted by whether it is or isn't done. He's going to go out and try to continue to demonstrate why he's one of the best in the league at what he does."

(On whether he would have any personal concern about a player's mindset in that situation)

"I have concerns about a lot of things in this role (laughs). But, Jalen is one of those guys that I think you've gotten the feel for. I don't get the feeling that he will let anything really deter from his ability to play football. He's the epitome of a competitor and I don't see that being an issue. But, it is something that we'd like to be able to work through."

(On what he has noticed about Ramsey's leadership off the field)

"I think the more you get to know him, the more impressed you are. We mentioned this in the offseason, but being able to be around him, he has a great heart to be able to do that kind of stuff. His daughters that he loves dearly, he's a great father to them. The more that I get to know him, the more I'm enjoying just being around the human being. Then you see what he's doing day in and day out at practice, I've never seen anything like it. So, it's really impressive and we're very very fortunate that he's on our team. I can't say enough good things about him right now, with what he's doing on, off the field and all those things. He's been great."

(On any timetable on a decision on a kicker or whether he will hold on to all three for as long as he can)

"Yeah, I think so. That's a really important part of what we're evaluating right now. All three guys bring certain things to the table. That's another thing, it's how many different pressure situations can you try to create in these practice settings to truly evaluate guys that are younger players. You've got a rookie and some other guys that don't have a whole lot of experience at this level, but I think they've done a nice job. Coach Bonamego (Special Teams Coordinator John Bonamego) has been excellent leading the way for them. To be able to have a consistent operation, when you're talking about (LS Jake) McQuaide and (P Johnny) Hekker as your long-snapper and holder, I think is something that definitely is going to be an instrumental part to their success. Everybody always attributes the misses or the makes to the kicker, but it truly is a reflection of the entire operation with the snap, the hold and the kick. That's why you feel so good about two of those three parts being reflective of true consistency over the last handful of the years. We'll see if one of these guys starts to really separate themselves from the other two."

(On whether a kicker will be placed on the practice squad)

"That's a possibility, it's something you can look into just given the fact that they're expanding the practice squad rosters. Those will be decisions we're certainly not in a rush to make and we're going to use every day that we have to really evaluate them."

(On if he will use two kickers, one for field goals and one for kickoffs, if needed)

"That's always a part of the consideration. I think the ideal approach is to be able to have a guy that can do both. Just because of how minimal, even though you have the ability to have 48 guys up this year on the game-day roster, you want to be able to try to have that guy be able to do both, unless you're in a situation when your punter ends up kicking off. We'll let Hekker continue to be the best at what he's doing with punting and holding."

(On S Taylor Rapp being out on the field in a jersey is a positive sign)

“That was a positive sign to see him out there and moving around. That’s exactly in alignment with what we hoped and I think we’ll just see a progressive build from here on out.”

(On if the same approach applies to RB Darrell Henderson Jr.)

“Yep. You’re exactly right. Those are guys that we’re just taking a day at a time. But, anything that they’re able to do a little bit more than the previous day is a step in the right direction, and that’s what today represented for both those guys.”

(On any players that stood out in practice today)

“There was a lot of good things from individuals. I thought (QB) Jared (Goff) had some good decisive decisions, being able to work through progressions, get to guys on some of the back side of these concepts. But until I really watch the tape, it’s hard to say. I thought our defensive front, they did a nice job. (DL Greg) Gaines and ‘Brock’ showed up a handful of times. But, until I go back and watch it, it’s hard to say.”