



**Rams Defensive Coordinator Brandon Staley – Media Availability – September 9, 2020**

**(On his level of excitement for this game)**

"Yeah, really excited. Certainly, an opportunity of a lifetime, but that's the way I felt four years ago at John Carroll. I felt like that was an opportunity of a lifetime. So, just fortunate to be a part of the Rams. I love coaching here. I love our coaching staff. I love our players. I love this organization and we're certainly excited to get the season started."

**(On how to prepare for a quarterback, like Dak Prescott, who can run)**

"Well, this guy's a competitor, he's a winner. I think you guys are aware of his standing amongst his draft class and he's got more wins than anybody in that class, which is a highly regarded class. I think he's a competitor. I think he has all the qualities that successful quarterbacks have. He's mentally and physically tough. He's very physical for the position. He has a strong arm. He can create offense when there isn't any offense to be had and really tough in the, 'Got to have it situations' – third down, red area, two minute. He thrives in those situations and he's been a very, very, very good quarterback in this league for many years."

**(On CB Jalen Ramsey's contract extension and what he's learned from Ramsey off the field)**

"We're obviously very excited for him. Today's a big day for him and all the people along the way that helped him to get to this point. I think that when moments like this happen, it involves a lot of people. We're certainly excited that he's here. We think he's a really good fit for the Rams and I know that that was one of the things I was really excited about, when I got this opportunity, was be able to partner up with him and compete together. I think we fit really well together. I think that we've gotten to learn a lot more about each other over the last six months and certainly the last month-and-change since we've been in person. It's been fun going to work every day together and we're hoping that the best is to come."

**(On if he is relieved Ramsey's extension occurred before the season began)**

"I don't have any experience with guys with a contract ongoing, you know, looming, I should say. So, that would've been my first experience with something like that, with a player of his caliber, but you know, I think for him, now he can just go be Jalen Ramsey. He can go play the way he's capable of playing and I think that for him, probably more than myself and everybody else, is that I think he gets to be free now. And I think that certainly when something like this happens for you, now you can just focus on being the best version of yourself and in many ways, it's a dream come true, but I know for him, that there's so much to be done. I know that he's just getting started in his NFL career and we're excited to see his best football this season."

**(On Ramsey's confidence)**

"Yeah, I think his confidence is real. I don't think it's something that's orchestrated. I think it comes from all the work that he puts into his game, his confidence in his ability, certainly, but also confidence in his preparation, his training. I think that that's where that comes from. I think that's what's impressive about him, is when you put him in between the white lines, there's a gear that he can get to that few can, there's a level of focus, there's a fearlessness that all special players have and he has that. What he's able to do, is elevate the people around him. I think that that is something that we wanted to feel good about with him is, is he going to elevate the play of people around him? We felt like he could do that and on top of his obvious physical gifts and his skills. Obviously, we're looking for him to elevate the performance of everybody around him."

**(On losing to the Cowboys last year and how to make sure that doesn't happen again)**

"Yeah, (they're) a very good running football team. It starts with an offensive line that played a lot together and then Jason Witten, that tight end, those guys had played a lot of football together and then you add in the runner of caliber of (RB) Zeke Elliott. Day's like that happen in the NFL to everybody, but I think that with the Cowboys, they're a line of scrimmage team and that's where the game is going to be decided, is at the line of scrimmage. It starts with playing really physical at the point of attack, setting edges, and then being able to tackle. You've got to kill blocks and then, you ultimately got to tackle. They've got a lot of weapons, a lot of people that can hurt you with the ball in their hands. It's not just the runner, it's the quarterback. (RB Tony) Pollard's an outstanding runner. They've got receivers that are really good after the catch, they've got tight ends with size, so they've got a very complete offensive football team and we're going to have to be a really fundamentally sound defense on Sunday night."

**(On what excites him about the long-term prospects of having Ramsey and DL Aaron Donald)**

"I think they elevate the performance of people around them. I think that's what makes them special, is that they can change the math and how you play defense and how you prepare and attack for offenses. It affords you some luxuries that not very many defenses or teams are able to have. Having two guys of that caliber, one guy that is close to the football and then another one that's farther away but football lifers would tell you, that those two spots are very important to defensive football and the fact that we have both of those guys and then the caliber of people that we feel like they are, it's a win-win for us and hopefully we can get a lot accomplished together."

**(On deciphering when to be a coordinator or when to be teacher to the players)**

"Those are outstanding points. I think all the time. That's the first thing I consider myself as a teacher, as a coach and I think teaching starts with relationships. You get your point across a lot better when you have relationships with people. You become a lot more believable teacher when guys know you're invested in them as men and then as players. I think establishing really good relationships is at the hallmark of any great teacher or coach, and that's what I've tried to do here. I think that being able to show people why we do what we do and how that helps them as often as we can, whether it's on video or out on the field, just being able to always give them a reason and it's an ongoing process. It's day after day, it's moment after moment, taking advantage of every opportunity you get to create buy-in from your players, especially when you're brand new. When your brand new, you got to prove yourself, you know? And that's something that makes the NFL special, is that no matter what role you're in, even you guys, you got to prove yourself every day in the NFL. It's a special responsibility. It's one that I don't take lightly, and I enjoy that part of it, is teaching and coaching players."

**(On the addition of LB Justin Hollins and the linebacker group)**

"I have obviously a relationship with (LB) Justin (Hollins). Justin played good football for us last year in Denver. I thought as a rookie, he came into a tough circumstance. We cross-trained him in two positions, and I thought he showed himself in the preseason of last year playing, kind of, two positions. I mean, last year when we played the Rams, he played every play in the game. Played in two games last year at inside linebacker, just kind of off the bench. We got banged up and a way he was in there and held his own and then on the edge, he played a lot of good football for us. We felt like he'd be a good fit. He's a young player, he's got the traits that we're looking for from a physical standpoint and then he's got really good makeup. He's a really dependable guy, gives you kind of dual position flex and then hoping to get him going on special teams with (Special Teams Coordinator) Coach (John) Bonamego. So, I think the familiarity was big, but I think what was bigger is that he fits exactly what we're looking for in a player and hopefully excited to get to roll back here in due time."

**(On if he sees Hollins as more of an edge player to start)**

"I think that's accurate. I think he's going to be outside linebacker to start, and then he's going to give us insurance at inside linebacker. I feel very comfortable with him at either spot."