

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

September 8, 2020

Defensive Coordinator Jack Del Rio

On Head Coach Ron Rivera's treatment today:

"I don't have an update on Coach [Rivera]. We do expect him back tomorrow."

On practicing today without Rivera:

"We've got all our plans laid out. We carried on as normal. I tend to the things that needed to be tended to. It was pretty much business as usual."

On his expectations for DE Chase Young going against Eagles T Lane Johnson:

"Which tackle he goes up against, we'll see. We like Chase, think he's a good player and excited to see him play. We're not asking anything more from him that we are anyone else on the defense. Know where you are, know what you're doing and go fast, play hard. Be technique-sound. Play with great energy. Help the team win in any way we can."

On the cornerback group:

"We're getting ourselves prepared. I feel good about the work that's being put in. I think the guys have been really focused and working hard and understanding where they belong and the techniques we're looking for and what their answers are to certain problems that are presented by the opponent. I feel good about the work that's being put in."

On how the cornerbacks will play:

"That's more game-planning type thing. That's not a good question for today. I'll kind of play them up on that one. Apologies."

On CB Kendall Fuller:

"He's working hard at being back. He participated today. So, we'll continue to work all of our guys and get prepared to put our best out there in terms of who we put out on Sunday and looking to win the game."

On LB Thomas Davis Sr.'s role on defense:

"Well, he's been banged up a little bit and not able to work as much as some of the others. The way we're starting with our base group is there on paper for everyone to see. We like the work that we put in and overall, obviously love Thomas. He's a tremendous human being, a tremendous football player and has had an incredible career. Nothing but respect there. But, going into this first game we're going with the guys that can help us be at our best on Sunday."

On if the linebackers will rotate:

"Well, to me you do what you can with the group you have each and every week. That's what this league's about, how you respond to different things that come up whether it's injuries or what not. That's part of what we do is adjust to things that happen or matchups. We're going to put the best group forward. We like our group. Everybody that gets a uniform we feel like has a role to play. We're looking forward to doing that."

On how the running back responsibilities will be divvied up:

“Well, I think [offensive coordinator] Scott [Turner]’s going to work through that. I would defer to him primarily on that. Having gone against that group, I think it’s a talented group. There’s a lot of things that they’re able to do with those guys. So, it’s presented some challenges when we matched up with them throughout camp. I’m looking forward to watching them play.”

On how Rivera handled all of the offseason issues:

“Yeah, it can be a tough spot for anyone. Certainly, you add some things that have been added in and put on his plate. He’s been a rock. He’s been incredibly stable. He’s been excellent at communicating with the staff and with the players. I just compliment him in every way and support him in every way we can.”

On if Rivera has ever waived:

“No. There was never a doubt. He’s always been a man of character. He’s always been a great communicator, a great leader. He’s just being himself in doing this thing.”

On how he impacts a new defense:

“Well, I think the biggest thing I seem to do is make sure that we all understand where we belong, that we all understand how we attack blockers, that we all understand how we leverage and really some of the basic fundamentals that I stress. Then, obviously schematically we want to keep things fresh and I seem to do that. Everywhere I’ve gone, it’s always been a ‘we effort.’ The staff effort has been a complete effort and it’s about players understanding where they belong and having fun flying around on Sundays. That’s what we’re looking to create. We want to play fast, we want to know what our problems are, what our answers are to those problems and make sure we solve them quickly, adjust quickly and put our guys in positions to make plays they’re capable of making.”

On why he emphasizes the fundamentals:

“Well, I didn’t say it wasn’t complex—I just said that we know what we’re doing. We’ll have some design that gets after people and causes problems. In terms of talent, everybody has talent. This is the National Football League. It’s not like we’re sitting here with more talent than other people. Other people are talented, too. I think, to me, that’s the one question I’ve been getting a lot about how talented we are. It’s about production. Really, this league is not about assembling talent. It really doesn’t matter. There are a lot of guys in the Hall of Fame that were undrafted. It doesn’t matter where you come from or how you get here, it’s about how you perform when you get your opportunity. It’s about this group here and now. So, that’s where our focus is. We’re just looking to be at our best for each other, very unselfishly. Doing our role, doing exactly what we’re supposed to be and doing it fast and then playing off each other. Those are the fundamentals that allow us to play at a higher level collectively, regardless of the amount of talent we have.”

On the stress Eagles RB Miles Sanders and QB Jalen Hurts can put on a defense:

“You have to have an idea of people that they have and how they might use them. Obviously, we prepare accordingly for the season, not just this week. For the season. Those are some of the challenges that you get. A really talented running back out the backfield that can do multiple things, a really good pass receiver and ball carrier. Obviously, we’re aware of that. They’ve got a big ole offensive line and they move people and do a nice job with that, so that’ll be a challenge with our front. They’ve got a really talented quarterback that’s a heck of a player. He can create things with his leg and his arm. So, a lot of different things go into it. That’s a part of the challenge. Each week is a challenge. As I said, there are talented players everywhere. The Eagles in particular, looking forward to going out and battling with them and understanding that they’ve got some really good pieces.”

On LB Kevin Pierre-Louis:

“Well, I saw a guy that—when I watched the tape last year—I saw a guy that, to me, looked like a light had kind of gone on. He looked very comfortable in the snaps he played later in the year. He played with certainty and he played with explosiveness. I was drawn to that. So, we added him and he’s been everything I hoped he would be. He’s been terrific. He’s bright. He works at it, he’s really got explosive speed, can really run and he’s been a good fit in the defense with the things we’re asking him to do. I’m very happy with the way he’s been working.”

On how his previous stints as Interim Head Coach have prepared him:

“I guess having had that experience, I don’t really give it a lot of thought. My day’s up. When Coach said he’s going to be out and I need to step in, I said: ‘I’ve got you Coach.’ I’m just going to carry on his message. We’re going to stay on point with what we’re doing. I pay attention to what he is saying to the staff and what he is saying to the team and I echo those things. Very much it’s just taking control in a way that he would and making it easy for everyone that we’re working with. As he indicated, when he knew these things were going to occur and talking with the team, he’s asked everybody to step up, players step up. Everybody’s got to step up and do their part and help the team. That’s what I’m about.”

On when the players found out he would lead today’s practice:

“When we found out, we all found out I think two days ago. Again, it’s been pretty seamless. I understand what he’s looking for. I’ve been in this role before with Coach [John] Fox in Denver. We all tend to our business and take care of our responsibilities. If there’s anything that’s needed on the head coach side, then I step in and handle those duties. So, pretty seamless, I think. I thought our guys reacted and we had a good, solid practice today.”