

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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Offensive Coordinator Scott Turner

On the decision to start QB Kyle Allen this week:

“I talked to [Head] Coach [Ron Rivera], obviously. He brought it up. He wanted to know my opinion on it. I understand 100 percent where Coach was coming from. Just talking about [QB] Dwayne [Haskins Jr.]—he had some ups and downs, obviously over these first four games. We’ve been trying to do things to play toward his strengths. We just feel like at this point he’s got a little way to go. There’s been some mistakes that showed up that were kind of repeat-type mistakes. I think that’s what really started getting Coach thinking that way. Frankly, when he brought it up I agreed. Coach decided to make the decision.”

On what mistakes Haskins Jr. made:

“Well, the obvious ones that I think everyone points out are the interceptions and stuff. I don’t want to get too specific because there are things that have happened over the games that maybe people don’t see. I think I want to focus more on going forward. But, just some opportunities that we didn’t capitalize on.”

On Haskins Jr.’s reaction to the quarterback change:

“So, Dwayne was obviously not very happy when he found out about the decision that was made. He’s a competitor. He wants to play. He’s a football player. We’ll formulate a plan and get that together with him. He’s going to be a part of it just like everybody else, just like all the quarterbacks in the room. We’ll have a specific plan as it relates to him on the practice field.”

On Haskins Jr.’s progression:

“Well, Dwayne, I felt like he did a nice job in camp. Games and practices are two totally different things, especially when you’re playing at this level. The camp itself was very limited compared to what you’d normally have in a training camp. Obviously, the preseason games—not being able to see that when it’s live bullets. It’s different when it’s real football. You’re going to see some mistakes here and there. Nobody’s perfect and we don’t expect guys to play perfect. I think there were just times where you’d see the same things happening over and over again. I think, not only for our team—and I know Coach has spoken about that—just for Dwayne, sometimes it’s good for a guy to take a step back and see it from a different perspective and not just keeping him out there. A lot of times that can be detrimental to a quarterback, especially a young guy going forward. I think not only for Kyle getting out there but for Dwayne being able to remove himself from the situation—I think that’s part of it, too, with making [QB] Alex [Smith] the backup. We feel good about Alex’s progression physically. This is the next step with him, and it allows Dwayne to take a step back there. As far as with Kyle, I have familiarity with him. I’ve spent a lot of time with him. He’s familiar kind of with the way we do things or with me specifically, the system. We have a lot of other young players, so being able to help them. There’s a lot that goes into that.”

On if Smith has been hit in practice:

“We have not had him get hit in practice. We don’t have our quarterbacks or really any of our players get hit in practice or tackled to the ground. I don’t make those decisions to be honest with you. Those are the doctors, our trainers. They let us know if guys are medically cleared. Now, with Alex, there was a physical development point with that. Once he was medically cleared, as coaches we had to make a decision that he was physically

developed as far as just able to play at the level necessary in order to be successful in the NFL. That's the time period when he came off PUP until now—we've been working toward that. We think this is the next step. We all know he could be in the second play of the game. We know what kind of sport this is. Everybody's aware of that. We've had a conversation with Alex about it. But, the first people we always talk to are the doctors and trainers. They ultimately make those decisions.”

On what they've seen from Allen:

“I think Kyle's going to consistently run the offense. I think that Kyle was basically a rookie last year. I know he technically wasn't. But, he played a lot over the course of last season. I think that Kyle is somebody that's benefitting from what I was talking about with Dwayne earlier. He took a step back, and he kind of saw it from a different lens not having to be the guy that's forced out there all the time. I think that made him take some assessments. I think we had some games last year with Kyle that—everything started out great for him. He didn't throw an interception until his sixth start or something like that. It was almost like: 'Hey, this is easy.' It's never easy in this league. Then he hit some adversity and we hit some adversity as a team. I think we got down in some games and Kyle thought he could make some plays to bring us back and ended up digging ourselves into a deeper hole. I think the things that he's learned is just that it's not about making some big plays, it's about making the right play consistently. Later in the season—we didn't win it—but we had a game against Green Bay or New Orleans where he did that and gave us a chance on the road against some tough teams. That's what we hope is that he's learned from that and it's not about doing something spectacular, it's just consistently doing your job.”

On the limitations of the offense:

“I wouldn't say we were limited because I think in order to give Dwayne or our offense the best chance possible, I don't think you can do that. I don't think it's fair to the guys that put in the work. I think what happens is because of the lack of reps maybe on some plays—a guy can only see a certain amount of looks. They might get a look in a game that they haven't seen before. Over time as you continue to get reps, you've had that or you can draw back to past experiences. I think that's where potentially the limitation comes from, not from anything we were doing. We were trying to give ourselves the best chance to win, the best chance to go score points. We haven't done a good enough job of that. Again, starting with me we have to be better offensively. We have to move the ball better. We have to score. I feel like we're getting better, but we're still nowhere near to where we need to be. That improvement needs to happen.”

On balancing the team's improvement with wins and losses:

“I don't know exactly what Coach has said over the course of this time. To me, it's always about doing whatever we can possibly do to win. That's where—again, as we prepare as coaches and players every week we're trying to compete and win. We owe it to our guys with the effort they put forth to do that. I think to me—I don't think anything's changed much. As far as Dwayne goes, I think it just goes back to with his development and like I said earlier with guys, I think sometimes it's good to take a step back and to assess kind of what you're doing and not just get lost in the shuffle of the week in and week out grind because that can be detrimental to a guy's long-term growth.”

On developing a quarterback through game action:

“I understand that. I do get it. Again, you're talking about building experiences. I was just talking about the same thing. But again, I think you also want to make sure you're not forming bad habits either. I think you want to make sure you're approaching things the right way. Again, Dwayne—it wasn't all bad. Coach made the decision that he wants to go in another direction. I understand it and I understand the thought process of 'Hey, take a step back.' This doesn't necessarily mean that anything's the end of the road. It's just letting Dwayne see it from a different vantage point.”

On opening up the playbook with Allen:

“No, I wouldn’t say that we’re going to necessarily open up the playbook. I think kind of the question earlier about the limitations, I think maybe Kyle has a little more experience running some certain concepts. I think if there is a different look that maybe we’ve talked about but Dwayne might have not necessarily seen it that will get the response or reaction we were looking for. You can only run 60, 65 plays in a game anyway. So, we always try to run the best one we possibly can. There are a lot of situations that go into that. So, it’s not like we can’t run anymore plays. I don’t think what you’re going to see is any different. I think maybe the operation will be. Again, that’s why you play the game. I heard Coach saying it as I walked in. Kyle’s going to have the opportunity to play with the same guys that Dwayne’s playing with. We’ll all see the results.”

On what he saw from Allen in Carolina:

“I think what happened is the first game that Kyle played he really got off to a great start. The other thing is we really had great guys that played around Kyle, too, both our offense and our defense. As our team kind of struggled as the season went on, Kyle struggled. The point I made earlier is Kyle just tried to do too much. That forced him into some turnovers. He has to do a better job this turn around with interceptions, but also ball security and taking care of the ball when he’s sacked or hit. But, he tried to do too much or maybe force a ball into a tight window when maybe he shouldn’t have. That’s what got us into trouble and ultimately hurt our team. But, I think this time away from playing has again given him a chance to step back and learn about himself. It’ll help him going forward.”