



## WASHINGTON REDSKINS

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER AT REDSKINS PARK – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA.

21300 Redskin Park Drive | Ashburn, VA 20147 | 703-726-7000  
www.redskins.com | media.redskins.com

June 4, 2019

### Offensive Coordinator Kevin O'Connell

#### **On the new quarterbacks adjusting to the system:**

"First impressions, really on all three they've done a heck of a job the whole spring. But our teaching progression from the offense, the way the rules are set now, we first get a hold of them during Phase 1 [OTA] in the media room and we try to expose them to as much as we can. Then Phase 2 starts and we get to go out there and see how talented guys are. Dwayne [Haskins] integrated towards the end of that post-draft. This is really where the learning curve goes a thousand miles a minute, because we can talk protection now, we can talk situational football. Today in two-minute there were five things that came up in those two-minute drives where we had to go back and talk about, you know, you can't run with no timeouts in the red zone. You know late in the two-minute drive you can't do things that they know, but they're so focused on plays, so focused on progressions and flipper calls and protections that they forget about playing football sometimes. So, we've got to circle back and make sure we hit all those. The spring's a great time for teaching, but also, there's an end game in mind in getting all these guys to compete for the job, you know come fall training camp."

#### **On how Haskins' skillset fits with the wide receivers:**

"Yeah, I think his skillset fits with having some vertical speed on the outside, especially, not only 'just take the top off,' I know that's a common term sometimes. We've got to throw some of those balls and we've got to make defenses defend the entire field, not only vertically but sideline-to-sideline. He's got the ability to really stretch the field. I mean, you guys have seen him throw the ball beyond the numbers I think pretty impressively this spring. QB Case [Keenum] can do it as well, but for the most part, them having those skillsets and WR Terry [McLaurin]'s been outstanding and having WR Paul Richardson back and healthy will be huge because he's a veteran presence that's been there, done that in that room along with WR Josh Doctson outside. I think those young guys have some good examples to watch work every day, but at the same time we'd love for there to be some competition amongst those guys in that room because there's no doubt that that skillset's needed. I think going back through the years of Coach Gruden's offense here, when those skillsets have been there, you guys can probably remember some of those explosive plays really started to show up, which I know me personally would really like to get back to."

#### **On evaluating Haskins:**

"Well, you spend so much time evaluating the skillsets on tape. What did they do at Ohio State? I have a relationship with Coach [Ryan] Day, I know the system – parts of it I don't want to say I know the whole thing – but you know enough of it to know, to see some of the things that he's doing on tape at a really high level in college football, and you kind of form your evaluations of somebody. But, there's nothing like getting them here on the field at Redskins Park calling our plays, throwing to our players. You really start to see kind of where you could realistically set expectations for guys. From a skillset, I know Jay's [Gruden] talked about it, it's not hard to see, his skillset throwing the football. I've been really impressed with his ability to go through [quarterbacks] Coach [Tim] Rattay's individual drills and really not waste any time out there, knowing that every moment matters for him. Sometimes, rookies can swim a little bit with all the information we're throwing at him and want a little bit of a deep breath and say 'hold on, let me get ready for this next period,' but he hasn't been like that at all. It's just 'what do you got for me next, let's go' and even if he makes a mistake, he's been pretty good about not making the same mistake twice which is something I'm really looking for from him throughout the whole spring."

**On having enough depth on the offensive line:**

"Yeah, I think that's the goal. I mean, we drafted a couple guys. We signed obviously somebody in free agency with T Ereck Flowers and there are still those young guys. Even though they were pressed into action last year, those guys are developing. [Offensive line] Coach [Bill] Callahan is the best in the business at developing offensive linemen. Even when he had to do it and guys showing up in the building on a Tuesday and he's coaching guys to play on a Saturday or Sunday, you know you still saw those guys progressing. And then you have the draft picks, and then hopefully there's nothing like seeing G Brandon Scherff and T Morgan Moses and hopefully T Trent [Williams], eventually C Chase Roullier, seeing what that starting five is going to look like, and then we can start seeing the depth at that point. But, you're absolutely right at this point we're just focusing on our system, making sure these guys are learning. You know, when we say things everything has a meaning in our system. You spend a lot of time talking about it, now we'll go back upstairs and evaluate, see where they're at. Coach Callahan will always evaluate the technique and fundamentals just like we're doing at the quarterback, all of our position coaches right now. That's really what the spring is all about in addition to installing all of this offense and sometimes overcomplicated things, we, in fact, need to teach technique and fundamentals to a lot of these guys because the things we're asking them to do could be foreign to them compared to what they did in college."

**On WR Cam Sims:**

"Well, everybody probably remembers. I mean he was a play maker in training camp last year from day one. Really, pleasant surprise, we knew he had ball skills, we knew what he may be potentially could be, but Alabama there was so much talent out there, maybe the nation didn't get to see some of those plays and then he shows up here and he's confident. He works extremely hard. He's got a great skillset for that Z position which we're always looking for. You know, the injury happens and he's kind of a forgotten for a year. We draft some young guys. We have some veterans coming back, but Cam's in a great spot right now. I think he's motivated to make sure that he's in the mix every single day and when his number's called. You never can guarantee things in this system for guys, you know, scripting plays and trying to get this guy a choice route or that guy a post or a go-ball and then [defensive coordinator] [Greg] Manusky decides to play a defense that tries to make the quarterback throw it here or there. So when his number is called it can be free and far between, but it was good to see him really execute and make that deep play in two-minute. He made a couple others, caught the dagger I think in 7-on-7. So, it's good to see him showing up and finishing plays for sure."

**On getting more involved in play calling in his new role:**

"No, I think for me, when I got here day one three years ago, I noticed right away Jay is one of those play callers that he gets in a great rhythm, but he's not afraid to ask for a call every now and then. He's not afraid to say, 'hey Kevin what do you like here?' You're talking to a quarterback every day, every meeting as the quarterback coach or even last year, even transitioning, still working with the quarterbacks transitioning to a more passing-game role. He relies on his coaching staff just like he does Bill in the run game, [tight ends] Coach Angelichio in the run game and the pass game and then us as a staff, when we game plan everybody's got their responsibilities, but the best plays and the best ways of attacking the team we're playing get put on the call sheet. Coach Gruden's going to call those plays, and if he ever needs a call I've learned really quickly to have a call ready for him. I'm always trying to develop and being around some of the coaches that I've got to be around as a player and a coach; it gives me that opportunity to give us every day to learn. Potentially when he needs a call it might be three calls in a game it might be 10 calls, it might be no calls, but I'll be ready because I'm constantly evaluating myself. You know, am I ready to call a play, its third-and-seven with the game on the line what would I call here? And if Jay needs a call, I have it for him but I'm pretty sure he'll be ready to go most times like he has been and he's a wonderful play-caller to be able to learn from every day just like the guys I'm lucky enough to be around."

**On what he is doing differently this spring:**

"The big thing for me was just trying to make sure we were getting the fundamentals and techniques taught on our base offense. Sometimes you get enamored with plays, you get enamored with install 10 and making sure are we highlighting the install sheet, and you get through this playbook and you say, 'well what did we really accomplish?' So for me, it's been making sure that we're circling back on install one. We drafted a rookie quarterback in the first round; we want to make sure he's getting the plays that really, when I think about our offense – they make up our system. They make up the offense that's been put together over the years that I've been here and going back to years before I ever got here. So for me, it's just making sure we're getting those reps, we're getting back to the play action game. We're making sure we're moving the quarterback a little bit. First and second down to me has been a goal of mine to get back to some explosive passes and it's a product of a lot of things, but I think if we can run the football which is always something we want to do. It's hard to really do when you're not wearing pads out here, but you can simulate running the right plays versus the right fronts. Then obviously the play actions, the keepers, the completion plays you want to call on first and second down and then leading into what we're working on just as much as any of the situational football where you want to be as good as you possibly can be on third down, red zone, two-minute, because all those things hopefully will help you not only train a young quarterback, but play makers on the offense have to show up. The help of the offensive line starts to show up. The running backs, you know our really good running back room that we have, you start to feel how it's all going to be put together when the games start in the fall."

**On if the health of the offensive line will affect Haskins playing in the regular season:**

"Yeah, obviously we're going to have a quarterback competition. We're going to make sure everybody gets the reps that we need to see, not only in practices but hopefully in games to really truly evaluate and let Coach Gruden and our whole staff really make the collective decision, hopefully on who that guy is going to be. Any time you have a young quarterback that you're invested in like we are with Dwayne, it's a daily process training that guy, and you really don't want to look towards the end of that process because if he feels that at all, he might start looking ahead and not just look for tomorrow and making sure he has a really good minicamp number two practice. But as far as that, I hope we can put him in the best possible situation when the time's right for him to play. It's the guys up front, it's the guys outside, it's those running backs that I just talked about, it's the guys on the other side of the ball that are maybe playing really well – special teams. This whole team hopefully comes together, and if he's the best guy, if he's won the quarterback job I think we all will be confident putting him out there day one. But, like I said we're in the role of developing him and trying to have not only the best quarterback room we can, but he's a young quarterback that we see with a really, really bright future, so let's not rush it. I think it will present itself probably to everyone normally how these things play out what the right decision will be."

**On if the offense can expand this season:**

"Yeah, I think so. You talk about some of the injuries last year, I mean even in the room I was coaching last year, I remember coaching some formations, teaching the guys what trips right and double right meant in December, and that is not a good thing when you are talking about really attacking down field. You want to hopefully teach a guy snap counts, formations and motions. So, when you are doing that in December you are not really outcome-based, as much as you are 'let's get this guy prepared to practice today.' With that, I think we ran the ball because we could rely on Adrian [Peterson], we could rely on Chris Thompson, and we could rely on Semaje Perine, and really try to set the quarterback up for an easier process on the line of scrimmage. Situational football is always going to happen. Third down, red zone, the ball is going to be in their hands with everything that they are required to do to make us be successful, but first and second down, I know we really tried to establish the run and some of our games, where we had a lot of success last year, we were winning the line of scrimmage. We were able to transition that into some explosive passes, and make the quarterback's job a little easier, which we were trying to do with guys who got here in December."