

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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Defensive Tackle Matt Ioannidis

On defensive coordinator Jack Del Rio and his fit within the defense:

“We’re still in the early stages and getting on the field for the first time. That question’s a little hard to answer as far as changes, but hopefully just getting off the ball more in that 3-4 [defensive formation]. I’m hoping that my role can just be to help the team in any way I can.”

On DE Chase Young:

“He fits in great right off the bat. I think he fits into the group mentally how we all gel together right away. Obviously, physically he looks the role, plays the role. It’s been great having him around and getting to work with him and play with him.”

On teaching Young:

“Personally, I’m taking it a little slow. I want to lead by example first before I dive into that stuff. I think that can be later down the road. But, for me, I’m just trying to set a good example for him. He’s a young, talented player. He’s going to have a successful career and I just want to give him some space and let him feel out the ropes for himself.”

On DE Ryan Anderson working with the defensive line:

“He looks good. He’s moving fast. He looks strong. Ryan’s a good friend of mine. It’s exciting having him around, he brings a lot of good energy.”

On former Washington defensive line coach Jim Tomsula:

“It’s going well. We built a good thing here. We always knew a day would come where he’d be leaving and we’d be staying here. We have a good chemistry, a good gel here in the room and we’re going to continue to grow that.”

On using new face shields:

“We haven’t brought helmets out yet. I imagine that will be something I’ll look out down the road. But for now, we’re just in an acclimation period. I’ve seen some prototypes and stuff online, but I haven’t seen any firsthand.”

On making the decision to play this season:

“It was a decision that took some reflection, some prayer. I spoke with my wife and we just ultimately decided we felt comfortable moving forward and playing the season out.”

On the key to consistently improving year after year:

“I’m not sure. Obviously, had a lot of success as a d-line here in the past and I attribute that to those guys working hard and trying to commit the stuff we’re practicing and executing in the game. It’s tough to say what it’s been, but I’m going to try to continue to work hard every day and continue to grow. “

On the pressure of the defensive line leading the defense this season:

“I share that sentiment 100 percent. I think the defensive line is the tip of the spear. I think we have the ability to, with the right guys in the room, to lead this team. I’m hoping to do that come game one.”

On isolating himself to minimize risk throughout the season:

“I’ll speak for myself, personally I see it as my responsibility not to put myself in at-risk positions, whether that is what I’m doing or places I’m in or what I’m doing while I’m in the facility. Limiting contact, limiting exposure. For me, it’s just that. I hope that everyone shares that same thought process. It’s definitely been expressed in meetings and when speaking with our medical team.”

On his Madden rating and if he is the second strongest player in the NFL:

“I hadn’t given it much thought before seeing it. I’d like to think so, I think in the d-line we’ve grown this chemistry in the weight room so it’s cool to see that number being reflected and [strength and conditioning coach Chad] Englehart’s efforts.”

On what separates his strength from others:

“I don’t know, truthfully. I’m appreciative of it, but it’s not something I’ve given a ton of thought to. Frankly, I think the d-line, we try to play physical, we try to play hands on, we try to play strong and take what we do in the weight room directly to the field.”

On his role changing in the defense:

“It’s still early. We’re still sorting out roles and the defense with installs and stuff like that. That’s a question I’ll probably have to just wait for another time down the road to answer. We’re still working through that stuff.”

On if the current uncertainty is unsettling:

“Yeah, obviously COVID’s hindered our process a lot. It’s hard when you have a coach come in with a new system, but I feel confident we’ll have enough time to get everything worked out by the time the season comes. This is the d-line group that I feel is highly capable, so I don’t have any confidence issues there.”

On the differences in teaching with the new coaching staff:

“Every coach is going to be different, coach to coach, coordinator to coordinator. I think it’s all been positive. It’s all been productive.”

On if having a coach with defensive playing experience helps:

“I try and stay in my bubble. I try to stay with what I know. Obviously, those guys are defensive-minded. I try to keep everything right in front of me, man in front of me. I try not to think too deep into the scheme and where it’s coming from and who it’s coming from. I try to just focus on doing my job.”

On if he anticipated his level of success in the NFL:

“I would say I’ve always had confidence in myself and believed in myself. I got off to a rocky start, but I’m happy where my path has taken me. I’m happy where my career has taken me. I want to thank God first and foremost. I’ve obviously had coaches that have been instrumental in my development.”