

# WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

August 20, 2020

## Head Coach Ron Rivera

### **On how the offense practiced today:**

“I think this time of year when we’re putting big volume in – the last few days there was a lot of volume going on – it’s not just quarterback struggles, but it’s about the guys that are running routes, the guys that are running the football, the guys that are blocking up front. So, if you’re going to say there are offensive struggles, I’d say yeah the offense struggled today. But, they did some good things. There were some positives. Again, when you’re talking about quarterbacks, what you really want to do is you want to make sure the decision making is good. We’re working on delivering the ball where it needs to be thrown. We’re working on making decisions where we’re handing the ball off whether we’re running outside or inside. That’s probably the more important thing right now is about decision making. The rest of the stuff will come. But making good decisions versus bad decisions, that’s what’s important. As we break this tape down and get a chance to watch it, we’ll see whether or not they’re making good decisions as far as the quarterback’s concerned.”

### **On veterans having the day off:**

“We had a lot of vet days today. We were trying to take care of some guys. It’s always good when a couple of the older guys, guys that have been nicked in the past that going into a day off, if you can give them a day off before the day off, they get two. So again, just gave a couple guys a little bit of a bonus so going into tomorrow we have a few guys that are going to get some extra days off, which will be good because they’ll have a chance to get well-rested. Plus, it gave the younger guys an opportunity to get a lot of reps. We have eight guys on the offensive line that took 80 reps. The nice thing is they rolled through; they were playing different positions. We’re going to see a lot of young guys play different positions other than their specific spots. So, that’ll be really good for us as far as being able to judge the development of these young players. There are certain times of training camp that that happens for us where – on the defensive side – you’ll see it as well. You’ll have some of those veteran guys get a couple extra days or get a day off and you’ll see these young guys get to take advantage of that and get some quality reps. Again, we do things with a thought in mind. I sit down and talk to Ryan Vermillion, our head athletic trainer, we kind of mapped out guys that we think need to get days. We did this for [RB] Adrian Peterson the other day. We did it for [RB] Bryce [Love] coming out of his situation. Again, we try to look ahead and anticipate these type of things so we don’t get guys with these nagging injuries.”

### **On working out new offensive linemen:**

“Just so you guys know, we haven’t tried any of these guys yet because they have to go through travel protocol. But we’ll have an opportunity to work these guys out once everything’s been cleared and we’ll have a chance to take a look and see who’s out there, who’s available. You’re always looking. That’s not the only position that we’ll be bringing in. There’s probably one or two other positions that we want to take a nice dive at. [Vice President of Player Personnel] Kyle [Smith] and his guys have been looking at who’s out there. We’re looking for guys who can come in and potentially compete to make a spot on our team whether it’s on the active or practice squad. But we’re always looking. Again, this may not be the only position that we bring in.”

### **On TE Marcus Baugh:**

“He’s a young, athletic tight end. He’s got a good skillset. He’s got a lot to learn. Last year, we started to see his development and growth. We played the last preseason game last year against Pittsburgh, and he really had a

good game. It was exciting to see. Unfortunately he tweaked his back, so we were able to put him on IR. Knowing that he was growing and learning and talking with [Tight Ends Coach Pete] Hoener, he's a young man that he wanted an opportunity to see where he is. He's got a long way to go. He's got a lot to learn. But he's got the skillset that you're looking for. He's quick, he's got good speed, good hands. He's got good strength. He plays with good leverage. But again, he's got a long way to go, a lot to learn but he's somebody we were interested in enough we wanted to take a second look at."

**On QB Alex Smith participating in 9-on-9 drills:**

"Well again, it's about getting comfortable. It's just a part of another step in the process. Hopefully he'll continue to grow. We'll get a chance to look at it. We'll watch it. I know our trainer will watch it. As long as he's feeling more and more comfortable with it, we can go ahead and continue to add more and more. It is another milestone for Alex. I'm very happy for him, especially with the way that he works and that's a huge plus for us and for him, especially."

**On if his teams have always practiced 9-on-9 drills:**

"It's something that I've done in the past. I got it from Norv Turner when we were in San Diego together. I really like it because what it does is it's not like 7-on-7 where the quarterback sits back there and holds the ball, unrealistically. Even though you're too short in terms of rushers, the quarterback still feels the pressure. The quarterback still has to move away from the pressure. Even though he knows where it's coming from, at least the time clock in his head is still going on. I think for young quarterbacks that's important because you don't want them to sit there and go, 'Oh, I've got all the time in the world' and then all of a sudden something happens and they get crushed. So we like the idea of getting a chance also to watch two offensive linemen go against two defensive linemen. It kind of takes the one-on-one to another level because again, there's an actual target back there for them to rush or to protect."

**On QB Kyle Allen:**

"Kyle's done a nice job. It's interesting because you watch his decision making, and it's very typical of him based on my experience with him the last two seasons. Sometimes he'll bypass the easy to try to make the sensational, and that's one thing he has to understand. Just take what they're giving him. Sometimes when he does go for the sensational, he makes a good play. But let's take the sure thing and methodically move the ball. I think his decision making for the most part is good. You see that he has a grasp and an understanding for the things we're doing. The other thing is he works well with the other quarterbacks. He seems to really help out with [QB] Dwayne [Haskins] and Alex – you don't need a lot of help with Alex in terms of learning it and [QB] Steven Montez. Those four guys work well together as a group."

**On how much he has learned from other coaches:**

"Everything I do has been pretty much developed by other coaches. From my playing days with Mike Ditka to my coaching days from Dave Wannstedt to Andy Reid, Lovie Smith, Norv Turner. All guys who are, in my opinion, quality, quality head coaches. You always take a little bit. As we always say, this league is about beg, borrow and steal. So, you learn something, you take something, you borrow something. That's kind of how you develop your style. I try telling young coaches, 'Be your own individual. Don't try to be exactly that person because people see right through you.' If you're true to who you are, take a little bit of something here and something there, I think you can come up with a little bit of format. I'm pretty comfortable with the things that we do. Like right now, in talking to [defensive coordinator] Jack [Del Rio] and [offensive coordinator] Scott [Turner] and [special teams coordinator] Nate [Kaczor], they've all come up with different things that we've implemented that we've used, whether it's special teams work, whether it's offensive or defensive work or something we do in our walk throughs. I listened to these guys because, again, they're the ones that are putting the units together. They're the ones that are telling me, 'Hey, you know what can we do a bit more this or that.'

Hey, I'm all for it because if they believe it helps us and they buy into it and sell it to the players, then we are going to get better."

**On if he is seeing progress with QB Dwayne Haskins Jr.:**

"So far, yes. I've seen it from a lot of people, a lot of our players. You're looking and hoping for a step each day. You don't want to go one step and then two backwards. You always want to make sure you're going forwards. Today was a good example. There were a couple things out there today where I listen to Scott or listened to [quarterbacks coach] Ken Zampese say, 'Hey, think about this. Look at this. You went from here to here, but you know you could've hung on this a little bit longer.' So, it's interesting to see that the little details of what we're doing, he's still learning and he's listening. That's another positive, too, that you've got a young guy that wants to listen and wants to grow. That's a huge deal for us, so we've been really, really pleased with the coachable nature of a lot of our guys."

**On defensive players getting to the quarterback in practice:**

"I used to lose my mind, too, to be honest with you. Even though I was a defensive coach because you do, you do want to protect your guys. But I will say this, and you kind of learn this, you don't want to take the aggressive nature from your pass rushers. You don't want them to understand, though, that if you're under control, you can adjust and you can make things happen. To me there's nothing wrong with all of a sudden you have a rush going and you have the offensive guy on his heels, peel off. I know you're under control. I know you can do it. So that's one thing. But you also want the quarterback to know these guys are around you. Make your decisions and live with it and let's go with it. Get the ball out of your hands. Go through your progressions quicker. I think that's part of it too because if you're always protecting them they get a little too comfortable and confident and it gets a little bit more realistic."

**On TE Logan Thomas:**

"I've seen growth. The interesting thing is, the guy's really only been a tight end for, what, three seasons now? You see the growth. You see him going out there and learning, picking things up. I love his effort. I love how hard he works. I love the accountability. When he makes a mistake he goes right over to Coach Pete and they talk about it. And he tells me he was wrong, 'I did this and this.' And they get it corrected. That's what you want from a veteran guy. Even though he's new to the position, relatively in terms of his development, he's growing. And again he's the type of guy you want to grow with. You want him to get better and better and have your units get better and better."

**On RB Bryce Love's growth:**

"Well, I've seen some positive things. I really have. The biggest thing is him getting back and getting his confidence back in what he's done. It's been kind of nice to watch him run and get bounced around and for him to absorb it. He's a great young man. He's a really solid person. I went up today and I tried to figure out how he got a vet day off. He's a guy that as he continues to grow, I believe he has a chance to get in a position to grow and help us."

**On where Love fits in the running back room:**

"He's shown some versatility. He really has. He's shown that he can run the ball inside, he can run the ball outside, he can run it from the gun, he can run it from the dot. It's interesting because knowing his background, having played at Stanford, knowing Stanford uses its own read and gap scheme which we do, a lot of things we do fit what he's grown up in as a college player. So we think we can take some of those elements and incorporate them when he's in the ball game. He's a guy who is going to continue to grow and if he does and shows us what he's capable of, he'll have an opportunity."

**On the importance of first impressions in training camp:**

“Sometimes it’s fair because if you’ve seen it once, you’d like to believe that you’re going to see it again. I think sometimes it gets stuck in your mind. But what you have to be careful of and what I have to be careful of is you fall in love with a guy when we’re not in pads. Because guys do change. Pads come on and all of a sudden things become harder to do. Pads come off and they become easy again. Those are the guys you have to be careful of. It’s like this time of year and I tell this to our coaches, especially our young guys, they’ll come up and be in love with a guy and say, ‘He did this and this and this.’ Just remember right now, they’re playing without any consequences. We had a young corner when I was in Carolina that would make a ton of plays during preseason and during training camp and everybody would be like, ‘Oh my God, look at him.’ And we didn’t start him for a while and everyone was saying ‘Well why?’ Because as soon as you put consequences up there, he wouldn’t make those plays. He would become guarded and he would sit back. Now, he’d drive up and make tackles, but he wasn’t knocking the ball away, he wasn’t intercepting it because he didn’t know how to play when there were consequences. So, you have to be careful because as you go through this, and when the consequences begin to increase and now it’s about winning and losing other than just going out there and practicing, that’s when you really judge a player’s ability.”

**On if any receivers have jumped out in practice:**

“It’s easy to sit here and talk about the obvious guys, and again [WR] Terry [McLaurin] has come out and done some really good things, [WR] Steven Sims is a guy that’s flashing. I like what we’ve seen from [WR] Dontrelle Inman. But, now you take a step back and see who are the other guys. I think [WR] Cam Sims has done some very positive things. I need to look down at my list here so I don’t forget anybody that deserves it. [WR] Isaiah Wright is a young man who’s caught some people’s attention as well. We’re talking with our scouts as well to see what they think. I like what [WR] Antonio Gandy Golden, ‘A.G.G.’ has done. You see him doing things he’s done on tape, using his body. That’s one thing that you want to see him continue to do. But you also want him to understand how to separate at the right time as well. He’s still learning. He’s got a way to go. It’s been interesting watching that group. [WR] Trey Quinn is another guy that deserves to be mentioned because he’s been working hard, he’s been doing what he’s supposed to. It’s an interesting group. We know that we have to find a couple of those guys that separate themselves from the rest of those guys.”

**On simulating game-like situations in practice:**

“One thing that we’re doing is we’re doing a lot more move-the-ball situations. At the end of practice, we’re trying to simulate moving the ball. Like the other day we went and did a move-the-ball situation. We went three and out and we went to the next group. We got a turnover, moved to the next group. I mean, trying to put them in that kind of situation so we’re doing a lot more move-the-ball elements. Today we had three move-the-ball elements. One was a 12-play drive, the other one was another 12-play drive and the last one was eight plays. So, we’re trying to create those situations. It’s good for Scott and it’s good for Jack as well because they’re really doing a call it up defense and offense. As the situation dictates, we’re trying to go from 1st-and-10 now to 2nd-and-3. Now go back to 1st-and-10, 1st-and-10, 1st-and-10, 2nd-and-4, 3rd-and-2. You want to create as many as those elements as possible. You also want to get into situational football and get into third-down situations, get into 3rd-and-short situations, you want to get into red zone. So we’re creating some of those elements now. As you typically do it, you typically go through an installation period where you go, ‘Okay, this day is dedicated to just this.’ Well, today was a big red zone day. We had three elements of red zone. But because we also have to work on some of the other stuff because we’re not going to get those game situations, we extended, protracted, move the ball. So we started on the minus 35 and worked our way to the goal line. We did that twice. So, you have to think about other ways. That’s where the other coaches come in as we try to talk about as fast as tempo, game-like situation as possible.”