

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

August 23, 2020

RB Adrian Peterson

On how the offense is coming together in training camp:

“I feel like it’s coming together pretty well. I think we’re doing a great job offensively. Each group is trying to do what they’re asking us to do and do it correctly. That’s why you have training camp. Obviously, a lot is going on because we didn’t have opportunities to have OTAs or minicamp. But I feel like this offensive staff is doing a great job of being detailed and teaching us the things they want us to execute once we get out on the field. So far it’s been going pretty good.”

On how if the rookies ask him for advice:

“A lot. Guys are always coming up to me asking ‘How do I take care of my body?’ I had a young guy today ask me about one of my workouts again and what exactly was my regimen when I’m in the underwater treadmill. So, I’ve been around for a long time. 14 years. I tell those guys all the time: ‘I’m here, if there’s anything I can help you with on the field or off the field, taking care of your body, whatever it is just come. Don’t hesitate.’”

On proving he can play into his thirties:

“I enjoy it. One thing that’s going to always remain is that people are going to have their opinion. For me, it’s always fulfilling to go out there and play at a high level because I love the game. I make people, I turn people into believers. Even more so than that, show these young guys or guys that are five, six, seven, eight years in that if we take care of our bodies, we do the right things, we can have an outstanding career as well. Especially when you talk about the running back position because they like to kind of put us in this box of four or five years and then, typically you’re out. To have a really successful – what people will look at as really successful, seven or eight years in the NFL, why not 15? Why not 18 years? It’s just me playing my role and trying to inspire our next generation.”

On if fewer offseason practices and the new coaching staff helped him stay fresh:

“Yes and no. You stay fresh because it’s not like playing football. In OTAs, it’s not like going out there, cutting inside and you’ve got a defender, [LB] Reuben Foster chasing you. You get out there, you can do cone drills, you can cut as hard as you can, but it’s not like when you play football. From that standpoint, it takes a little off the body as far as the knees and the joints and things like that. But you’re still putting in work as well during the offseason. So, it was good and then again, it was something I felt like guys could’ve benefitted from as well. As far as the offense, I thought the offense is something I’m really excited about. A lot of guys are excited about what they’re asking us to do. We have some big roles in this offense, being able to spread a defense out and throw different looks, really make it challenging for a defense to stop us. I feel like where our skillsets at the receiver position, tight end position, running backs, offensive line, is looking good and shaping up. The running back room is incredible. We have so much talent as far as [RB] Antonio Gibson, [RB] J.D. [McKissic] to [RB] Peyton [Barber] to [RB] Bryce [Love]. All these guys are unique in their own way. Just being out here seeing them go through this offense where it presents opportunities for a running back to make plays, and sometimes they have a couple of us out there at the same time. It’s exciting to see. I’m just looking forward here in the next three weeks to get out there against someone who we don’t see every day and see how things look in live action.”

On Gibson:

“He’s an athlete. He probably could play linebacker. You could put him on the defensive side of the ball as well. When you look at his snaps in college, he took majority of his snaps from the receiver position. But being around him, you see him at the running back position and it looks like it’s natural for him as well. He’s a big body, big lower body, thick thighs, he’s a big body guy. He’s not fat by any means. So, to be so big and athletic and have great hands, it’s going to be exciting to see what he’ll be able to do for us within this offense.”

On the tone of this year’s camp compared to previous seasons:

“It’s night and day from what we experienced last year. Obviously with everything that took place this offseason as far as a change of offensive coordinator, defensive coordinator, everyone pretty much got shipped out and with new faces in, you’re going to get a new personality as far as the Washington Football Team. So, they’re demanding a lot from us. I feel like we’re accepting that. Offensively, defensively, special teams we have a lot of veterans on this team that are excited about this change and adapting to the change as well. We’re just trying to do our part and making sure we get this ball rolling in the right direction. We do it in the right way, in their way. The tone has been set and it’s up to us to go out and execute and have that same mindset when we approach practices, knowing things are going to start coming around and rolling around really fast.”

On players being leaders throughout Head Coach Ron Rivera’s diagnosis:

“That’s something that we did regardless. We have a lot of veterans on this team, like I said in all phases. I wouldn’t say that puts the emphasis on us stepping up even more because that’s just something we do. So you know, with the news, it’s unfortunate. The only thing we can do is keep him in our prayers and don’t add any stress to him. We can do that by performing well and stacking some good practices.”

On how Rivera’s recovery will affect the team:

“I don’t know. It’s fresh still. We’re in the heart of training camp. We’re grinding. We’re all dealing with unfamiliar territory right now, so it’s a lot right now. We’re all learning a new offense, learning a new defense. We’re doing things differently. I don’t know how other guys are viewing it. Coach talked to us and gave us some detail with what he’s dealing with, and I felt comfortable knowing that he’s strong. He’ll be good. He’s got a lot of people around him, supporting him. He’s getting the best care. Like I said, the best way we can help him is stack some [wins], keep him stress-free and that will be one less thing to worry about through this process for him.”

On how his time in Washington fits into his storied career:

“It’s a lot. It’s my second home. I’m going into my third year. It’s something I was thinking about the other day. It’s like, I get a couple more years in here. The love has already been shown from Maryland to Virginia and even Baltimore. I’m just excited. The fan base here is incredible. They show a lot of support. They remind me all the time how much they appreciate what I do when I’m out there on the field and how I play. I’m just enjoying it and embracing it. God willing it’ll be five more years.”

On T Geron Christian Sr.:

“He’s looking good. There are some little things he has to clean up. He works out in Houston with me, so I was able to be around him and see the type of work he was putting in. He has some big shoes to fill. It’s hard to sit here and say ‘Oh, you’re just going to replace [former Washington tackle] Trent [Williams].’ You can’t do that. He’s an eight-year in a row Pro Bowler, All-Pro. Trent is who he is, but Christian is doing a great job of filling in that blank space that we had and working to get better. He’s coming around. From what I’m able to see he looks good. He’s playing fast, he’s playing strong. So, it’s up for grabs for him to take over that spot.”

On how Christian trained in the offseason:

“He was really grinding. You could tell that he was on a mission. He showed that by how he worked and how he came in and the effort that he put in. Not to say, because it’s not my first year working out with him that he

didn't do that in the past, but when you've got Trent there, nine times out of 10 unless there's an injury or something [he] probably won't be playing, so there's a different feel of 'Wow, the spot is open finally for sure. This is something that I can take over.'"

On twisting his ankle during practice:

"Everything is good. My left ankle got kind of twisted up and caught. Thank God it came free. That little expression you heard was when it was tweaked and then came free. I was like 'Thank you Jesus.' It could've been bad. But, yeah, I'm good."

On being thought of as an example for young players:

"I look at it as a high praise for me and [LB] Thomas [Davis] because we've been doing it for a long time. One thing I knew from the veterans that kind of paved the way for me was that it takes hard work and consistency and making sacrifices and doing the little things that when you're a younger guy you might overlook because your body might recover faster. Your body is a little different. For him to give that example, it really says a lot about how he views us. He's right on. There are guys that talk to T.D. all the time, there are guys that ask me questions and things like that. We want to be able to relay to them the information that they need."

On what the hiring of Team President Jason Wright means to him:

"It means a lot. Congratulations as well, but it's something that has made history. I feel like it can open the door for us to see this more from different organizations as well. That's the ultimate goal. That's what you want to see, for it to trickle down from the Washington Football Team making this major step. I feel like it's a push in the right direction."

On if it is difficult seeing people of color passed up in positions across the league:

"Yeah, of course it is. You look at the NFL and 95 percent is darker-skinned people. You look in the building and it doesn't reflect that. So of course, you look as a player, that the question is asked 'Why?' So, to see guys actually getting an opportunity to fill these positions, it's amazing. It goes to show that things are kind of starting to unwind and the bigger picture is being seen. Like I said, it's a push in the right direction. We just need to make sure it's something that's not just happening once every blue moon."

On if he has to discontinue his famed handshake this season because of Covid-19:

"I have. It's been more fist bumps, elbows. Yeah, I can't shake too many hands unfortunately."

On QB Alex Smith returning:

"It's been remarkable just to see him bounce back from where he was. To enjoy the process of seeing him grind, seeing him go through the suffering and continue to grind and suffer, now he's out there. It's just a testimony to not only football, but to the sports world and the world in general that when everyone counts you out, if you set your mind toward something and you put in the work, then you can come back and you can accomplish that goal. The body can do some incredible things if you lock in and you don't let anybody else tell you otherwise. That's the mentality that Alex had. To see him laying out on that field when the injury happened, fighting to not lose his leg, surgery after surgery, fighting to live and now he's out here zipping that ball around, moving around, sprinting out – if that doesn't motivate you, I don't know what will. If that doesn't open your eyes to know that by believing and having faith and putting in the work and by having a good core group around you of people supporting your dreams and what you're going afterward, you can accomplish it. I take my hat off to him and I can't wait to see him in his first live game."

On playing under Norv Turner's offense compared to offensive coordinator Scott Turner's offense:

"Some of the terminology is kind of similar. When I hear, not going to call plays now, but when I hear certain plays I'm like 'OK, Coach Turner. I remember that from Minnesota.' For me it's been a little easier to kind of

pick up because a lot of the terminology is similar. What doesn't register to guys when they first hear it, it registers to me because I'm able to kind of flash back like, 'Bam I remember that. Bam I remember this.' So, it makes it a lot easier for me. Of course Scott adds his own little flavor with it with what he's got going as well. I kind of sit back sometimes and kind of watch him and look at him because I remember when Scott was just Scott. Now he's offensive coordinator, been doing his thing. Obviously last year, they were so explosive down in Carolina. So I'm excited to see what we're going to do as an offense. I'm happy for Scott and what he's accomplished so far."

On proving himself to a new coaching staff:

"Me and Coach Rivera had a good conversation last year after the season was over and he got into the building. One thing he told me was: 'Hey man, I'm looking forward to your leadership for this team going into next year. I know the body of work that you have put in, and I expect you to be you.' Also for me, no matter who it is, whether it's a first year or second year guy, a guy who's been here for five, six years and I've been around, I'm always going to compete. I'm always having to prove myself. I am just competitive. I just have that competitive nature, so it's never a sense of 'Oh, I have to prove myself to these guys.' I'm always going to go out there and have to thrive off of having competition and working to be the best I can be. Whether that's pad protection or running routes or running out of the gun, out of the backfield, I'm always trying to push myself to get better. I've got 22-year-old guys coming in, 230 pounds, catching the ball. I have to make sure I stay on my game. I've got to prove and I'm proving things to myself that I can continue to do this and I can continue to be competitive."