

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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LB Jon Bostic

On how not having preseason games might affect tackling:

“To be honest, you’ve got to work on it every day. Tackling’s always going to be an emphasis for defense. Yeah, you would definitely like to get as much tackling as you can before you get to the regular season, but to be honest you don’t really get a whole lot of live tackling during camp anyway. Regardless of how you want to look at it, whether there were no OTAs or we had OTAs, no preseason games versus preseason games, it’s all about having good angles to the ball and practicing tackling every day. Yeah, we might not be taking them to the ground, but we are fitting up the ball carriers still. We’re trying to knock ball carriers back, and then we obviously let them go.”

On if concerns over tackling are overblown:

“I think so. Certain teams do a very good job of emphasizing taking good angles to the ball, emphasizing staying inside out on the ball, emphasizing budding up the ball carrier, knocking the ball carrier back. So, it’s important to emphasize that stuff during practice because even during the season we don’t live tackle. A lot of these things that you practice over and over and over throughout camp, this stuffs got to carry over into the game.”

On having yesterday off to reflect on social justice initiatives:

“To be honest, it was just kind of a time that was open floor. Guys were allowed to express how they felt throughout everything and some things they may have gone through. It was something that I think was good for our team. It was good for a lot of guys because it brought a lot of guys together. You don’t have OTAs to have that comradery to get you through that, to get to know some of these guys. To be honest, yesterday, yeah we wouldn’t have liked it to be when it was after [the Jacob Blake shooting] happened, but I do think it was good. I think some guys really got to understand where some guys came from and just listen to them. Everybody comes from different backgrounds. Everybody was raised differently. Everybody’s been through things throughout their life that the next person doesn’t know about, so be able to share those circumstances yesterday and be able to try to get eye-to-eye with each other I think was good for us.”

On what he’s learned about Head Coach Ron Rivera throughout the offseason:

“To be honest, you see a guy that’s come in and is trying to lead us. Showing us the right ways to practice, showing us the right ways we’re going to have to do to when ball games, giving us statistics showing if we’re able to play this type of style of football, we’re going to have success. But it’s going to take a lot of work to get there.”

On defensive coordinator Jack Del Rio:

“We’re all still getting to know each other. I’ve heard a lot of good things about him from guys who have played with him in Jacksonville, guys who have played with him, Raiders guys, in Denver. He’s been as advertised. He’s a hard-nosed coach. He likes to get after it. He’s a linebacker at heart. So, he’s always watching us. He’s always around us. For me, especially as a linebacker myself, you like defensive-minded coaches. You can never have too many defensive-minded coaches around because they care about defense. For us, we didn’t finish what we wanted to on defense. For us to be able to take the next step, we’re going to need all the help we can get.”

On if Del Rio has done any unique things to get the defense pumped up:

“To be honest, we haven’t really needed that. It’s been more so: ‘Last year wasn’t good enough.’ That’s really all that needs to be said. Right now, we’re working to get better as a defense. So, the defensive line’s got to get better. The linebackers have to understand how the defensive line is playing, how we’re going to fit in the run game, how we’re going to be effective in the pass game and get your eyes on the quarterback, being able to play fast and know how the secondary plays a role in all of this. That’s really where the focus has been.”

On LB Kevin Pierre-Louis’s multiple stints before Washington:

“I can’t really speak on his past, but I can speak on mine. Sometimes things happen. Really, it’s just having the opportunity. We’re glad to have him here. I think he’s going to be a good piece for the linebacker corps. He’s a good dude. That’s what really matters the most to us within this team. He’s a good guy. I think going forward, everybody’s getting better within that linebacker room each and every day. Everybody’s pushing each other each and every day. That’s what I kind of have to say about it.”

On the competition amongst the linebackers:

“It’s competition. You’re going out there and you’re competing, not only with each other, but against the offense. That’s what we like, [to] go out there, be able to make plays, come downhill, be excited for each other, making plays, celebrating with your teammates. That’s really the most important part and that’s the fun part about football.”

On LBs Shaun Dion Hamilton and Reuben Foster:

“Everybody’s growing. That whole position group’s growing. Everybody’s getting better day after day after day. It’s only helping our defense. Shaun’s been a guy that can do a little bit of everything. Reuben, each day he’s taking a step. I think that’s, like I said, the fun part about football. We’re all pushing each other. We’re trying to get better each and every day. We’re helping each other, giving each other tips about how we can play certain routes better, how we can play this run fit better, certain things that I may understand better than the next guy where I can explain it this way now and everybody gets it. I think just those two guys along with the group, each and every day everybody’s taking a step.”

On how he gauges team expectations with the altered offseason:

“We’ve got to take it day-by-day. We’ve got to work on getting better today. We’ll go in, we’ll correct the film from today’s practice, we’ll try to get better. We’ll make those corrections in walk throughs tonight and we’ll get started tomorrow. And then tomorrow, we’ve got to have an even better day than we did today. We can’t look down the road because we’ve still got a long way till game one. For us, right now expectation-wise is to just get better each and every day.”

On having a defensive-minded head coach:

“He’ll make it challenging for us. You’ll always hear LB Thomas [Davis] saying how he makes it hard on us. When we get into the game, it’s made a lot easier for the offense. You can’t hit people like you used to. You’ve got to change your target areas. It puts a lot of challenge on a defense. So he’s going to make it hard on us. He’ll do different things in practice just to make it harder on the defense so when we get into the game, it’s a lot easier for us and we’ve already been stressing so many different ways. But when you have a defensive-minded coach—like I said I’ve played for a lot of defensive-minded coaches—that’s always been my favorite. They love their defense. That’s their baby. So the more defensive-minded people we have—especially as a linebacker—the linebackers we have throughout the building, that’s only going to help our defense.”

On if last year’s team was better than they performed:

“I don’t really like to go back too much to last year because, I mean we could go on forever. [There are] so many things that could be better. For us going into this year, we like where we’re at right now, but we’ve got a long way to go. We’ve got a long way to go. Tomorrow will be another day we can go out and we can prove ourselves as a defense and have another chance to get better. That’s just kind of how we have to look at it.”

On Foster’s eagerness to return after injury:

“I’m excited for him. Him and I, we’ve had conversations. Mine wasn’t to the extent of his, but I went through what he went through. I got hurt early in my career. To be honest, a guy like Thomas Davis was somebody I looked up to early in my career because he was a guy that had been through multiple injuries and guys really didn’t think he was going to get back from that injury. To be able to come back and be able to play at a Pro-Bowl level and where he was playing at—when I was looking at linebackers back then, I know a lot of people weren’t talking about him, but he was definitely a top-five linebacker. So, now all of a sudden to be able to share a meeting room with him, these are some of the stories I’d been able to share with Reuben. We’ve had a couple conversations just about my story and where his story’s at. To be able to keep him positive each and every day and just worry about the day in front of you—tomorrow, we’ll get to tomorrow. But, he’s progressing each and every day and going forward. Like I said, we’re all excited for each other.

On offseason distractions:

“I think we’ve done a good job of blocking a lot of that stuff out because like I said, we don’t really have control about that stuff. We’ve got to control what we can control. Like I said, last year wasn’t good enough. We didn’t get done what we shouldn’t gotten done last year. Now this is a new year for us to be able to get back on track and be able to go out and prove ourselves as a defense, as a special team’s unit, as an offense and as a team. This stuff that’s gone on outside, like I said we can’t control that stuff. We’ve got to kind of stay in tunnel vision right now and worry about just getting better each and every day.”

On returning to the roster this year with a new coaching staff:

“I think it was important. I was glad that they saw value in me. I’m still going out and proving myself each and every day. This staff hasn’t been with me a long time. This staff didn’t draft me. So, to go out and be able to prove myself and be able to show there are even more things that I didn’t show on tape last year that a lot of people still haven’t seen me do. It’s just certain things they’ve asked me to do in camp and they didn’t know I was able to do those things. So, to be able to go out each and every day and show those things and show where I can help this team going forward, that’s all I can do right now.”

On the defensive line last season compared to this year:

“I think on the outside, a lot of people kind of make a big deal about it, but it’s not too much of a difference from what they were doing last year. Versus catching blocks and keeping us free, now they’re going to attack. They’re going to make people deal with them. Especially the defensive end position, they just won’t be driving in coverage as much. Last year, they had to drop in coverage a lot. They had to understand a lot more coverages than they’re being asked to this year. Now, we want those guys to get after the quarterback and go hunt. We don’t want them thinking as much, let the back end do the thinking and let them get after the quarterback and change the game that way. I guess it’s more of an emphasis on the outside more than it is on the inside. It is different for those guys in a way, but they’re growing just like we are each and every day.”