

WASHINGTON

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INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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Offensive Coordinator Scott Turner

On QB Alex Smith's comeback story:

"No, I don't know if I have seen anything like that. It was pretty cool on a personal level. I didn't really think about it at the time, I thought about it more after the game. But, for him and just knowing Alex as a person—not as a player-coach relationship, but just as a person and how good of a guy he is and how committed he was to coming back, to see him get all the way back. Number one, it was a good day because he was active for the first time, and for him to actually play in the game was huge and really a credit to him and what type of guy he is and his commitment to doing that. I thought obviously the game didn't go the way we wanted to and we didn't play the way we wanted to, not even close offensively, but him being out there on the field is a pretty good deal. The only thing that's even close to that, and obviously it didn't have the life-threatening part of it, I was coaching Teddy Bridgewater when he had the big injury in 2016—watching him from afar to have some success that he's having right now is really cool and I'm really happy for him. It's not to the degree of Alex's, but it was a pretty major injury and him battling back from that is obviously a part of that as well."

On QB Kyle Allen's performance:

"I thought Kyle brought some energy. I thought he did a nice job running the offense. The second drive of the game was really nice getting down, making a play with his feet getting in the end zone. Kyle's a tough guy. He doesn't need to be doing what he did. That was reckless. We talked to him about that as: 'Hey, it's third-and-1. If you throw the ball away and we punt, whatever. You stay on the field.' So, I think he'll learn from that going forward and not take on defensive players, especially guys like [Rams CB] Jalen Ramsey. But, I thought Kyle did what we asked him to do. I'm looking forward to seeing him continue to play."

On how they can make more big plays:

"It's a group effort. We've got to protect up front. The receivers have to get the separation down the field and then the QB's got to stand in there and make the throw. I've got to do a good job of making those calls at the right time. It starts, obviously, with me making the play call and the guys have to execute on the field. We've had some opportunities for some plays down the field and they haven't worked out one way or another because of a breakdown at any one of those key areas. I talked to the guys after the game Monday and I talked to them again today about success is not a straight line. There's ups and downs, and there's a lot of work going on here behind the scenes. Hopefully one day, sooner rather than later, we're going to have one of the performances that we're capable of and it's because of what we're doing on a day-to-day basis."

On if Smith looks like the same player he was before injury:

"You know, it's hard to say. If anybody—regardless if they got hurt or not—if anybody missed a year and a half and did not play at all and all of a sudden was kind of thrown out there, he obviously got reps during practice and he was prepared and all that stuff. There's going to be maybe some rust here or there. Plus, the conditions weren't really ideal to playing quarterback. In practice, I think he looks great. He runs around, he throws the ball down the field. You saw him move around a little bit on Sunday. I don't think that was a great indication of where he's at on Sunday because of a lot of factors. We've got to protect better. Obviously, it was a torrential downpour for most of the time that he was in, and there were other issues involved."

On C Chase Roullier adapting to different quarterbacks:

“For the center, I think as an offense as a whole you kind of get used to the cadence. I think for the center it’s not as big of a deal if it’s vice versa for the center having to get used to a lot of different centers. The center just kind of snaps the ball and the quarterback puts his hands where he’s supposed to and gets under center in shotgun snap. They get used to the cadences. But, all of our guys do a nice job of communicating, so I think it’s a pretty easy transition.”

On speaking with QB Dwayne Haskins Jr. about his illness:

“Yeah, I talked to him on Monday. He was here Monday. I talked to him Monday. Yesterday was players’ day off, so we’re grinding on the game plan and I didn’t see him at all. I did not know he was sick and that he wasn’t going to come in until right before our meetings were about to start, and once the day gets rolling on Wednesday I don’t really have much of a break. So, haven’t talked to him at all today. From everything I hear, I expect him to feel better and be out here tomorrow. I’ll reach out to him at some point when I catch a break.”

On Haskins Jr. being out of the building:

“It’s a unique situation. In all honesty, all I know is that he’s sick. He hasn’t been feeling well, so I just hope he feels better soon.”

On where the offensive line can improve:

“So, pass protection and run blocking, a lot of it is an offensive deal. It’s not just the line. Obviously, the line gets the focus of it because you’ve got to block your guys. But, as far as the run game, we’ve got to be consistent with our backs, make sure we’re putting the ball where it’s supposed to because we’ve got to be better running the football. The receivers, they have to get better separation so there’s people to throw the ball to and the quarterback’s got to make a good decision and get the ball out of their hands. Now, we had some tough matchups on Sunday. Again, it wasn’t our best in any aspect. I think just in general we have to improve in those areas. I’ve got to improve as well.”

On how G Brandon Scherff returning would help the offense:

“Having a player of his caliber back, that’s going to help you. So to get him back in the lineup, not only as just what he’s going to do and how he performs on a play-to-play basis, but just the leadership. Having him next to [T] Morgan [Moses] really solidifies our right side. I think [G] Wes Schweitzer did a nice job filling in. But, there’s no real replacement for a type of player like Brandon.”

On the running backs creating mismatches:

“It’s been a little up and down. I think early in the season, we weren’t able to do it much I think in the Cleveland game and then really in the Baltimore game we got some stuff where we were able to take advantage of them on some mismatches. We had some stuff that we didn’t necessarily take advantage of. This past game, we had a couple plays to [RB] J.D. [McKissic] where some guys made some really nice tackles where we caught them in some pressures. We were really close on some things. Then you got into the second half of that game, which was an absolute nightmare. We’ve got to keep expanding those guys. J.D. is a guy who’s a veteran. He does a really nice job of putting out some really nice looks. Then [RB] Antonio [Gibson], he’s just continuing to grow. His comfort level is going to continue going up and up as he gets more experience. He’s a rookie. He’s a guy that was really a spot player and didn’t play a ton in Memphis. He’s already I think had more carries already this year than he had in, maybe not his college career, but definitely in his last season. His body is just getting used to that workload and I think you’re just going to continue to see him improve as a player.”

On if he would like McKissic to receive more snaps:

“Yeah, I think the game situation is going to dictate that. We really, the one thing I’ve been disappointed in with myself, is just getting [RB] Peyton [Barber], we’ve got to get him more snaps and let him get some carries

running in between the tackles. I think that could help take a little bit off some of those other guys and also just give us a little physical presence. I think for sure J.D. can make some plays, so we definitely want to use him as much as we can.”

On his relationship with Haskins Jr.:

“I feel good about the relationship with Dwayne. I’ve felt there’s been good communication. I think back and forth, talking to him about the things that he likes, me expressing to him what we’re looking to do on offense, just reaching out to him talking to him about his personal life but also how he’s feeling, how he’s doing inside and out of football. Ever since what happened, he was obviously a little upset with the decision last week. Toward the end of the week we talked a little bit. As we’ve said, he’s been sick so I haven’t seen him much outside of Monday.”

On struggling to establish the run against the Rams:

“Any time you have a performance or the game goes the way it did in the second half, you’re always going to look back and think: ‘Man, I wish I could’ve done something differently.’ We were having a tough time against that defensive front. It’s a very talented front. The runs that we did run, both really in the first half but also in the second half, we weren’t really getting a lot of success there. It was hard to just say: ‘Hey, we’re going to rely on this.’ Obviously, the passing game we weren’t really able to push it down the field with the conditions. There were some issues there. Yeah, you can look back and forth on it. I just think my statement with Peyton was more so he’s a guy that can give you something, and just the way that the games have gone getting down in some games and throwing the ball a little bit more like we are. You plan on working Peyton in, and all of a sudden you’re down, you’re not sure how many possessions you’re going to get as the game goes on and you kind of get away from it. I think just getting him going potentially maybe earlier in the game will give us a little juice.”

On Allen taking a dive against the Rams:

“No, absolutely he doesn’t need to be doing that. You’re talking about the second quarter of the game, taking on a guy who’s a physical player—really any defensive player as a quarterback, but especially a guy like that. Fourth-and-1 and it’s the last drive of the game or something like that, maybe you get into a situation like this. But, it’s a long game and it’s a long season. No, we’ve got to be smarter than that. Obviously, not only is it kind of a bonehead play to put yourself in that situation, but it’s also selfish as far as now he got hurt and now he’s not available to help the rest of his teammates.”