

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

October 15, 2020

Head Coach Ron Rivera

Opening statement:

“Before we do anything, I just want to first of all congratulate [Director of Football Communications] Sean DeBarbieri on his situation, working full-time with the football side of it and his focus with it and [Media Services Coordinator] Charlie Mule and [Corporate & Football Communications Manager] Jessie Johnson. Those guys have been great since I’ve been here. I think this is a pretty good thing for Sean and his group of people.”

On the tempo at practice today:

“I thought tempo was good. One of the things we talk about is up-tempo practice. I thought it was good. I thought the guys worked hard and the focus was there. There was good energy. We’ll see. We’ll see how that translates as we get closer and closer to Sunday.”

On if QB Dwayne Haskins Jr. will travel to New York:

“We’ll have to wait and see. I do know he’s seeing the doctor today. So, we’ll go from there.”

On keeping the team mentally sharp:

“I think the one thing is to talk about what we’re trying to do. We’re trying to develop this football team, and that’s what we’re going to do. Win or lose, going forward, the bottom line and the thing we have to understand is we’re going to play to win. We’re most certainly going to play to develop guys that we think are going to help us, and that’s what we’ve got to do going forward.”

On Haskins Jr.’s illness:

“I couldn’t tell you. I’m not the doctor. I do know he’ll be seeing the team doctor later today, or he may already have seen him. But, again, he checked in this morning, went through the COVID test, there was something in seeing the doctor this morning that he went home. He’s going to see the doctor this afternoon, and that’s all I can tell you.”

On T Saahdiq Charles recovering from his injury:

“He looks good. He really has. He’s had some couple good reps and practice days, taking the reps that are planned out for him and he’s handling that very, very well.”

On what he’s looking for on the offensive line:

“Again, we want to see consistency. We want to see our guys play physical and stout up front and just really be consistent more so than anything else.”

On Charles playing guard:

“We’re just trying to get him reps and trying to see where he fits. He’s a young football player, he’s a good football player, he’s a physical guy and we’ve got to find out where he can play and where he fits best for us. This is a guy who’s going to have to play and get a lot of reps.”

On the linebackers:

“It is a position we’re looking at most certainly. We anticipate [LB] Cole Holcomb being able to play for us. He’s not on the report. He hasn’t had the opportunity, so we’re going to give him the opportunity and we’re going to see how that goes. If there is one position we’re really, on the defensive side, I’d like to see a little bit more from it is the linebacker position. I’d like to see them be a little bit more consistent and productive. They’ve had good numbers, but we’ve given up some plays. In my opinion, that can be directly related to that position. I’d like to see that position play better for us.”

On where the defense can be more consistent:

“Overall and in general. A little bit more consistency is, again—we make a couple plays, but then we allow something to happen. We can’t do that. We have to be consistent where we’re not going to allow those plays and we’re going to be where we’re supposed to and we’re going to continue to dial out those plays. I hear it when we do our reviews on Mondays for the coaches: ‘We did this, we did this, we gave up that.’ Well, we can’t go where we gave up. That doesn’t work.”

On what ‘Rivera Strong’ means to him:

“I think the big thing, and it’s kind of been a catch phrase that’s been used, I know Lance Armstrong did a really big thing with that and Chuck Pagano did a really big thing—it’s really about people being supportive, people being behind you, and for me personally it’s just trying to set the example as I go through this. It’s just trying to be strong and trying to show this is manageable, this is something that we can beat, we can get past. Having folks support you has really been a great thing for me, personally. It really has. I get notes every day, and it truly does mean something. It really does lift your spirits. When you see those things as an individual, I see those things and it really does help me. I can’t explain why as much as I just know there’s folks behind me and praying for me. I’m in their thoughts, they’re wishing the best. That’s really cool.”

On his remaining treatments:

“I’ve got about seven more proton therapy treatments, and I have one more chemo cycle. I think it ends October 26th I think is the day. It’s the 26th, my last day.”

On if he has been feeling well:

“I have. I’m at the end of my second cycle, so things start coming back. But as I start my next cycle, things will be all foggy again.”

On Charles switching to guard:

“I think it’s out of, first of all, just a bigger body and a more physical body at guard for us. I like what [G] Wes Martin does. Wes is a really good puller. He’s good in space. He’s a physical blocker when he’s in space. Watching Saahdiq, Saahdiq at the point of attack is a little bit more stout. This is a move to see what happens and how he handles it. Do I think he could play tackle? Yeah, I do. But, right now I think this is a move a little bit out of need.”

On Giants QB Daniel Jones:

“I think Daniel’s got a live arm. I think he’s a smart football player. He’s a young football player that the more he plays, the better he’s going to be and the more he’s going to grow. I think he’s a good football player. I think they’re building things the right way. They’ve got an impressive offensive line and they’ve got a physical guy up front and big playmakers around him.”

On handling Haskins Jr.’s situation:

“Honestly, the only time I have to handle it is when you guys ask about it. That’s the truth. I get the reports and we go from there. A young man’s feeling ill and we’ve got to respect that and make sure that he’s getting the

proper care and he'll be back when he's getting better and feeling healthier. I mean it. The only time it becomes a distraction is when you guys are talking about it."

On scouting Jones out of college:

"We thought Daniel Jones was a guy that was a smart football player, a live arm, good athleticism, good decision making. He was in a good system that he understood and played well. He was very well-coached. So, he's a guy that I think in time is going to grow and fit right into what they're trying to do. It's a good system. From what I see, it reminds me a lot of the system that's in New England right now when Tom Brady was running it. There are some good things that they do, and we've got to be able to handle them."

On Haskins Jr. going home after his COVID test:

"There really is no confusion. A young man's ill. Because he's feeling ill, we don't want him to come into the building and spread whatever flu-like symptoms he has. So, he went home. He's seeing the doctor. We'll let the doctor determine what's going on. That's the truth. I'm not the doctor, guys. Just so everybody understands it, I'm telling you what I've been told from the trainer and whatever information I got from the doctor. There's really not a lot to clarify right now. The young man is ill, and we're trying to take care of him so he gets better and we can have him back at practice."

On Giants CB James Bradberry:

"Well, he's a physical corner. He's very physical. He gets his hands on guys, and he can stone them at the line of scrimmage. He can re-route them and get them off of their routes. That's one of his strengths. His other strength is he plays with good vision, he's got good anticipation and he's physical with the ball. When the ball's in the air, he's going to fight whoever's going for it. That's the kind of football player that you really do appreciate."

On situations that he uses to motivate the team:

"You've got to keep playing. No matter what happens, you've got to keep playing. I was in the same situation as a first-time head coach. I was in the same situation as a first-time coordinator. Things are going to be hard. I've said that from the beginning. This is not going to be easy. Just because I'm showing up does not mean we're going to win the division. We've got to work through it. There are a lot of things to grow through. You have to keep playing and you have to keep playing the guys that you think are going to help you going forward. That's what we're trying to do right now. We're going to play guys that we think are going to help us, but as I said, there's an interesting stretch right now. There are five games that are very impactful, and that we have an opportunity and a chance. We're going to see what happens and we're going to go for it. That's all that's happened right now is I've changed my approach to this. A big part of it is looking at the schedule from the beginning and saying: 'These four games are going to be very interesting, but we're developing.' These next four based on where we are—we have a chance. We'll see what happens."

On the hit QB Kyle Allen took against the Rams:

"Well, the 'gung-ho linebacker' in me loved it because here's a guy that's going to fight and scratch and do whatever he can to help you win. Unfortunately, he got a helmet-to-helmet shot. He got a pretty good shot in the back. But, I was fired up for him obviously until he got up woozy and then I was a little concerned. That's the head coach in me. I was split on it. Like you said, the 'gung-ho linebacker' in me was fired up. The head coach was fired up until I realized when he kind of got up and it was his arm. There was a little bit of concern there, obviously. Thank goodness it was his left arm, his left side as opposed to it being his right."

On balancing Allen's aggressiveness:

"Sometimes discretion is the better part of valor. He and I have had that conversation about sliding and not taking the big shot sometimes."