

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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Head Coach Ron Rivera

On the injuries at receiver:

“We’re dealing with two guys that are injured that haven’t had a chance to practice, that won’t practice this week. We’ve got some young guys that we’re going to take a look at, pop up and get them ready to play Sunday.”

On having young players on offense:

“Well, it’s very challenging. Again, hopefully our coaches have been doing a good job and trying to get these young guys. These guys weren’t with us, really, through training camp. [WR] Tony Brown came at the end of camp and got a little bit of work. [WR] Jeff Badet is somebody that we brought in a few weeks ago, and he’s gotten a little bit of work. We’ll see how they handle it, and we’ll see how many opportunities they get on Sunday.”

On how playing in the Dallas-Washington rivalry feels this year:

“It’s kind of tough because of exactly what you’re saying. This might be one of those things that I feel once I walk into the stadium on Sunday. There’s not going to be any fans in the stands. It’ll be a limited number, actually. A very limited number of friends and family, and that’s about it. It’s going to be a little bit different than what I thought. I can’t wait for some normalcy to really be able to experience it. Again, this is one of the original franchises. This is one of the really good rivalries in the NFL, the Cowboys and the Washington Football Team. I’m excited to be a part of it. It’s just, unfortunately, the part of it right now is a little bit weird.”

On his relationship with Cowboys Head Coach Mike McCarthy:

“I think you’re making too much of it, I’ll be honest with you. To me, the real bond is just the fact that he’s an NFL coach. It’s a small fraternity, a tight knit group of guys. There’s a mutual respect that you feel for each other, more so than anything else.”

On QB Kyle Allen’s performance against the Giants:

“I was pleased with him. I thought he did some really nice things, made some good decisions, moved the ball when we had to. Obviously, the two things you’d want back are the two takeaways. Other than that, he did the things we’re expecting of him that he needs to do. Again, he put us in the position that we could’ve won the football game. That much I think is promising.”

On taking advantage of the Cowboys defense:

“Well, I don’t believe in that attitude. You could’ve said the same thing about last week’s game that last week would’ve been the time to get things rolling. So, I don’t think that’s fair. I really don’t. I’ve heard a couple people say: ‘Oh, Dallas is playing the Washington Football Team.’ You’ve got to be careful with that crap. I really do think that. I’ve never bought into that. These are professional football players. There is a sense of pride, and this is a rivalry matchup. Anything goes. Within the division, to me, all bets are off. There’s no telling what’s going to happen.”

On if there is an advantage playing a team that played on Monday:

“There can be. What I was hoping for was overtime, and it went the whole 10 minutes and then they lost. That would’ve been good because you want them coming in tired and disappointed. But, the advantage can be for the home team because they’ve got to travel as well. So, that could be a plus for us.”

On the cutoff point at quarterback:

“I didn’t have a cutoff point for [QB] Dwayne Haskins. I made a decision based on what I was watching and what I was seeing, and that’s what happened. So, with Kyle I’m going to go as long as I feel I can. Again, it’s about watching him and if I’m seeing what I want to see or not. Again, there was no drop-dead that if this didn’t happen here or this didn’t happen—no. What I was looking at was watching him and looking for growth and the progression and a development and that type of stuff. That’s why I made the decision I made. I had no cutoff.”

On if the division still impacts his decisions at quarterback:

“No. Again, like I told you guys, we’re going in to compete and we’re going to compete and compete and compete and we’re going to play to win. That’s the way that I’m going to look at it. Who is going to give us the best opportunity to win is what I’m going to go with. I think that’s something that I’m trying to get across is that we have an opportunity to win right now and be competitive in the division. That’s what I’m playing for. The intent is to win every game you play. I’d love to win all 16 games. That can’t happen right now, so I’d love to win the rest of the games we play. That’s the way I’ll approach it as we go forward.”

On how Allen’s knowledge of the system helps the offense:

“I think having sustained success and being able to move the ball and move the ball consistently, that’s probably the biggest thing. We had three sustained drives to put points up on the board. I think that’s what you want. You want that sustained success so that you can move the ball systematically down the field, you can move the ball and control the clock, keep the defense off the field. That’s what Kyle’s done consistently for us so far.”

On areas Allen has improved:

“With the exception of the interception, you see him make better decisions. I was going to say you really haven’t seen him force the ball, but that’s what the interception was. He got fooled on the coverage then basically forced the ball into what was really a high-low coverage. He had a guy underneath and a guy on top. It was one of those things that unfortunately happened. You do see him being more consistent. You do see him sustaining the success in the drives.”

On when he realized they could win the division:

“I’m just looking at it as I broke the year down. I break the season down into quarters. I looked at where we could be in the first four games, looked at where we could be in the next four games and then so on and so on. When we got to the second quarter and having seen what I saw and looking at the division, I thought: ‘Wow. Here’s a chance to do something.’ I just think we have to take advantage and take a shot.”

On if he focuses on other NFC East team’s results:

“I do try to pay attention to our division in the games and see what’s going on. It’s important to know what’s happening within your division.”

On the timeline for instilling a winning mentality:

“Gosh, there’s no telling. When we were in Carolina, we had the dubious distinction of being 3-13 in games that were decided by six points or less in my first two years. Part of it was me knowing and understanding how to win as well. I think we really kind of got it going into my third season. We started doing some things that really helped us. Players really almost started having this fearlessness about them and this confidence that: ‘Hey, just give us the ball and we can score.’ Or: ‘Hey, we need to stop. We’ll get a stop. We need a takeaway; we’ll get a

takeaway.’ That kind of attitude and mentality. Sometimes you get into a: ‘Oh, here we go again. It’s that same old negative stuff that goes on.’ You want to break that habit or that feeling or that sense that negative stuff is going to take over. That’s kind of what we have to get past. We can’t keep expecting or waiting for the negative things to happen.”

On what allowed the sustained drives against the Giants:

“Well, we converted on third downs. I think we were right around 50 percent if not a little over 50 percent last week on third downs. That’s big. Our first and second downs, we had success where we put ourselves in second-and-short and then we put ourselves in third-and-short. When you’re converting that way, that’s huge. It gives you an opportunity to maintain the ball. When we went for it on fourth downs twice, we converted both times. That’s also important, that you go out and you can do that so that you keep the ball going forward. That’s part of being successful and sustaining success.”

On the Dallas-Washington rivalry:

“I do know that some of the Thanksgiving stuff was always pretty good. Just watching that more so than anything else, that always gets your attention and just how big this rivalry is. When you talk to young players, you’re going to tell them: ‘Hey guys, this rivalry is as big as any college rivalry you played in.’ A lot of these guys played in some pretty big ones. We’ve got Alabama guys that played in the Iron Bowl. We’ve got Ohio State guys that played Ohio State-Michigan. We’ve got Cal and Stanford guys that played in the Big Game. So, it’s that type of rivalry. Hopefully, that translates and they understand the significance. But also, more importantly, this is a divisional game. We’ve got to understand to be able to win the division we’ve got to win the division.”