

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

May 25, 2021

Head Coach Ron Rivera

Opening Statement: “Good morning everyone. Before we get started here, I just wanted to take a second to acknowledge today being the one-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. I know I speak for a lot of people in saying that the pain from that senseless act of violence still stings. I know that justice was served through our judicial system and that has helped start the healing process for our country, but there is still a lot of work to be done. Our Team President Jason Wright addressed our team this morning and together we held a moment of silence to honor Mr. Floyd. The Floyd family is in our thoughts and prayers today. With that, we’ll open it up to questions.”

On the attendance at OTA 1:

“As a team, we understand that we are a young football team and a group of young guys that are coming together. For the most part we have a lot of new faces. For the most part, just very pleased with what we got. I appreciate our guys being attentive. It is a voluntary situation, and it is pleasing to have a good mixture of the guys. We have a lot of new players and new faces. I guess our guys are looking at the opportunity to develop and come together. I am very pleased with that.”

On seeing QB Ryan Fitzpatrick:

“It was good to see. He is a very veteran guy. He picks things up very quickly and he handled himself very nicely. I think the guys have already started to draw towards him in terms of being comfortable and understanding how he does things and how it fits our structure. That is one of the really cool things is that he can come in and assimilate very quickly. The teammates around him gather around him and assimilate to his style as well.”

On OL Morgan Moses and Geron Christian Sr.:

“We are just going in a different direction. We have an opportunity to get some young guys on the field and we went out and brought in a veteran left tackle. Feel very comfortable with those decisions because of the players that we have on the roster right now. They are both good players and have been good players for us. They will continue to be good players in the league, we just felt it was an opportunity to get some young guys on the field.”

On Saahdiq Charles playing tackle today:

“Absolutely. It is an opportunity to work.”

On S Landon Collins:

“I was watching him in the way, way back there going through his reads and his movements. You can see he is coming back, and he is into it. That is really good to see.”

On President Jason Wright speaking to the team about the anniversary of George Floyd’s death:

“The message was that it was a very tragic situation. Justice was served but there is still a lot of work to do. Jason, he and I talked about it, and we wanted to remind our players that there is a lot of work still left to be done.”

On what he saw from Fitzpatrick as a leader:

“He took very good command of the huddle. He got the calls out quickly, got to the line of scrimmage and got the calls lined up. That is one thing you can see in terms of his knowledge and understanding of what we are doing. We have a lot of first and second-year guys on the field and he helped them get lined up. You listen to him talk with [Offensive Coordinator] Scott Turner and [Quarterbacks Coach] Ken Zampese and you can see he is suggesting things. There is that type of seniority that you feel and see from him because he has been around, and he has a vast wealth of that we can also gain from as well. Not just the players, but the coaches.”

On the tempo of the group:

“Yes. I was happy about some of the veteran guys telling some of the young guys, ‘Hey, we don’t walk around here. We hustle to here and we hustle to there.’ I thought that was a pretty cool comment from one of our senior defensive guys. I think the guys are understanding that if you want to play fast you have to practice fast. This is as good of a simulation as you can get. We have to be aware and try and get the players aware of the rules. There is no high impact collisions. We have to get the DB’s to understand that they aren’t supposed to compete for the ball when it is close. We have to take care of each other and make sure we practice and learn to get something out of this. Like I said, we have to really abide by the rules.”

On the linebacker position:

“By Week 1 of the regular season, you would like to have your primary guys set. ‘Hey, this is where you are going to be for the most part,’ but still having the ability to adapt if something were to happen. That is again, a big part of the reason we talked about position flex. You never know how things are going to play out and if someone is going to get hurt or something happens and you have to move a guy from one spot to another. You want to make sure you put the best player on the football field. If you have a guy that only plays one spot and something happens, that is a tough situation. We are going to continue to move our guys around, develop them as we get into training camp and then further along in training camp, you will see guys settle in in their primary positions.”

On T David Sharpe:

“I would not buy into anything like that as far as David is concerned. David is a very athletic football player and he can play right, left and guard if he has to. He will work and work both sides of the ball.”

On the offensive line and T Sam Cosmi:

“It is early. He has taken snaps on both sides of the ball. It is hard to say, he has really done a nice job. We got to see him last week move around and then today. I will get an opportunity even more to look around and then get with [Offensive Line] Coach [John] Matsko and [Assistant Offensive Line] Coach [Travelle] Wharton and see how he looked today.”

On WR Curtis Samuel and coaching him again:

“It did. He is fast, that was cool. That was one thing that is very noticeable as far as our wide receiver group was concerned. Those guys can run. We got faster as a unit and as a team. It was cool to see all of them. It was good to see Curtis and then you see how dynamic he is once he gets the ball in his hands.”

On how Antonio Gandy-Golden and Kelvin Harmon looked coming back from injury:

“They both looked good. Kelvin made a nice catch along the sideline early on and it is good to see him moving around. He is a guy we missed last year. AGG, it was good seeing him out there. Big physical presence. Guys like that most certainly have roles.”

On if there is a year in his career where his offense took a big step:

“It is interesting because the styles are similar, but the players are different. One of the positions we relied on so heavily was quarterback in Carolina in terms of our entire offense. Here, we do not have to rely on the quarterback. We have a lot of good weapons around our QB position. This will be a little different as I study and look at and watch our guys. It is good to see the personnel we have. I thought we improved. We improved at receiver, tight end and running back. One of the goals that you talk about as an offense is protecting your quarterback and you have playmakers around them. I feel that we have a different group of guys this year, but we are in a better position than we were last season.”

On DE’s Chase Young and Montez Sweat not being in attendance:

“I know they have talked to their position coaches. We stress that it is voluntary. You would love to have everyone here. We have 86 guys here and it would be nice to have everyone, but guys are entitled to what they feel they need to do right now. They are both good, young football players and they will be here when they are here.”

On QB Kyle Allen:

“He looked good and he threw the ball well. His movement was good. It was limited, obviously, but it was good to see him out there moving around. I liked what I saw from all of our quarterbacks today. I thought those guys worked hard. Their retention from last year was very good and their retention from instillation was good. I think we are in a good position at quarterback right now.”

On G Brandon Scherff:

“Absolutely, it is good to have Brandon here. He most certainly is a leader. He’s an influential person on our team, and it’s good to have a guy like that here. I appreciate it because, again, this is voluntary. With his resume, he’s going to get some work the next few practices for sure, but then it will most certainly taper off. As it will with most of our veteran guys. This is just a great opportunity to check in on them, see how they’re all doing. They’ll work and they’ll work hard, but we’re also going to be smart about how many reps these guys take because, again, this is really just getting them reacclimated to playing the game, building up their callousness to getting ready for training camp and then we’ll go from here. Again, it was just really good to see him. We’re very fortunate to have as many guys as we have here. I think it speaks well to the mentality and attitude of our players right now.”

On the offensive additions to the team:

“Yeah, there is because sometimes guys turn out to be a little bit more than what you thought or not quite what you thought. Right now, I’m pleased with what we’ve seen. Like I said, especially watching the receivers run their routes and watching the receivers make plays on the ball. Also need to see the secondary. I know we can’t get up there and jam and get physical with the receivers right now but it’s good to see these guys run. It’s a different look obviously from last year because we didn’t get a chance to do this, so it’s kind of refreshing for us to be out on the field with our guys already. Like I said, it was really kind of cool to have as many guys as we had here.”

On more competition amongst the receiver and tight end groups:

“I think so. I do agree with that, Les. I think we’re going to have some really good battles in terms of starting positions. Quite honestly at our primary back up positions as well. We feel we did some good things with depth, and we just feel like it puts us in a good position preparing for training camp and then into the regular season once we get to camp.”

On 86 players showing up for the voluntary program:

“I think that our guys understand the value of it and the importance of it. Like I said though, we have to stress the rules to make sure we’re following them. We’ve got to be on top of that. If you guys noticed, we came out and some of the guys had their shells on and we’re not allowed to have shells, so we had them take those off before practicing. I appreciate the enthusiasm, I really do because this is voluntary. I think our guys understand that we’re a fairly new team with a lot of new faces from last year. To get together, to work together, to develop, I think our guys have seen the importance and significance of it. I’m really grateful that they’re here. I really truly am, and I appreciate them being here.”

On the importance of these OTA’s for the rookies and veterans building a relationship:

“I think it’s very important and I’ll say this, a couple of times our quarterbacks threw the back shoulder fades. In fact, Ryan [Fitzpatrick] threw one to Cam Sims. It was a perfect back shoulder, Cam saw it at the right time, made the right move and made a heck of a catch. So, those are the types of things you’re developing. When we have a drill going and watching our defensive line, they ran what we call a natural. It was a natural pick, and it happened. You watch these guys and watch them do these things already and it’s kind of cool. But again, that’s what we’re working towards – that feel for one another. Again, this is a good opportunity too. We’re just appreciative of the players and having that many players here.”

On Fitzpatrick:

“Well first of all, he’s a very smart football player. He’s been around, so he’s picked up our system very quickly. Like I said, probably one of the good examples of it is he threw a back shoulder fade. A lot of times it’s you come in, you develop, you have this trust already. I know last week he threw a few balls to Cam, but today on that particular sideline route, and low and behold that back shoulder was there. That was really cool. Then we had one where we botched the snap and what happened was the center and guards tried to re-ID the defensive line in the middle of the cadence and because of that it threw everything off. Ryan told them, ‘Hey we can’t do that. Once we got it, we have to stick with it.’ So, it was kind of neat to see him step up and correct his teammates as well. You see that savvy, veteran leadership.”

On Fitzpatrick stepping up as a new player on the team:

“Well, if a guy didn’t have the reputation Ryan has in terms of being a good teammate, being a smart football player, being a successful player, it would be hard. I think because he has so many games under his belt, he’s had so much success under his belt that he’s gotten the players’ respect already. That’s a really cool thing.”