

WASHINGTON

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QB Taylor Heinicke

On his touchdown pass to WR Cam Sims against Carolina:

“So he's my second read on that play. And I kind of remember the safety going left and the linebacker going left, trying to get in that lane and I kind of fit it in between those two. That's probably one of my best throws of the year. And when you kind of make a throw like that for a touchdown in a big game like that, it gives you a lot of confidence. So, no ever since that throw I've felt really good and just kind of kept on building on that.”

On where he is most proud of in terms of progress he's made over the past year:

“I think the biggest thing is really taking care of the ball. I feel like we've done a great job of that. And also, not taking really bad sacks. When things break down and you kind of get outside the pocket and make things happen. I think in previous games I was taking a sack when I was trying to make a big play, or I was taking an unnecessary hit. In the last three games, I feel like I've gotten away from that. So those were the two biggest things.”

On why he thinks he's gotten better at avoiding sacks:

“I think it's just the more reps you get in games, the more comfortable you get. And again, you start to progress, you understand the game better, and the game kind of slows down for you a little bit and you understand what needs to happen. So again, you know, when it's first and second down, don't take the sack, live to see another day, give yourself a third and manageable.”

On if he notices the energy of the offensive line when the offense is running the ball well:

“Yeah. So Big E[G Ereck Flowers], he's always the first one to be in the end zone on rushing touchdowns and stuff. He says he has a lot of juice, but again, when you're in the offense and when you're in the huddle, these last three games and you call that run play, and those offensive linemen, their eyes light up. It's cool because you know that's right in their wheelhouse and they're doing a great job. So hopefully we can just keep this thing rolling.”

On Offensive Coordinator Scott Turner's approach to pass and run:

“Yeah, it's easier on me, easier on the offensive lines, easier on everybody, the defense as well, when you can run the ball effectively. Our time of possession is crazy right now and you know they can't score points when their offense isn't on the field. And so, if we're running the ball effectively and that helps the play action pass, that helps the protection that helps the receivers get open. So, you know, as long as we can keep running the ball, it's going to help everything out. Scott understands that he's a smart guy. And obviously we had to change a little something to get this thing going, we were on a four-game losing streak. And again, the last three weeks we've run the ball well and it just opens up everything else. So, I think he did a great job of adjusting to that.”

On C Keith Ismael being hyped up by the offense when he entered the game:

“I'm sure it was a combination of Big E and [G Brandon] Scherff and those guys. We had a lot of confidence in him. [Offensive Line] Coach Matsko does a great job throughout the week of coaching those guys hard and

rotating those guys in. So it wasn't the first time I took a snap from Keith. We knew he can get the job done. It was just him going out there and executing and I think he did a great job.”

On the play calling with a change of the offensive line lineup:

“When you're on your fourth string center and you keep running the ball like that, obviously, you know, something's going right throughout the week and in the game. So, again, it's just a lot of credit to those coaches and how hard those guys worked throughout the week.”

On if he thinks about joining the team this time last year:

“You know what, I really haven't. Every, day's a new challenge and there's a lot of stuff to be done this year still. I'm sure after the season, I'll kind of look back on it and say you know, how crazy it's been, but right now, I'm just focused on the Raiders.”

On if he knew that today was the day he joined the team:

“What's today, Wednesday? So today would have been my first practice last year and again, I wasn't allowed to practice. I was 10 yards behind everybody watching. So, it's been a crazy wild year.”

On what it is like to process the attention he's been receiving lately:

“Yeah, you kind of enjoy it while it's happening, because again, not many people get to experience this, so you have to reward yourself getting those wins. But at the same time, to have a short-term memory, and what I keep telling myself is it's been a great story these last three weeks, but it's an even better story if you keep winning and greater things can happen. So that's what we really want to accomplish. We want to cover some great things, but we do recognize the last three weeks have been pretty special.”

On if he feels as if he is playing his best football right now:

“Yeah, I do feel like I'm playing probably some of my best football I've ever played, and I think that's, you know, a credit to the coaches and just really working hard and keeping the ball in our possession. I think that's the biggest thing, you know. We'd like to take shots down field, we'd like to get those big chunk plays, but if they're getting out of their checking the ball down is just as good. As long as we keep getting first downs and scoring points, that's all that matters. And yeah, the confidence now and how we feel now before our bye week is a total 180. We still have confidence during that four-game skid that we could be great. But it was just going out there and executing and to come back after the bye against Tampa and going against them and building on that last three weeks has been huge for us.”

On if there have been any changes to the passing game:

“I don't think so. I just think running the ball effectively helps that play action even more. When you can run the ball well and you can play action well and get those guys up and hit him behind there and mix in a couple of quick games and a couple of shots, the defense is kinda all over the place. They don't know what's coming. It's just been a good three weeks and I think we can keep this thing rolling.”

On what he is thinking about when he is in those scrambling moments:

“I honestly can't give you an honest answer there. When I'm back there and things are kind of breaking down, I think that's when instinct kind of comes through and the feel of the game. I'm just trying to find a little hole to squeak through and get what I can. I think the play you're talking about was when I kind of ducked under number eight or 10, I forget who it was. You can't really coach that type of stuff. You don't do that in drills. I

think it just kinda instinctly happens. I guess it's just a little small gift I have.”

On making tight-window throws:

“Yeah so, that throw to Cam [Sims], if I don't throw it on time, it's a bad throw and that's the basis of it. If you don't throw that ball on time, you can't throw it. So again, that's another thing I've been working on. You watch the four-game skid, I'm kind of late on throws or I'm overthinking stuff and maybe floating things. Coming off the bye week, we really just want to work on our timing and just being on point. If it's not there, just check the ball down and live to see another day. So again, that was a great play for us. And it was a big confidence throw for me.”

On having teammates who also went undrafted:

“Again, when you have a lot of those type of guys on the team, the reason that they're in the position they are in today is because they just worked hard and didn't take no for an answer. We all have that kind of same mentality and we just want to go out there and play football and have fun and do it as long as we can. We work hard every day. We try and get better every day and that's all we can really do.”

On Raiders QB Derek Carr:

“Yeah, he's a great quarterback. You kind of watched him throughout the years and he puts up great numbers. You kind of watch his games and he likes to throw the ball downfield and he completes a lot of them. They're a dangerous offense. We know that. They can score some points. Us as an offense, we just try and stick to our guns, do what we do best. We know Derek's a good quarterback and he can air it out.”

On taking the underneath throws:

“I think that just, again, comes with a lot of experience. Sometimes it's kind of the defense that they show and stuff like that. I would say like you just said that has something to do with it as well. When you keep throwing, trying to fit balls in deep and they get picked and stuff like that and you go back and watch them in film that there's a guy wide open five yards down the field that can get you 10, 15 yards, keep moving the chain, stuff like that. So again, there's that fine line of you want to be aggressive and take shots; but at the same time, you want to be smart and not turn the ball over. I feel like we're at a good level right now with that.”

On TE Logan Thomas and WR Curtis Samuel:

Yeah, you know, it doesn't hurt when you have a big body like Logan, a good player like Logan and an explosive player like Curtis. Hopefully, we have a plan for them this week and they can go do some great things, but it never hurts to have two great receivers slash tight end come back.”

On how the improved run game helps him:

“Yeah. It takes a lot of pressure off a lot of people, not just me but the offensive line as well. The D line can't just pin their ears back and go when our guys are kind of beating them up on the run game. Then again, that it keeps their offense off the field, it gets our defense rested. So it's a huge just team deal. When you can run the ball, it helps everybody out. But especially myself, it's nice handing the ball off to AG [Antonio Gibson] and seeing him do his thing and same thing with J.D. [McKissic]. So again, those guys up front, they don't get a lot of credit, but they're doing awesome right now.”

On what it's like in the locker room after a win:

“Yeah, it's huge. You can feel the confidence in the locker room. You can feel like the guys, they just want to

keep playing ball, they're excited. They're looking forward to the next game. When you beat a defending Super Bowl team and you go down to Carolina and Cam's homecoming, then you play on Monday night and you keep running the ball and you're playing well, the confidence keeps building and building. We're just excited for the opportunity against Vegas, and we want to keep this ball rolling.”