

WASHINGTON

FOOTBALL TEAM, EST. 1932

INOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER - LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

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Head Coach Ron Rivera

On if losing two more players to COVID-19 makes it seem like this trend will never end:

"It does. You kind of worry about it. It's just what's happening right now. We're not the only team that it is happening to. There's a few others that are going through this right now and it seems to be inevitable for everybody too. It just drags on."

On the process of RBs Wendell Smallwood and Jaret Patterson stepping up in place of RB Antonio Gibson:

"I mean that's basically it. They just have to step up."

On what he has seen from Patterson:

"I think the biggest thing as far as Jaret is concerned is just how hard he's been working. He's a young guy that's really in tune as to what we do. He does the extra things. Same thing with Jonathan. Jonathan is spending extra time taking as many opportunities as he can to get as much reps in practice. Same thing with Wendell. I mean, all three guys are gonna have to step up and take advantage of this opportunity to play and show us what they can do."

On how the staff helps players who have lingering issues from COVID-19:

"Well, not everybody has those symptoms. But the guys that do, I know the trainers work a little bit extra on them. I know we as coaches pay attention to that and then some don't have any symptoms or have any lingering symptoms. So those guys, you check in on them real quick and, 'Hey, I'm fine coach. We're good to go.' And then they go out and show you. So, even though it's more contagious and they say that it's not as strong a variant as the Delta, guys still have symptoms and guys still have some reactions to it. It affects everybody differently."

On if he has spoken with DE Montez Sweat this week:

"I have. He's doing as well as he can. What we talked about really is between us."

On the league trend this year that shows home field advantage hasn't been very prevalent league-wide the past two seasons:

"Well, I think the last two years there's an impact right now based on what's going on in society because of COVID. I think that's got a little bit something to do with it. I think you aren't getting the types of crowds that you've had in the past. I think that's a little bit that has something to do with it as well. I think hopefully if this does ease up and we know how to deal with it, it may change things, but I really couldn't tell you."

On if he thinks there are any sports science reasons behind this trend:

"That might have something to do with that. We do pay attention to it. I've paid attention to it, starting probably in 2015 as a head coach. When we started, everybody started doing the GPS stuff. There are certain metrics that tell you your guys are gonna perform this way. Certain things, as far as the analytics or the sports science tells you about how to travel, what to eat when you travel, what's the best time to meet, all those things. We went through it when we went to Denver. One of the things that they said is if you're there less than 24 hours, the

altitude doesn't affect you. So, we purposely went in a little later in the afternoon than we normally would've to make sure we stayed underneath that 24 hours. So yeah, I think that's part of it too."

On how he feels about the team's depth at cornerback:

"Well, it's very thin right now. We're a little concerned obviously, just hoping that we can keep everybody healthy through this weekend, and we'll get those guys back next week and we'll go from there. But, it is a little precarious. I mean, that's kind of what's happening is we just continue to go through this and it's just one of those things that's lingering right now."

On what he has seen from CB D.J. Hayden:

"You see a lot of the savvy vet come into play. The way he goes through his progressions as a corner and the techniques he uses, you can see that he's a veteran guy that knows how to play certain things."