

July 30, 2022

Head Coach Ron Rivera

On what DE Ryan Kerrigan means to this franchise:

"I think the biggest thing that's obvious is what he meant to the franchise, what he meant to the fans and the community more so than anything else. Also, in talking with him is just how important it was for him to do this. We really felt that we were obligated to do it because it's the right thing to do when you have a player that you know, is gonna retire and he's the all-time sack leader, you most certainly need to. At this point recognize his contribution to the organization, to the franchise, to the community."

On the consistency DE Ryan Kerrigan had while playing:

When a guy plays with that much consistency for that long, you know, there's a lot to be said about it, just because of what he meant. He's a guy that you could always count on. He's a guy that always could help set the example. I mean, you only get so many of those guys and when you get them, they most certainly need to be celebrated."

On what were some of the things CB William Jackson started to do different after the Tampa Bay game:

"You begin to notice that he understood passing, coverages, you know, we check coverages and when you lock a man and you get to a certain point, you gotta pass him on. He kind of started to understand that it, it wasn't just, Hey, this is my guy, and I'm gonna run with him all over the field. What we were trying to get him to understand and seems to really have gotten it right around that point was that when I lock on a guy, but yet I gotta pass him off, it gives me an opportunity to play with my eyes. Okay. So, guy's gonna, let's say he starts to run a slant. I start driving on him and I know that I'm gonna let him go because I got a guy going in the flat stuff like those little details to it. Because again, for so long, early in his career, they played so much man to him it was just, Hey, this is my guy and I'm gonna chase him, everywhere."

On what he's seen from CB William Jackson so far in Training Camp:

"I think you see better understanding of what we're doing and how we're doing it more so than anything else, and that's good to see. It really is because he can be a very integral part just because of his athletic ability and his skillset. He can put himself in position to make plays for us."

On DT Jon Allen and DE Montez Sweat not doing team drills today:

"Yeah. Today was designed that way. We didn't have [G] Andrew Norwell and [T] Charles Leno out. We were very careful with [WR] Curtis [Samuel] again today. We'll have all those guys back out on Monday ready to roll."

On if there is anything he attributes CB William Jackson and CB Benjamin St-Juste's second year success to:

"I think they had really good off seasons. I really do. You know, both guys came back OTA program and they were very good in it. You could see that they really have gotten more acclimated to how we do things, the techniques that we're asking them of, especially William. I mean, he really has shown a good feel for it so we're excited for him. Excited for Benjamin too, having him back out on the football field."

On what led him to believe that the secondary would put it together:

"Well, it's time. I mean, things don't happen overnight. I mean, you know, granted we had 2020, but that was a whole different year with, with COVID and then 2021 had its own personality as far as the season goes. It's just, you know, there were so many new faces and there's still more new faces. There's a lot of young guys. Today was a good example."

We sat down a few veterans, gave some young guys an opportunity and quite honestly, there were some things that were terrible out there today from the young guy and I told them after practice that some of the things that happened today out on this field and we're gonna watch it on tape was not acceptable."

On how he evaluates a players' reaction to a bad year:

"Well, I think you see the seriousness in which those guys have approached it and you know, we had some guys that, that did have subpar years. We had some guys that could have better years and for the most part, they all came in, and it was interesting because one of the things that Jack [Del Rio] talked about in his opening meeting with the defensive players really was about the humility, more so than anything else. Coming into this, we got a good dose of humble pie. We knew a little bit more humility and let's just put our nose to the grindstone. When you watch some of the things that they've done, particularly the guys that we're talking about, you're pleased. I was pleased with their approach when we got to OTAs and minicamp. I really also like some of the leadership that we've seen from the group. [DT] Jonathan [Allen] and [DT] Daron [Payne]. I know Daron was in and out of OTAs and minicamp, but when Daron was out there and he is out there today, you know, he steps up. Jon, his natural leadership has been really good. And then right up with [LB] Cole [Holcomb] learning to step in front and be the Mike. And then [CB] Kendall [Fuller] and [S] Bobby [McCain] have been two guys with the secondary that have been really good job in terms of their leadership setting, the tone in temple for their groups."

On if improvement is based on their mental or physical reps:

"I think it's more about the mental aspect of it right now and what their approach is more than anything else is what you're looking for. You also look at body language. There have been a couple things that when you watched [CB] William [Jackson III] how close he was to a couple of plays yesterday, and when you watch the entirety of his reaction to it, you could tell he wanted to make that so bad, and he just missed it. Well, that's exciting that, hey, I'm getting it. I know I have a chance to do that, and I can do it. That's kind of a neat thing because you know he's challenging himself."

On status of TE John Bates:

"No other than he's working through it."

On how vet off days affect evaluation for others:

"It's a huge opportunity for us to really get in there and evaluate and see exactly what they're doing and how they're doing it. It's also an opportunity to mix it up because a lot of times when you're going against a [DT] Jonathan [Allen] or you're going through against a [OT] Charles [Leno Jr.], you're talking about top guys at their position. Now it's an opportunity for you to go against somebody else that needs to step up at the same time. You know, you should be able to say, hey, you know what? I've been working against one of the better guys. I should have some success. And so, it's an evaluation for us as well, because I'm going to look at it that way."

On if he has a sense of who the starters will be:

"No, no. There are still some guys I think that could step in and push for time. Whether they earn starting opportunities or they earn rotational opportunities. I think there's still some spots that we can get some more clarity on."

On players that stood out:

"Yeah. I mean we're keeping an eye out on all the positions. But yeah, there's some specifically that are in my mind I'm thinking about."

On TE Curtis Hodges:

"I like how coachable he's been. First day he had a couple of technique errors coach stepped in, you know, [Tight Ends

Coach] Juan [Castillo] went at him, explained a couple things to him. He was battling with [DE] Montez [Sweat], beat him a couple times. Montez pulled him aside and said, hey, you know, if you do this, this and this, this could help you. And then the next day he came back, and he did a couple of those things. So he's really shown that he is coachable. He is listening. He is fighting to improve and get better. You appreciate that when you see a young man, you know, be instructed, you see a young man, have his teammate, put his arm around and say, hey, you know, you can do this. I've seen it from you. That's pretty cool."

On competition for the returner position:

"I think it's a good competition because you know, the dual returner, it takes some pressure off you trying to find another guy and it helps you. So when you've got to have your 48 guy list for game day. So that's an important thing for us is to have, if we can have a dual returner that could be really big."

On potential for WR Jahan Dotson to play the return kicks:

"A lot of it depends on how it goes in the three preseason games with the other guys first before we do anything with Jahan. Jahan has an opportunity to be integral part of what we do already. He's shown some flashes that have been very impressive. So we've got to be very diligent, very smart about it as we go through this process."