

October 27, 2022

Head Coach Ron Rivera

On WR Jahan Dotson missing practice again today:

"Well, I'm not anticipating him being there Sunday. It's unfortunate, but he's still tight. So, they've been working him inside, been working him in the water on the treadmill and just trying to get him going."

On DE Chase Young's status:

"For the most part, he's had an opportunity to visit with Doc [Dr. James Andrews] today, and everything's positive. So, it's one of those things that we looked at it, he's met with Doc on Sunday and wanted us to slow it down a little bit and wanted to take one more look. He had a real heavy work day on Sunday morning before the game. Then he's had a couple heavy work days and Doc wanted to see him. He flew down, saw him this morning, and just waiting on his return. But preliminary, [Head Athletic Trainer] Al [Bellamy] texted me, told me everything went great. Doc is very happy with it, and we'll be able to start him next week."

On LB Cole Holcomb:

"He's been a solid player. He's done a lot of good things. He's pretty much led the defense. He's got a foot sprain right now. He's been treating it. We're trying to keep him off it as much as possible, and then we'll see how he is for tomorrow."

On what he has seen from DE Montez Sweat this season:

"I just think tremendous growth on his part. I think understanding what we're expecting from the defensive alignment, especially our defensive ends. I think that's really helped him. I think the play of the guys around him, you know [DT] Jonathan [Allen] playing at that high level, I think has really helped him as has [DT] Daron [Payne]. The two of those guys are a terrific inside tandem. I think the other guys on the opposite side that have been filling in have done a nice job also. I think it's really just everything coming together as far as that unit is concerned."

On going to California to visit his mother:

"Well, initially it was tough. But getting there and seeing her and seeing her in such positive spirits was really good. It really was. It was really kind of neat just being able to visit with her. I don't think she necessarily expected me to be there, which was kind of cool. So, a little bit of a surprise. We had a nice conversation and they have a really good plan for her, so we're kind of optimistic."

On having to face another personal issues since becoming the head coach of the Commanders:

"Well, the best thing that happened for us was yesterday, not being around -- well, start with Tuesday actually knowing the coaching staffs were more settled in, in terms of game planning. They handled that tremendously. They really did. Then getting in on Wednesday and talking with [defensive coordinator] Jack [Del Rio] and having Jack just take charge and lead most of everything. I had [running backs coach] Randy Jordan handle the morning meetings, and then I had [offensive coordinator] Scott [Turner] handle the afternoon coaching meetings. The reason I did that was I didn't want to just put everything all on Jack and take Jack away from what he's done with the defense. I mean, the defense has been tremendous this year,

and I wanted to make sure he was able to keep his focus. So, I didn't want him to be just kind of piled in on one thing. So, like I said, I had Randy help out with the morning meetings and I had Scott take care of the coaching afternoon meetings. I kind of split the duties instead of just having one guy have to do the whole thing."

On if he thinks the defense has to face adversity before they improve:

"I wish it wasn't that, but I almost wonder if that's where the challenge comes for those guys. But I really like, just kind of how it's all kind of coming together too. You know, they've been playing well as of late. Start a little rough. We give up a couple big plays, but the focus of being better on third down I think has helped us. You know, we worked on that all throughout training camp, mini-camp and OTAs. We worked on the redzone stuff, which we've been solid in as well. And so you see those things. The one thing we gotta continue to monitor and keep our eye on is not allowing the explosives, which seems to be a little bit of a nemesis for us. We gotta just continue to be aware. But I do like where they are in terms of, you can kind of feel as if they've grown together as a unit and they're really playing like it right now. And again, that was, like I said, part of my thought process was I didn't wanna take Jack completely away from what he's been doing and what he's been doing so well for us."

On if he feels better about trusting LB Jamin Davis with an increased role:

"Yes. If Jamin has taken on a bigger role, I don't feel bad about it. The nice thing I feel good about is we got a couple of veterans still back there as well. If we needed to, [LB] David Mayo and [LB] Jon Bostic are more than capable players for us."

On if it is harder to focus solely on football when there are stories about the franchise off the field in the news:

"Not really. I mean, the truth of the matter is it only becomes the story when it's brought up. Just trying to remember that the focus for me more so than anything else is we're playing the Colts. And my concern is the guys that'll be on the field more so than anything else. We'll continue with that focus. I like where our guys are, we haven't talked to anything about that. What we've really talked about has been our opponent and the players that'll be on the field."

On his thoughts on the Colts quarterback change:

"Well, you're gonna get a little different player. Obviously, [QB] Matt [Ryan] was more of a prolific style passer. He was tall in the pocket. Matt did a lot of tremendous things and he's had a very good career, really has. Whereas you look at Sam Ehlinger, young guy, got a terrific arm, very headsy, smart player. He's got a good feel for the game. When you watch his preseason stuff, you watch some of the stuff back from college, I went back and looked at the reports on him. This is a guy that has a good sense and feel for running the RPOs. He also has a really good feel as a runner himself. So those are things that we're all kind of looking at and trying to anticipate and figure out what's the best way to defend against that."

On what he thinks is the most important aspect of the teams running game:

"I think when you're running the ball well, it helps the offensive line first and foremost. The defensive line can't just tee off. They've gotta approach it where it's about read and react now as opposed to just getting vertical and getting after the quarterback. So, I think that's the first thing that's probably one of the more important things as far as being able to run the ball successfully. Secondly, it makes your play action more viable. I mean, now they have to pay attention. They have to anticipate, whether it is run or pass, and then they gotta go from there. And then it takes a lot of pressure off the quarterback. If you're gaining yards running it, then he doesn't have to sit there and try and read a lot of things. The fourth thing, and to the defensive side, it helps them. It gets them off the field. It lowers the amount of time that the opponent will be

on the field and gives them a little bit more of a break. So having success running the ball is important."

On RB J.D. McKissic's role on this team:

"Well, I think if what happens is if [RB] Brian Robinson [Jr.] continues on the path that he's on in terms of getting back to shape and getting back to form, and AG [RB Antonio Gibson] continues to play to the level he is, we won't hopefully be in as many passing situations where you need a J.D. McKissic, a guy like him to come in that can change the pace and tempo of the game. And we saw that at the end of the second quarter against Chicago. And then we saw it later on in Chicago when we got into passing situations. So, the role for J.D. will be dictated as to how successful we are, to your question, running the ball."

On how much he has seen Randy Jordan and Scott Turner grow as coaches in the last couple of years:

"I think that's really good. I really do. I think the growth and learning and growing and having to deal with the team situation is important for the development of younger coaches. I think Randy has handled it very well. You know, his flavor, his style is Randy. It's one I think that shows the experience of having coached in this league for as long as he has. With Scott, he's learning, growing, developing, but it gives him an opportunity to address the whole as opposed to just his part of the team."

On what he thinks is the style of Randy Jordan:

"[Laughs] Randy's got a little bit of that player flare to him still. And the longer you coach, the less of that you go back to. But he'll fall back into that player mode so you can see it. I had a couple people come to me and kinda explain to me what he did in the morning meeting, which was a lot of his style."

On if he has had a chance to observe how other quarterback changes around the league have panned out:

"Only if we play 'em. If we're playing 'em, I'm looking at it. This one I'm looking at, obviously because we got these guys this week. It kind of shows a little bit of what it means to work on getting a new guy adjusted in what you're trying to do."

On if he is surprised that a lot of the moves have not worked out:

"Well, everything takes time. I mean, let's not forget when Tom Brady went to Tampa Bay, where they were until they ran off what was eight off in a row or something at the end of the year. So there's this little growth period."

On if he anticipates CB William Jackson III getting back on the field soon:

"It's a little early to tell. But, for what we're doing right now, we're gonna focus on the guys that'll be on the field."