

November 12, 2022

Head Coach Ron Rivera

On what having WR Jahan Dotson back will do for the offense and how he's looked this week:

"He's looked good progressively each day. He's gotten better and better. Yesterday when he finished he reported no soreness and then this morning he reported no issue so, we feel pretty comfortable moving forward. We don't expect him to have a setback or anything. We really don't. We thought he had a good week. His preparation just seemed to be ramped up each day. Each day he'd come in and 'Hey, I don't feel anything. I feel really good, real comfortable.' Next morning he'd come in, 'Hey, I'm doing this. It's been really good,' so, that's why we're gonna move forward with it."

On the progress he has seen with DE Chase Young:

"He's made incremental progress. Yesterday was a little disappointing because we were going inside. We didn't want to put him out there. We just didn't, so he lost a day and we'll see how he progresses. The big thing is we're not gonna play him unless we feel absolutely that he's ready to roll. He's had a couple of good practices. It's just that there's some things he just right now isn't comfortable doing, which we get but the things that he does, he's doing pretty doggone well, so we're pretty excited about that. It's just a matter of now I think the conditioning aspect of it and the confidence in it and that only comes with I think reps and practice."

On what Young needs to do to get comfortable doing things he isn't comfortable with:

"Just keep working. I mean from, from my perspective, he's just gotta get the reps. He's just gotta get used to putting that leg out in front and just stepping into it. Every now and then you'll see it just kinda hesitated a little bit and you can see his frustration because he wants it to happen now, but it's gonna be a rep thing. The more practice he gets, the more reps he gets. That's why I said yesterday was a little disappointing having to go inside because we didn't want to put him on that turf and have it get really sore on him or something the next day."

On if the reps or using his knee more will give Young more confidence:

"I think more using it. The more he uses it, because there's a certain point that the trainers and the strength conditioning guys can get him to, after that, it's all about football movements. I mean, they can work all they want on the side, but now there's the football. I mean, you have a 300-pound guy pushing on you a little bit different than having a 225-pound trainer trying to simulate those things. So, he's just gotta get more and more confident of being pushed, striking somebody and driving through with that leg."

On if it is more difficult to bring Young back to practice now compared to training camp with lighter practices:

"Yes. Yes, it is and that's why we talked about making sure the condition is right before we do anything, so we're trying to be smart. This is long term. We're talking about a young man's career and we want to make sure we do it right."

On RB J.D. McKissic's injury:

"For the most part, he's going through what the doctors think he needs to and that's pretty much all I could say about it. They just have to be careful with it and they check him and have him go through the rehab program they have for him. No timeline."

On if there is specific thing they will look at when making a quarterback decision when QB Carson Wentz comes back:

"I'm not gonna get ahead of myself. We're gonna focus in on playing Philadelphia on Monday night and then Tuesday, I'll have to answer that question cause I know I'll have to do the pressure and you guys ask that question then. So, when Tuesday comes, I'll have some sort of an answer."

On G Chris Paul:

"He's done a really nice job. He really has and we'll see how things go the next couple of days but he really has. He's growing, developing. He's learning. He's understanding. He's a young man that I really do think as he continues to grow, he's gonna have a bright future here. He really is. He's smart. He understands the game. He's athletic, very athletic, big man. Just some little detailed things that he's gotta show up, but his time is gonna come."

On if Paul being a thinker outside of football helps him prepare and improve:

"Oh yeah, it's helped him. I mean, it's all about growth as a player now, understanding this game but he's somebody that is very intriguing and we most certainly do like a lot."

On how hard it is to get QB Sam Howell prepared for a game and develop as a backup:

"Well, I think first foremost, it's really all the work that the quarterbacks do together. First of all, Sam is very attentive. He's great in meetings. He really is and then when you get on the field, you watch him and you watch as he goes through the mental reps. One of the things that we do is there's a lot of plays obviously that you script and as you script plays and they become a third and fourth time you practice it. That third or fourth time is when we give Sam some reps. So Sam has been getting a series of reps these last few weeks as well, so he's engaged and we are working him trying to make sure that because a guy like Taylor [Heinicke] doesn't he did, he showed us when we first got 'em in 2020, he doesn't need a lot of reps to go out there and play and improvise the way he does. Scott [Turner] looked at and said, 'Okay, we get to this point where this is rep three, or this is rep four at the same play, so he maps it out that way and we try to make sure he's getting some snaps with the ones. He's getting a lot of snaps with the twos for the most part, but we try to make sure he's getting some snaps with the ones.'"

On where Howell is with his development:

"I think he's getting more and more comfortable. There's some little details to his technique and his footwork that I know Kenny [Zampese]'s really harping on. In college, you can get away with those things and he did and he did a really great job but there are some things that in this league you have to be really good at. Great examples a couple times in the preseason when he got sacked or got hit, it was understanding that you're in shotgun, we considered this a five-step drop. Well, it's not catch the ball, shuffle your feet throw it. It's you may have to take a step and a half to make it a five step drop and that helps aid in the timing, helps aid in the protection, because if you're only at three and a half, four yards, that guard or that tackles expecting you to be at five or six and you're not, that's tough on him. So those are little things that he has to understand what certain plays call for in terms of the depth of your drop and how important that is to your protection."

On what he looks for to show him that a young quarterback is ready to play:

"I always thought, especially with [former Carolina Panthers QB] Cam [Newton], it was always about his confidence. I can remember his first couple of preseason games, there really wasn't this confident, this

swagger as much as you could see. He was still thinking his way through it. And then in the fourth preseason game, we played Pittsburgh at home and it was a 12-play drive on the opening series. I was gonna play them the first quarter and he just, I mean, we marched right down there and he threw a touchdown pass to cap it off. And when he turned and jogged off the field, we thought, 'Wow, he's got it.' And then he goes on to have the record setting year that he did as a starting rookie quarterback, he broke the record. And then of course next year, [former Indianapolis Colts QB] Andrew Luck broke the record. But, he did that and you just thought, 'Wow, I think he's got it. I think he really does.' And it just rolled from there. With [former Carolina Panthers and Washington QB] Kyle [Allen], it was, again, the confidence that guy gets out there. But with him though, I think you guys know this about him, his tendency was he threw a lot of risky balls, but he was confident for the most part because of that arm. He could put it in there. And so you knew he had a good feel for it. With [QB] Taylor [Henicke], it's always been from the beginning, his confidence level. So a young guy like [QB] Sam [Howell], you see him come in and there were some really good things in the preseason, especially in the Baltimore game where you never saw him get frustrated. You saw him try to handle things out there, you saw him try to direct traffic, and he showed a feel for it. So, his growth and development I think is pretty much where it needs to be as a young quarterback that has time."

On if he saw any of those tendencies with Wentz in the first couple of games:

"Yeah, I thought so. I think the hard one was really going from Detroit to Philadelphia with the way he got sacked. And I think that got to him a little bit. So as you saw it, he started to get his feel again and started getting confident again, and then he breaks the finger. We are where we are with that right now, but I think the pause right now has been good for him. I think giving him an opportunity to take a look at things from an outside perspective -- you watch him in practice, you watch him warm up out on the sidelines with the strength and conditioning [staff] and the trainers, and then he comes and stands back there with the coaches and you hear him talking about what's going on. 'Was that a good read by Taylor? Taylor could have done this. Oh, I like that. That's what I would've done too.' He's thinking football."

On if Wentz is able to throw yet:

"Lightly from what I understand. Now, when he is with the trainers and stuff like that. He did throw today, he did throw."

On if the football conversations that Wentz is having with the coaches are at a different level than in training camp and early in the season:

"I think it is. No, I really do because again, one thing is he's back even further. So, he's really getting a chance to see everything as it unfolds, as opposed to being narrowed when you're actually behind center. You don't get that broad look and so it's kind of interesting to listen to him."

On if he learned anything about coaching Wentz after the Detroit and Philadelphia games or on if he just credits those struggles to Wentz taking a lot of hits:

"I think it's gonna happen to anybody. You get hit a few times. It does. Shoot, I've seen some of the really big time guys get hit first couple plays in the game and it's a different outlook. It's one of those things as you get back in there and you get back on the saddle and just keep working through it."

On if there is anything Young can show the team tomorrow to change whether he plays or not on Monday:

"Well, I think tomorrow's gonna be an important morning more so than it is anything else because again, he got a lot of work today, did a lot of stuff out there on the field. We'll take a look at the tape and see how he responded to a lot of that stuff. But like I said, he's been progressing. But not practicing yesterday I think is a little bit of -- you just wish he could have, but we get it. We didn't want to put him on the turf."

On if he has any comment on the Indianapolis Colts hiring Jeff Saturday as their interim head coach:

"Well, it is what it is. I just think the disappointment of it is, there's some veteran coaches that are on that staff, and there's some minority coaches too that are all clamoring and working to try and get opportunities. But again, I get it, it's his team and the owner decided that's what he wanted to do."

On if the fact that he became a head coach by working his way up from the quality control level affects his opinion on the hire at all:

"A little bit. I mean, it's in the middle of the season, it's something a little bit different. If this had been in January, it would've most certainly I think been even worse. But again, just because it happened now and it happened the way it did, yeah there's some disappointment in it. But again, as I said, it's his team and it's what he decided."