

November 30, 2022

## **Head Coach Ron Rivera**

### **On QB Carson Wentz:**

“Well, we're gonna continue to evaluate and go through some things. You know, we've got some personnel issues and everything that we've gotta kind of sort through so we really won't make any decisions until Friday on guys.”

### **On if QB Taylor Heinicke is making throws this year that are different from last year because he knows the offense:**

“I believe so. I mean, you look at some of the decisions, he's making some quicker decisions, he's getting the ball out of his hands. He is not taking the sacks and the hits that he took last year. He's playing a smarter, quicker game which has been to his benefit and to ours as well.”

### **On the secondary:**

“Well, I think they've done a really nice job with the development of our young guys. I think [Defensive Backs Coach] Chris [Harris] and [Assistant Defensive Backs Coach] Richard [Rodgers] and [Assistant Defensive Backs/Nickel Coach Brent] Coach Vieselmeyer and [Defensive Quality Control Coach] Cristian [Garcia] have all really just kind of worked with that group and you start seeing the growth and development of the young guys. Playing [CB] Christian Holmes was, was really a decision that, here's a young guy that's got some potential, got the kind of size you look for in a corner and he had a pretty decent day. So, we felt pretty good about that. And we've got some other guys that deserve opportunities and it's all about their growth and development.”

### **On the development of his young guys that were drafted:**

“Absolutely. I think that's a big part of it is that, as a lot of those guys practiced a lot last year. [Darrick Forrest] D-Foe started injured, I don't know if you remember, but last year he was on the injury report I think the first four or five weeks, and then he came out and really made an impact on special teams. And one thing that in talking with [Executive Vice President of Football/Player Personnel] Marty Hurney and [Senior Director of Player Personnel] Eric Stokes, they know that if you watch a guy on special teams, a young player, and you see some things that they do a lot of that translates to what they're gonna do when they get their opportunity. You know, last year Dyami Brown did some really good things on special teams at the end of the year and we started talking about his growth and development. Well, it was one of those things we saw because the special teams told us that this young man's got a chance. Well, D-Foe was the same way. You saw his aggressive nature, the way he hustled, the way he took charge of the special teams and stepped up. You see that in both Christian [Holmes] and Percy [Butler] as two young DB's that are out there and they're playing Gunner and they're tough blocks. When you see that with guys, that that's a pretty good thing. Pretty good deal.”

### **On if Atlanta and QB Marcus Mariota gave them a good game plan for this week:**

“I think so. I mean, when you watch some of the stuff that they do with Daniel Jones and knowing some of the things that he's done in his past against us, I think it really does help us. I will say one of the things that I

was real appreciative of last week is really the adjustments we made going into the second half. I thought Jack and the staff did a nice job adjusting to the way they were playing with Marcus. Especially in that last drive when we eventually did get the turnover. There were a couple times when they tried to run quarterback keepers and we were all over it. I think that's important because it will carry over to this week.”

**On Giants RB Saquon Barkley:**

“Well, I will say this, the back we faced in Atlanta is a pretty good example, so it really is. But, I don't disagree. Saquon is really a special football player. He really is. He is back 100 percent. I know last year he was getting back to form and you could see it this year he's back. We have to account for him as well. So we've just gotta make sure that if we're paying attention to the quarterback on one aspect, the other side of it has to pay attention to their responsibilities. And that's really what it comes down to is we do our responsibilities.”

**On what defenses need to do to stop the Giants run game:**

“They do their responsibilities. I'm not gonna get into game plan stuff.”

**On if he has noticed a development in Heinicke's game:**

“A little more maturity. Every now and then when he does throw a high-risk pass, that's exactly what it is. And with the high risk though, does come big rewards and he's done that a couple times and again, you wanna see him limit those things and control that and really just take what's given.”

**On if he has an opinion on the turf vs. grass debate and if DE Chase Young is available with the turf at MetLife Stadium :**

“Well that won't, yeah, if he's available that that's not gonna be a concern. But, the thing about the turf, and I think the thing people gotta understand is all the turfs are different. They really are there. There are some that as far as the grass are concerned, there are some sand based, some are are long roots, some are short rooted, and so they're all gonna react differently and you've just gotta understand that. But big part of it too is wearing the right shoes. There's a guy that tells the players that based on their size, based on their position and their weight, this is the type of shoe they should wear for that type of surface. And so you would hope guys kind of follow that. That's one thing that could help limit some of those things that happen. I do know MetLife is a little different type turf and, and it's a little softer, so the shoe reacts a little differently and so again, wearing the right equipment is important.”

**On if he makes any adjustments when playing on turf vs. grass:**

“Well, one thing we try to do is at least get inside once just so our guys get used to it and get a little, little bit of feel for being on turf as opposed to grass. The grass is a different type surface. It's not as fast as being on the turf, so you wanna at least create some opportunity so they get a feel for running on it because it does change the timing a little bit.”

**On if they have honed in on the concepts that are making the run game work:**

“I that's one of the things that we do look at is and listening to Scott [Turner] and the offensive coaches game plan is trying to determine what concepts best for their style of defense, what type of front are they playing and what type of coverage do they match with those fronts and what personnel groupings they're in. Because of the different personnel groupings, you're gonna know that if they're playing with five bigs that their run fits are gonna be a little bit differently. If they're playing with four, uh, four man front is a little different and then the coverages that they're playing, how many times are they gonna try and get that extra guy in the box? How many times are they gonna try and stop you with just six in the box or seven in the box depending on what personnel grouping you're out in? And that's gonna dictate what concepts you're gonna

want to use, whether it's a gap scheme, whether it's a zone, you know, something like that. Pin and pull, whatever you want it to be, it has to match up to what they're doing.”

**On what they attribute using more 12 and 13 personnel in recent weeks to:**

“It's a little bit to do with the identity thing. Knowing that we wanna run the ball and be physical with it but we have had some success with our 11 personnel as well.”

**On if his younger self would be surprised he's using Safeties to play in the box with the absence of LB Cole Holcomb:**

“I think it's a little bit of the evolution of football. I mean, I would be surprised as heck back in the day, but you know, with the way things are evolving and changing, you have to adapt. The thing that's real interesting is we were one of the first teams to do it in Carolina and bringing that up again. But we did it with a linebacker, Shaq Thompson, who we moved to the nickel position because coming out of [The University of] Washington, he had played running back at one time and he had played safety. So we knew we had a really good skill set and so we were able to match that. But finding a guy like him at the linebacker position's heart, so then you gotta find a safety that can come down when you got guys like, Kam [Curl] that understand. He's a big body, he gets it, he can come down and play it, and then you take a guy like Bobby and go, well, Bobby's a little bit smaller, but Bobby's a very physical player and he understands run fits as well and he's a dynamic player that knows how to fit that makes a difference. And so you can do that with those kinds of guys and be able to hold up. And quite honestly, it doesn't hurt having the defensive line playing the way they are right now too.”

**On an area of the game that S Kam Curl excels:**

“No, I just think it just kind of covers it all. I mean, he's a very bright young man and he gets it. He understands concepts, he sees things that it may take another guy, a second or two to register and then, you know, dissect it and then react to it. I mean, he's a guy that's got a good feel for the game. He really does.”

**On if his opinion on the importance of the interior rush:**

“For me personally, I've always had that feel that the interior guys are very important. When I got the opportunity to play back in the day and I had to move to middle when [Former Bears Linebacker] Mike Singletary got hurt playing behind [Former Bear Defensive Linemen] Dan Hampton and William Perry and Steve McMichael, that was a treat. I mean, you know, those three guys, they took up a lot of space and all I really had to do was run and not miss tackles. So I've always felt that tackles are important, kind of a philosophy I had. And in my last place with the two guys that we had [Former Carolina Panthers DT] Kawann Short and Star [Lotulelei] two guys that allowed, [Panthers LB's] Thomas Davis and Luke Kuechly to run. That's what you want is your linebackers can get on their horse and go make plays for you. And then when it came to pass rush, they get that middle push so it's hard for the quarterback to step up. And when you get to that situation now, that's where your ends really come into play.”

**On WR Jahan Dotson's volume of catches dropping since return from injury:**

“I think a lot of that has to do with what we're doing. It was mentioned that we're playing a little bit more 12 and 13 personnel, and that's by design. So it's going to cut some of those opportunities for Jahan. He's still important and very integral into what we're doing and he's developing and he's growing and we all know he's got the potential to be a very, very good player for us. And it's just a matter of time before you see him start getting some more opportunities.”

**On WR Jahan Dotson still being a red zone threat:**

“Very much so. We know how dynamic he is, we've just got to make sure we got opportunities to get the ball to him, we take advantage of those.”

**On different rookie players stepping up and contributing to big games:**

“Well, I think big part has to do with their learning. Kudos to our scouting department, you know, the last few years the guys that we've brought in, smart bright football players, guys that get it and understand it. And guys that will get on the field a lot sooner and so far we've been able to do that so kudos to them. I think them going out on the road and spending time and taking the opportunity to visit with their coaches, their counselors, whoever they can talk with to try and get as much information about how quickly they learn. That helps us and again, being able to do that. Secondly, I think our coaches' willingness to play young guys, put young guys out on the field. I mean, if you can get young guys early in their career and get 'em on the field that that helps impact your salary cap, you know, now you can play young guys and it kind of changes the way you build your roster. And the more young guys, more of your own guys that you draft that you can keep and put on the field, I think that helps as well. So we've got to be really good to be really diligent with making sure we get guys that do understand, learn quickly, don't have to get a lot of reps, have some position flex that we can move them around and put 'em in different positions. That helps a lot, It really does.”