

December 2, 2022

## **Head Coach Ron Rivera**

### **On how close DE Chase Young is to playing:**

"He had a good day. We're gonna evaluate on Sunday."

### **On if it is harder to find a good three-technique compared to a good edge rusher:**

"Not necessarily, especially what's coming out now. When you watch a lot of these college games, it's harder to find these big bodies to play your one technique because there's so much throwing the ball that's going on around the league. In college, a lot of these guys, they've got that mentality that they're going vertical, that they're getting up field, that they're trying to make stuff happen. Rushing ends, they're a lot of 'em and they're plentiful, but they're smaller. And that's kind of the thing you look at now. They play that three-man line, two-man hanging over and one may rush and the other one may drop or one may rush the other side and the other one may drop or they may bring 'em both. So it's really just what you're looking for. If you're a 3-4 team, those two outside guys are great outside linebackers. Those two edge guys, the guys that play basically a three or a five or a seven, those guys are more of your defensive end types. And then what's happening is those noses, a lot of those guys are just athletic guys and they're guys that you gotta take a long look at and say, 'Wow, this guy might be a good three-technique.' So, they're out there. It's really what you're looking for. Most teams, as soon as you go to 11 personnel or 10 personnel and in some cases 12, they're going right to their four-man rushes. Which we see, like with Philadelphia is a great example. They're a team that they see pass and that's what they want. They want to pin their ears back and go."

### **On if it is rare that two defensive tackles on the same team are playing at as high of a level as DT Jonathan Allen and DT Daron Payne:**

"Is it rare? It's not as common. I wouldn't say rare. I refer back to my other time when I had [former Carolina DT] Star [Lotulelei] and KK [former Carolina DT Kawann Short]. I mean that is that one-two punch when I first got here, we talked about and then we did the same thing when we talked about the running game."

### **On the fact that they paid Short but not Lotulelei and on if that is something he would do differently this time around:**

"Oh yeah. The big problem with it more than anything else is it's gonna impact your linebackers and it's gonna impact all the way across. It really is because what happened was Star was that guy that would absorb the double teams, and hold the point so your linebackers could run and so your three-technique was typically singled up and KK made a lot of plays. But when Star wanted, Star would take it over. I mean, that's how good he was. We're fortunate that we have a guy that for the most part in [DT] Jonathan [Allen] that is really good at both. And you have a guy in [DT] Daron [Payne] who's really good at both. So we don't have to always try and flip one to make one to one and the other one to three, which is what we did with Star. We said, 'Hey, we'll make him the one and KK will be the one that flips.' And it turned out that they're both just as equally as valuable. It's the lesson we learned and if I had all to do over again, I would've asked that if we could get em both signed."

### **On seeing Allen, Payne, DT John Ridgeway and DT Phidarian Mathis as foundational pieces to build**

**their defensive line:**

"But that's what you want. You see right now with the things that we do because we do play some of the five-man line and we're basically playing with two threes and a one or a zero. So you have to have a couple of big stout guys and you gotta have a couple of athletic guys to play those threes for you."

**On if having stout players inside helps the edge rushers:**

"Right, and that's the beauty of having a guy with that size and that much athleticism. Then you have a guy like [DE] Casey [Toohill] who's got enough athleticism, but also enough awareness that he's gonna be a good dropper. So he can drop into coverages for us at times. [DE] James Smith-Williams can drop into coverages for us sometimes. I mean the truth of matter is we drop [DE Montez] Sweat, but you really don't want to drop him. I mean, you'd rather him going forward as opposed to going backwards because he's such a good rusher."

**On if the team had evaluated Ridgeway coming out of the draft for the nose tackle position:**

"Yes. We had a very good grade on him. When Dallas tried to sneak him through, we saw it on the wire and we put the claim in and we were one of two teams that tried to claim him."

**On if he was surprised that Ridgeway became available:**

"Yes. Those kinds of guys, they're the kind of guys that you look for, especially guys that, like you said, he was a draft pick. And so you put a draft pick on the waivers, and everybody goes, 'Whoa.' Then as soon as you see the name out there, you start calling people that are gonna give you an honest answer. 'Hey, what kind of guy is he?' We had a young man that did an internship for us, Mark Cala, he's at Arkansas. So we called Mark right away and asked Mark. He said, 'Coach, he's the kind of guy you guys want.' So that's all I needed to know. Mark did a great job for us and I've known Mark a few years. So, you ask people what kind of guy he is and he tells you it, trust me, I believed him. So, we put the claim in and we were fortunate to get him."

**On Allen, Payne and Sweat having a bigger workload this season:**

"Well, I mean if you talking about percentage wise, it makes sense just because we're not playing as many snaps as we probably have in the last few years too. So that's probably why their numbers are up. Do we want 'em to play that much? Well if there's a way that we know we we're gonna be good without 'em at times, then yeah, we'd love to take a few snaps off those guys."

**On the interior offensive line and how T Sam Cosmi fits into it:**

"We think it's pretty good. Trai [Turner]'s out and we like the depth we have, but we also know that Cornelius [Lucas] has been playing really well and that's why we've been rotating the two guys because we want Sam to play, but we also know Cornelius has played well. When this happened and I talk with Coach [John] Matsko and talk with Scott [Turner] and Travelle [Wharton] they all felt that Sam, this would be a real interesting thing for us to look at going forward. We got some pretty good depth. We like the young guys. We like Saadiq [Charles] a lot. We like Chris Paul a lot, but we got some guys that are playing really well right now. So, the young guys will get their chances. This is what we want to try and see what we have."

**On what Cosmi can bring to the tackle position:**

"He's got a little more athleticism, but he's got good strength and power and with the athleticism and understanding the leveraging and all that. He sinks his hips. He keeps his weight down. He can get into it and he can push, he's got some athleticism to him. He's not just a big spout guy, but he's a guy with some athleticism."

**On if the Giants defensive interior was a factor in moving Cosmi to tackle:**

"It's a little bit of it, but this is also something that we have talked about and every time I see Ben [Standig] write about it, it would just influence the impact more."

**On what it exactly means to do a better job of finishing:**

"Well, I mean, one of the things you don't want is you don't wanna lose sight of what's happening in the game. And finishing game up is really not letting some of the things happened late in the games or teams come back or makes a little bit closer than you really want to. It's just playing hard all the way through. Jon Allen said it really well after the Texans game. We had such a thing going and we had such a good performance in the first half, we could have easily finished it off and maybe they don't score a touchdown, so that's kind of some of the things that you look at."

**On if Payne is doing a better job of finishing his rushes:**

"He has. I think some of the things that, that [Jeff] Zgonina has done with those guys and Ryan Kerrigan with those other guys too as well. You see these guys emphasizing those types of things. You see that part of it just growing for them. I mean, Ryan has done such a good job. Jack [Del Rio] and them gave him the protections and so he does the protection stuff for our game planning days. And so, when you see it and now you listen to his experience, well that translates when he is talking to the players. And a lot of times and, and not that it makes him a better coach, but when you're talking about voice of experience, people tend to listen a little bit. So, I think that's what's helped those guys. I know, Kerrigan has had a great opportunity to work with those ends and I think it's impacting Montez [Sweat], I think it really has. I think it is really helped him and you see his growth but you see it on the same with everybody else too."

**On where he has seen the growth with Sweat:**

"You see a little more of the discipline, a little more of the understanding. When he's running certain line games or stunts, there's a little more patience. When you watch how he works so well with each one of the tackles too and there's a timing element that has to be done while they're doing those extra things. They're working on those things. They're talking about 'em and sometimes they get talking so much that you almost, you gotta tell 'em to hush it down a little bit because offense is over here and you guys are making a lot of noise from, but they do and they're enthusiastic about it. So, it's been really good."

**On going up against Giants Defensive Coordinator Wink Martindale:**

"Well, it really will be all about the communications upfront. Making sure we get the proper ID. Making sure everybody understands what their counter is to what happens. If there's a pressure where we gotta get the ball, we gonna know that you're the guy the ball's coming to so you gotta be ready for stuff like that. I mean, that's what we'll find out. This will be a very good test. It's probably one of the more aggressive teams we'll face all year. We will face 'em twice, so this will be a good learning experience for the first time."

**On how CB Benjamin St-Juste was to playing:**

"He's getting there. He's getting there. I mean this is a mid to high ankle sprain and it's one of those things that it just lingers."