

January 5, 2023

## **Offensive Coordinator Scott Turner**

### **On his assessment of the offense now and looking forward:**

"We've had some moments where it's been good. Obviously, some moments where it's been bad. I mean, that's what you're talking about being up and down and inconsistent. If you look at some individual performances that have been pretty good. I mean, I think the emergence of the three receivers, obviously Terry [McLaurin] has been consistent throughout the whole time. But Jahan [Dotson] came on and then Curtis [Samuel], what he's done this year was good to see. [RB] Brian Robinson, It was good to see him, Antonio [Gibson], a little bit of different role. Both those guys were productive. I think the quarterback play, you know, obviously we played with two different ones and there were some good and some bad as we went on, got to find some consistency there. And then we played some multiple people in the offensive line, and I think the run game stayed pretty good and there was times where we struggled with some protection issues where we got to improve and that's going to help those guys on the perimeter make some more plays."

### **On what he learned to help him improve moving forward:**

"I think you got to always just do a good job of evaluating your personnel and not ask guys to do some things that maybe they're not capable of doing. Make sure that if you got some guys that need a little bit of help that you protect them and not put 'em out there where you can get some possible negative plays. At the same time you can't go and be too cautious where you don't give your guys chances to make plays. And that's what you're doing is you got to balance it, you know, because we've had some turnovers in games that have been very costly. And then we've also had times where we're not making enough explosive plays to affect the game that we need to. So, you know, there's that balance that you always got to be aware and make sure that you're doing whatever you can do to help your guys make plays, but then also not doing something where you're putting yourself in jeopardy of screwing up the game."

### **On how he feels he's been with balance in the offense:**

"Yeah, for the most part I feel like I've done a pretty decent job of it. There's sometimes where you've gone too far one way or the other for sure."

### **On QB Sam Howell's progression this year:**

"I felt really good about Sam. You know, he's had multiple roles as far as, you know, he started out this year as an inactive third, was the backup for a while where he was preparing to play. And he was one play away from playing, for however many games that was when [QB] Carson [Wentz] was inactive and I felt good. Like if he would've had to play, I would've felt comfortable with him playing. I'm excited to see him go out there and play. Obviously not a great situation as far as just what happened last week and everything like that. But, he's excited. He's worked really hard for this opportunity, and it's going to be good for him to get out there and play."

### **On the expectation of QB Sam Howell's performance Sunday in terms of what he could be next year:**

"I don't know. I think it's too early to say that. I think you just evaluate him. We've already evaluated him throughout the course of this entire season, and we feel really good about that. And then this is just another part of the evaluation, him out there playing against a good defense."

**On his personal expectations going forward:**

"I don't know. I think we talked about it, I feel good about some of the young guys that we have on this team. I feel like there's been some moments where we've really looked like we're going to turn a corner. We didn't do the things that we wanted to do this year. I mean, no one's going to sit here and say that, I'm accountable for that as much as anybody. I think this group can really grow. You look at the youth around here, obviously with [WR] Terry [McLaurin]. And then, we came out of that San Francisco game a couple weeks ago, our leading receiver and our leading rusher were both rookies, you know. So you look at the guys that we have, I think that there's a lot of room to grow and I look forward to working with these guys and continue to get better and keep improving and get this team where we want it to be."

**On if he worries about his job security:**

"I mean, that's just part of this league, you know, it could happen, it could happen to anybody. It's happened to guys when they don't expect it, it's happened, you know, whatever. So I just do my job. I'm focused on the Cowboys. Whatever happens after this week, you go with it after that. But to me, I'm prepared to coach this game and then get this team ready to go be successful down the road."

**On QB Sam Howell getting a fair evaluation without the team being at full strength:**

"I think you take everything into account, you know what I mean? So, like I said, I think it's part of the evaluation that's already taken place. We see a lot, just the way he conducts himself, the way he practices. All of that is going to be taken into account. Now this is obviously live bullets against a good team who is playing for something. So, we know with everything else we take that into account and that's all part of the evaluation."

**On the young players he is excited to see:**

"I think we're still having conversations about that. I think just as far as who's gonna play and how much everyone's gonna play so that's something that we'll see more as the week goes on."

**On the run game this year and how the run game this year can be applied to next year:**

"I think when you're calling plays, it's not always just about the offense, it is about the entire team and it's doing what's best for us as a team. The one thing that we did well was we kept the ball. We just kept our defense off the field. Now when you're doing that, there's not a lot, like you're saying, there's not a lot of explosive plays. And part of the question I was asked earlier as far as that balance of creating explosive plays, but then also not putting yourself in situations to get sacks or sack fumbles or quarterback pressures and getting the quarterback beat up so, there was a little bit of necessity there. But yeah, I think we have to find ways to, like I said, we got talented guys on the perimeter and we gotta find ways to let them do what they do."

**On how much it would help not having injuries at center next year:**

"Yeah, I mean, you want to find starters at every position that play every game. Center is a big deal. They make all the line calls. Chase [Roullier], it's unfortunate to what's happened with him the last couple years. And we've had guys step in, I mean, Tyler Larsen, I saw some stat the other day that his record is a starter and he's done a good job. And again, he's gotten hurt two years in a row. So yeah, that's a big part of it for sure."

**On if he agrees with the assessment of it takes a certain level of mental discipline in quarterbacks when taking mental reps and if Howell has demonstrated that:**

"Yeah, absolutely. When you're the third guy, the starter getting ready to play and then the backup as well."

They know they're one snap away. Now, the good thing for Sam is he spent a lot of this season as the backup, so it wasn't just the third guy. But yeah, you gotta make sure that you're on it and that goes for really for any backup player, but definitely quarterback because you put so much on their plate. He's a very smart guy. He studies hard, takes a lot of pride in what he does. He wants to be great so I mean, he's been outstanding throughout the whole year and he's definitely prepared."

**On if there was a moment where Howell stopped being a rookie in practice:**

"I don't know. I think you would still consider him a rookie just because he hasn't played, you know what I mean, in actual games. I think some of our other guys maybe like Jahan [Dotson] or guys that have played throughout the whole year, you kinda see that transformation in the second half of the year. But as far as Sam, you still put him in that light. Now he, he's gone through the day to day, but not playing yet."

**On if there will be a different approach in the headset with Howell starting:**

"You just try to clearly communicate. When I call the play, just stay calm, make sure that he hears me, repeat it if I need to but give him a tip here and there if I see it, there's limited time obviously. He's done such a good job preparing. He knows what the expectations are in every play. You try not to flood them with too much information before snap so they can relax and play free."

**On his sense of where QB Taylor Heinicke is with the quarterback situation:**

"Taylor's good. I mean, I think like any competitor, I'm sure he was disappointed last week and he wanted to play. But he's a great guy and a great teammate and he was there for Carson [Wentz] and he is there for Sam this week and the rest of the guys on the team. Taylor's doing fine."

**On the younger tight ends:**

"Yeah, I think hopefully we'll get some of those guys out there especially like a guy like Armani [Rogers] who's been out. He's healthy, so hopefully we'll get a chance to get him out there and play. But yeah, we've got a good evaluation. Those guys have played a pretty good amount of snaps this season."