

September 26, 2025

## **Head Coach Dan Quinn**

### **Opening Statement:**

“Alright, what's up everybody? Let's get rolling, I thought first thing I'd do, I'd give you some guys that we'll rule out today. That'll be [TE] John Bates, [WR] Terry McLaurin, [WR] Noah Brown and [QB] Jayden Daniels. And I know you'll want to discuss with Jayden. He's working incredibly hard, round the clock to get back. Ultimately, doctors haven't cleared him just yet. He's absolutely doing everything he possibly can. So, [QB] Marcus [Mariota] is going to start again, which leads me into captains. And so, on the offense it will be Marcus and defensively, [S] Quan Martin, and on special teams [P] Tress way. These three have a tremendous impact on the entire building and legit heavy hitters on our team in lots of ways. So, we'd follow these three anywhere. So, glad to open it up and get rolling with you guys.”

### **On what is holding Daniels out of this game:**

“Medical on that side. So, this is just doctors on that space to go. Jayden's working as hard as he can to go. They just haven't cleared him just yet.”

### **On the level of concern with McLaurin's injury:**

“Yeah, it's a quad injury, just again, working as hard as he can to come back from it and he's putting all the work in. So, I would say he's week-to-week as we're hitting it and see what next week brings and where he is at. And most people know that when it turns, then it goes quicker. So, we'll just see where he gets into by next week.”

### **On what he's learned about Mariota in his time with him:**

“Yeah, I think I've learned about leading from him, when to lean in, when to watch, when to give support and he's very thoughtful. And so, I think there's a part of leading that goes into that, of when to lean in and speak up, when to watch, let somebody else assume that space. I think that's one of the rare traits that a person can have of leaning in but also knowing when to push someone else into that space. But I think the work ethic, the perseverance is what I've learned about him. He's dealt with injuries, setbacks, and just his attitude. He's so consistent in what he does, that's what I've learned about him. The approach, it doesn't waiver and that's something that I really respect about him.”

### **On how Mariota has dealt with setbacks throughout his career leading up to his start against Las Vegas:**

“Yeah, I think you have to go through those spaces and then lean into know, okay, the discussions we had was be you man, that that's more than enough. And you don't have to over try or put an extra spot on it. And so, I was very proud of him for that. Being able to share and peer to peer to others, that's a really powerful thing. And so, sharing perspective, sharing insights with one another, I think that's as big as it gets. And I think everybody saw the clip last year when I think it might've even been against Atlanta, we're only player to player sometimes it can be so impactful. As much as a coach on, especially on game day, gives you the truth. We're hard on these guys in practice, but on game day where their biggest

supporters. To make it as hard as we can out in the practice field but sometimes in between that white line, just hearing the familiar voice of a teammate, 'Hey man, this is what you have to go do right now.' It carries extra and I think that wasn't meant for everybody to hear and it was typical of what he would say."

**On the pass rush through the first three weeks:**

"Yeah, we're working hard at that to find different matchups. I think the players have done a better job using stunts, how to manipulate that. [OLB] Von [Miller] being here, [DE] Jake Martin being here, I think DA [DE Dorance Armstrong] inside and outside. All of that's been a part of it, we still feel like we've got many levels to go with that, but we like that the communication, the continuity of those guys working at it together. I feel like the arrow's going up. Different quarterbacks, different styles, where are they, where do they scramble, where's the protection? So, I feel like we're getting smarter as we're going and that's a big piece to keep continuing to practice."

**On the special teams unit last week:**

"Yeah, as difficult as it was at the Green Bay game on offense, defense. I thought we missed some of our identity. I didn't feel like we missed it on special teams. I thought we had some good returns, we had some opportunities to do it. So, it is one of the stronger parts of us. We've gotten to the spot, and we've learned that each of the phases, we're all connected to one another. And it's just playing ball, man. I'm a receiver, I play teams, man, I'm just a ball player. And so, when that happens and you're not just an island to yourself and I just do this or I just do that and everybody's down for whatever it takes to go, I think that's when the good things can take place. [Special Teams Coordinator Larry] Izzo is right there in the front of it. This is the type of guy you'd want to play for. He's got energy but I love also seeing the development of [LB] Jordan Magee and [S] Tyler Owens. They've established themselves, their presence, their speed, their physicality, and there'll be others that will grow from it. [LB Nick] Bellore's in the middle of that and they help bring the next ones along. And I think if we can continue into that space of continuing to develop people, the field position battles are going to be a big one. And our special teams will be right in the middle of that. And including Tress [Way] too, in terms of can we punt and keep them backed up into those spots. We had one with [CB] Antonio Hamilton caught a punt that was downed. So, all of those things they add up. And so, some of the margins in the game you hear me talk about are turnover margin, tackling margin, but winning field position, that's a big piece of it. And the return game, both sides, that'll be a factor again this week. I really feel like fourth downs, offense, defense and on special teams, the punt, punt return, you're going to be right in the front and center of this game too."

**On RB Jacory Croskey-Merritt and WR Jaylin Lane winning Rookie of the Week and on the 2025 draft class:**

"Well, I would say it's nice to share it around a little bit. Last year one guy just took it the whole time. They didn't share it around. So, it shows that the versatility, the class and their ready. I think it shows their willingness to put it all out there to say, I'm ready to contribute to be a part of this. Whether that's through Bill [Croskey-Merritt], that's through Jaylin, there'll be others, but it's a great way to express themselves and demonstrate it. That they can be counted on, they can be leaned in on, although they're young in their careers they're ready. And when somebody gets to demonstrate that and get recognized for it, obviously we're all pumped for them."

**On Running Backs Coach/Run Game Coordinator Anthony Lynn:**

"Yeah, Anthony's an incredible story for those that don't know enough about him. Resilient, he's tough, he's demanding, but he's also somebody that played it, has lived it. He's got leadership experience from

play caller to head coach. So, at the position, step by step by step, he just doesn't miss any of those. How do we drill it? How do we get to the next spot? Oftentimes with running backs, it's past protection, where are they? So, Anthony, very detailed into that space. So, we're really fortunate that he's here, not just as the running back coach, but just on our staff what he stands for.”

**On Croskey-Merritt potentially not playing and on what that would mean for the running back room:**

“Yep, he did a good job today. Yep, good practice, yeah.”

**On having depth across the team:**

“Yeah, yeah, for sure. I don't talk to the team about it a lot. And the reason being is I want, when the moments come, I wanted to prepare for that bend as a certainty, not a possibility. Who knows what position, it could have been running back or tight end or receiver, whatever that looks like that's the job. That's why you're here and you get those chances and when they come you want to make sure you don't over try it. ‘I wanted this so badly, I need to perform at a certain space.’ Play calling wise, I think [Offensive Coordinator] Kliff [Kingsbury] and [Defensive Coordinator] Joe [Whitt Jr.], they recognize how to feature the players or the things they can do. It's not just rinse and repeat, same plays, same ways. It's how do you feature the players and the things that they do best. And I thought Kliff did a really good job of that last week and that's our role is to make sure it's not everybody's in the same spot. So, how do you feature the guys? And that's why the practice reps really count because you want to make sure that this player has been in that scenario, that situation and how do we match up? And that's on all sides, it's [S] Will Harris, it's others that say, okay, how do you go into these spaces and may not be in the exact same way. It was with [RB Austin] Ekeler, not in the exact same way. And so, you just keep digging man.”

**On how a running back can be effective from the first snap of the game:**

“Yeah, it's a good question and I think it also helps in the system too. And here's why it's not one runner all the time getting his feel getting into that space to go. So, knowing that, you may be in, you may be out depending on what's called onto that space. And so, I'm comfortable with us using a rotation of guys as we're starting. Sometimes it may work out in the game, man, this guy's hot, let's push it, man, let's give him some more chances. Other times stay into the process of rolling through. They also have some factors on [special] teams. So, I think that can help as well knowing as they're working through that, that's a factor. But we're comfortable right now sharing the load. It's not a number count or this one split it up evenly, but we're comfortable with that because we really have faith and trust in what they're doing. Who knows, it may sort itself out the more that we play, but right now I'm comfortable with that.”

**On his confidence in players stepping up to fill roles:**

“Yeah, I don't spend a lot of time talking about it. I think it leans back into our standard of what we want and how we want to play. If you're in the game, you're the starter at the moment. And so, that's just how we play. It doesn't mean we're going to be playing exactly the same way, but these are the things we're counting on you to do. And so, it is part of our game that when the adversity comes, I think we're equipped for that. We expect it. And so, maybe early on in my coaching career, you want it to go just this way. I think as you go it starts this way and now you adjust and in the game, you adjust and you're ready. And I think those contingency plans help when at practice. You might have saw somebody in today that doesn't normally get a rep and, ‘Okay, good catch, good play,’ in a game rep. And so, he's demonstrating if called I'm ready, even though he may not be up this game. And so, I think you're, as a ball player, trying to put some cash into the bank to demonstrate that to the coaches to one another, to say, if called upon I'm ready to get down. And it doesn't mean you will be every week, but it does show that there was a play

yesterday, a fantastic catch and I showed that in the team meeting today where a defensive player got beat. Well, to me that's absolutely leveling up and so we just try to coach the whole crew and knowing that it's probably a certainty you're going to be ready at some point.”

**On the opportunity this week for Lane, WR Chris Moore and WR Luke McCaffrey:**

“Right and I think they're all part of it, we have a real system that we believe in and they've got experience in it. They know what to do, how to do it, and so they're ready for that. For Chris and Luke and like you said Jaylin and others, man, they have put in work so it's now a matter of, man, go run this system. You don't have to do things differently, just be you fully turned up.”

**On how much a player’s opinion factors into injury decision:**

“Yeah, really, we kind of just lean into the medical side on that. So, for him, I'm not surprised that's the response. Also, from the work that he's putting in. So, I'm not surprised that he would say, man, I am feeling good and feeling ready, but he has. This feels like it's around the clock, he's been ready to put all the work in that he needs to.”

**On if it’s normal for injured players to watch the game from a box:**

“Yeah, he and the teammates that didn't play, that's pretty standard for us. And so, just some time away, they might work it really hard Saturday in rehab and knowing they're going back at it again first thing Monday morning, those four hours on the feet, we just want them to be the support, they're in the locker room with the guys. And then as opposed to just having four hours on their feet and that's just how we do it.”

**On if expects WR Deebo Samuel Sr. to play his normal role on special teams:**

“We do.”