

February 24, 2026

Head Coach Dan Quinn

Opening Statement:

“Alright, what's up everybody? I thought coming into here today, the thing that I like is a new season comes at you fast and last year I stood up here at this time and talked about how important it is to turn the page and get ready for what's ahead and the challenges that go with that. Honestly, it's a similar message today. The biggest difference is the record and they were way different, but the message should still be similar each and every year as you're going through it and the processes you go through to get there. So, whether you kick and throw a hell of a year or not nearly enough wins, the only carryovers I really want are the lessons that you want to take, you know, from that season. And don't repeat them again and there were plenty for us, but as it begins, there's a cool part to this process. We had free agency meetings last week, now here and doing a lot of the interviews in the evenings. There's a lot of cool things that start during this week and envisioning, you know, what parts of your team could look different, you know, by adding some of the players. So, with all that said, glad to get rocking with you guys and we'll go through it all.”

On the importance of mental health:

“Yeah, it's a big deal and I think like first off it's like heartbreaking to hear you know, about [Former Minnesota Vikings WR] Rondale [Moore] but I'm hopeful that we get to a point that we're not talking about mental health just when a tragedy hits, but that we're talking about it on a regular basis, then we know we're making real strides in that. One of the things from the NFL standpoint, the advancements we've made is in player engagement and knowing that each team, you know, has a full team there ready to help and support and put those resources into effect. But that would be, that would be my, you know, my hope that we're talking about it way more than just, you know, when tragedy, you know, takes place.”

On New York Giants Head Coach John Harbaugh:

“Yeah, I think one of the things I really respect from their team, like an identity and those are things that, you know, can stand the test of time and last. I thought like just when you're playing his teams through the years is going to be a tough game and the attitude, the style of the team players may change, you know, and they did, you know, through the years. But I thought the identity of John stayed consistent. Even though scheme may change offensively how they would do things. But I think that's like the mark of a really good coach.”

On Pittsburgh Steelers Head Coach Mike McCarthy:

“Yeah, isn't that awesome to have Mike back in Pittsburgh of all places? It's such a cool thing. Like he has such pride in being from Pittsburgh and so any of us that know Mike, we've all heard, you know, Pittsburgh stories. But I think it's fitting for him to go there because when I think of Mike, I think of discipline, I think of toughness, I think of things that, like we were talking about Harbaugh that stand the test of time in coaching and I got to see that firsthand, you know, with Mike and

what that looks like on a regular basis of really high standards, not letting it slip. And he's going to do great things there. It's a fantastic organization. I thought that's just a great fit for Mike and for Pittsburgh.”

On the biggest improvements needed for the roster and coaching staff heading into next season:

“Well we did a lot of digging to start off and so the first piece of that we've had some staff changes that we've went through and although those are difficult, there's also a lot of excitement that comes with that, how we'll feature the players, what things would be different. And then the first thing you want to do from a player standpoint, obviously we evaluate our own team on the roster, how we feature them, who are free agents, and then the whole next process begins free agency around the league and then through the draft. So, you just don't want to miss one step of those. The first step for that was on the coaching side, then it goes into, excuse me, then it goes into your own team and then free agency and then finally onto the draft. So, it takes the full process to get there and go through that. And then as you get into the spring and training camp, putting your team together and creating standards like we talked about earlier, that's why I love coaching honestly, is putting that the puzzle pieces in the right spots to go make that happen. We've got a lot of heavy hitters on this roster, and I can't wait to get back to work with them.”

On finalizing the coaching staff:

“We're close. We're, I would say probably a day or two away from like all the way finalizing, but, yeah, for the most part it's pretty intact and we've had good meetings with the coaches, they've begun that process. We had a week last week where a lot of it was devoted to free agency, but it's been nice to see [Offensive Coordinator] David [Blough] and [Defensive Coordinator] Dorante [Jones] and the staffs, you know, kind of build their connection as they're talking through systems together. There's some good energy that comes from that because you're actually starting at the beginning to say, well this is why we're going to call this this and this is how we want to play this. And so, I like that feeling of what that is and I like, you know, what I'm seeing so far from them.”

On the importance of finding good qualities in an edge rusher:

“Yeah, it matters a lot because that ability to affect the qb, it's one of the biggest tenets in winning the game. You know, for obviously like, you know, scoring and that, but the ability to hit and pressure the quarterback, it also forces takeaways. Those are like things, so you want to see somebody that has demonstrated speed and initial quickness to beat somebody on the field. And I think that can be one thing as we get into this week and you hear timings and that, ‘hey man, let's go back to that demonstrated speed on the field and play making ability’. And so, that at the top is what I see, but beating somebody to the punch, having an explosive, you know, get off to make someone feel like overwhelmed. That's what all the great rushers have.”

On the use of technology and AI when it comes to coaching analytics and information gathering:

“Yes and it's keeps gaining momentum and strength and it's one of the things I love about coaches because what we once did, you know, 10 years ago is different than how we do things today where analytics was just called statistics and we use those in certain ways and now that's, you know, grown as much and how do we simulate models for game management? How can we simulate in-game practice, you know, models to show coaching down in distances, different personnels points of the game. So yeah, I think it's going to continue to grow, and it is one of the fun parts of the job.”

On balancing the responsibilities of the draft process:

“Yeah, and I say it starts with [General Manager] Adam [Peters], you know, wanting to be collaborative with the coaches and the coaches also being able to deliver the information that you know, Adam and the scouts need as well. And so, there's nothing, the college scouts who are on the road at the schools, at the games live, they start the entire process and drive so much of it. And so, the coaches get to come in and add a vision of what the player could become in our system. So, there's definitely a blend that I think takes place from the better the scouts and the coaches connect and know one another the easier it is for them to see how they would fit into the offense and the defense. And so that's why through this spring, there's some important processes to go through, with both coordinators, coaching staff, scouting staff, to keep encouraging that dialogue, you know, amongst each other.”

On who taught him the techniques to look for in a player:

“From my first time being in the NFL, it was at the San Francisco 49 ERs and that was my first experience into that when you were a college coach, you did the recruiting and you looked at it. And so, I would say a number of the people there taught me what excellent could look like in pro football. A guy by the name of [Former San Francisco 49ers Assistant Coach] Bill McPherson who had been a coach and was the pro director at that time talking about DPRs at that time, I didn't know what that was and how would you feature a player or you know, a shorty yardage pullback and how different players help the roles and how they go to win. And so, since that time, I've been much more interested in what a player can do and how would we feature them than the traits of things that they don't have. And I think that's where it all comes together, as opposed to what a player can't do is what can they at the very highest level, what makes them so unique and excellent and try to put them in those spots as often as you can.”

On applying takeaways from the last year:

“Yes, it definitely has already started. I would say, well like, you know how I'm structuring my own time I think is a big piece of that too. But, as we're going through the spring, as we're getting into training camp, those are other things that you'll see some differences that, you know, that would feel, you know, differently for me and for the players. So, there's a lot that I'm going into and the systems and the processes that we're going through, I've actually started that before it was the end of season evaluations, then the you have, you know, the free agency process. So, I've tried to implement as many of those as I could to make sure like I'm hitting all of those at the highest level that I can.”

On if the amount of players transferring affects the way he does player evaluations:

“I don't think it's changed the way you evaluate, but I do think there's a different perspective of them coming in with their first paycheck. You know, that was a question years ago, ‘what are you going to get or when you have this signing bonus’. And so, the fact that some of that's already taking place, there's actually a little less of that for the player when they come, you know, to your organization right away. So, in some ways there's some advantages that I feel. It's interesting to hear the different spots along the ways why did guys transfer? Was it opportunity or for more playing time or you know, a financially, you know, better scenario for themselves? And hearing those stories are helpful but the evaluation piece has stayed consistent. It does help that you're now can even see him in a different system. Okay, ‘what was he playing here? What was that the year prior, how would that look like?’. And so having different, you know, connection points to that, I think that does help.”

On [I couldn't hear this question]:

“No, that's their choice. But I think the part that does like I always come back to is like, ‘what's that demonstrated tape look like?’. And the workouts help but sometimes even for here, obviously I haven't seen all the players yet. So, the interview portion and getting to know them without any bias, sometimes that can help. And then I'll write something down that they said, ‘okay, is that real [laugh]? Is that accurate?’ and I'll follow up on that. But I do like when I see them do that for the movements in there and between here and pro days we'll see that. But I think at the end it still comes down to like their football performances.”

On the psychological impact injuries have on players:

“Yeah, it's a big topic and earlier we were talking about, you know, the mental health, not just when you know, a tragedy or in this case that you're referring to is when an injury takes place but making sure how's the ballplayer doing also and more importantly like how's the man doing? Knowing that you do feel isolated and separate from the team in those spaces. And so, I can't speak for everyone else but for my own spot I want to check on them first to see how they're dealing with the injury, dealing with the surgery, you know, because on the swing when it's getting closer that's easier because then there's something close to back to returning to play when it's the initial parts of it. And knowing I'm staring at six weeks, eight weeks the entire season, those are harder conversations and you just want to make sure they're checking in. And so, I love, even during this time, although it's lonelier, but having the players who can do their rehabs in the building, I like it selfishly because I get to see them and check in and see how they're doing and everybody's got their own process to do that, but it's very important.”

On his assessment of the team's tight ends:

“Yeah, well I'd say featuring [TE] Ben [Sinnott] in the ways you know, that he can do his things. It's in the backfield, it's, you know, through like to compare him to [TE] Zach [Ertz], they're way different skill, you know, so like I know they're both playing tight end, but you know, they're featured differently in that way. And so, what I do know is him on the move and whether it's the run game, pass game, running away from people, maybe not finding the zone and stopping. Those are differences and I'm looking forward to seeing that this year.”

On the growth he's seen in G Chris Paul:

“Yeah, super proud of Chris. I thought the development, you know, that he made and playing alongside of [T] Laremy [Tunsil], I thought a couple things that jumped out to me, I thought like the combination blocks with the two of them, these are strong people that could move people off the line of scrimmage. And then I thought because of Chris's athleticism, the things that showed up the most to me is him and past protection. And so having the ability to, to mirror somebody to stay in front, those were the things that I saw week after week from Chris. It's not easy that spot back up, back up, but to see that time for him to develop, you know, I thought that was a big deal and something I'm proud of him for, for sure.”

On [I couldn't hear the question]:

“Yes, but we're going through the whole process. Like everybody counts in that, you know, not the same but everybody's part of it. But, yeah, definitely somebody that like obviously we're keeping close tabs on is Adam and his team are going through that.”

On how Jones' new defensive system could work with DT Daron Payne:

“I think the versatility will help in some of that. What's so much fun about coaching? Daron, he's big

enough to be a three-four end. You guys saw some of that here early on. He's got the strength that can play inside at nose tackle and quickness to move. So, to see [DT Javon] JK [Kinlaw] and he and [DT Jer'Zhan] Johnny [Newton] and how do we feature them on the field together some. Having the three of those together that excites me. Honestly. These are guys that really love to battle and compete and so because they're versatile, it gives ante even more options of you know, how to deploy and how to match up guys. So, it's a big deal for us.”

On [I couldn't hear this question]:

“I think it's, it drives, like competition and connection. That's what drives me, from the game, you know, from when I started playing the connection, being on a team. I've been on over 70 of them in my life of teams and I've always felt that's when I'm at my best. And then I love the competition, whether it was football or other sports to go, but that's the thing that has always driven me, why I wanted to get from playing even into coaching. It's the connection and the competition.”