

# Philadelphia Eagles Media Conference

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

## Nick Sirianni

Weekday Press Conference



**Q. How have the Rams changed since you guys have played them, if at all?**

NICK SIRIANNI: They are playing really good football. I think that was pretty obvious when we went in to play them last time, too. They had won four out of five before we played them. And then pretty much have been undefeated since then.

So they are playing really good football. Both offensively and defensively, special teams wise, and you expect that because they got good players, and again, I can't say enough about this coaching staff. I really think that they have a really good coaching staff led by Sean McVay.

**Q. How about defensively, anything tangibly that you've seen that shows the improvement since the last time you guys faced off?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Any time you play a team as long ago as we played them, there's going to be things that have changed, and there definitely is. They do a couple different things on defense, making it hard on you, making it challenging on you, to predict what's coming.

But yeah, Chris Shula has done a really good job coaching the defense. Again, they have really good players and especially on that defensive line, it's a good front that's playing really good football right now. To say that, you know, exactly what they are changing, I'm not going to get into that but they obviously have some changes just like we have some changes since the last time we played them.

**Q. What was your message to the team this week?**

NICK SIRIANNI: You know, talked about, again, the consistency of what's important and our tough detail together is always going to be important. Then, also, we talked a little bit about embracing adversity in playoffs, in playoff football, and just in the NFL in general. You know, there's going to be plays that when you're in a game, that they are going to make.

You know, even with your best efforts, they still could make the play; so how do you play the next play mentality. And again, that's something that we focused on a lot all year is next play mentality, and so that's really, we're saying this week, embrace the adversity, and that's really another way of saying, hey, play the next play.

**Q. You got to work with Chris and with the Chargers. It's been a long time. Do you know anything? Do you have a foundational sort of understanding of what he is as a coach?**

NICK SIRIANNI: From my experience with him at the Chargers, no. You know, we've both been a lot of different places since then. Obviously enjoyed the relationship I had with him while we coached together. Still consider him a friend. I obviously think he's a very good coach and he's doing a great job this year. But to say anything like -- no, not really. Not really as far as that goes. Because again, his philosophy has continued to develop. My philosophy is continuing to develop.

You know, it will be a different handshake because I know him well but that's about it.

**Q. Vic Fangio said that Jeremiah Trotter Jr. could or will get some playing time with Nakobe out. How important was it that Jeremiah got that final regular season game and all that action, and what did he show you?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, I think that was important for all our guys to be able to get that. We had had the opportunity just like the Rams did to give ourselves a bye week, however you want to say that, to give our guys a rest at the end of the regular season, and with that comes opportunity for other people that are back-ups, and it was really important for him. He played a really good game. It was all over the stat sheet of what he did and then all over the field, and so I feel really good about the linebacker room.

Obviously bummed about Nakobe but feel really good about the guys that are going to be able to step in and play in his absence and just can't say enough about Trot and Oren and Bobby King and Williams, getting those guys ready.



**Q. Overview of the offense this year, Jalen's role in it, 100 less passes two years ago versus now, you called the game manager notion "bullshit" with him. How much has he embraced this role on the offense and how much of it was from input that he had throughout the year?**

NICK SIRIANNI: You know, again, to look at a whole season like that and say we had 100 less passes, that is the truth, right. But, games go differently. The way games were last year, are different than the games were this year, right. We have been in some situations where we haven't passed the ball in the fourth quarter of a lot of different games.

So I think that's kind of hard to see that number. It's an astonishing number when you say it like that but that's over the course of 17 games and also, again, knowing that some of these guys didn't play in fourth quarters, and we didn't throw some in the fourth quarter.

But again, to answer your question, I think what we do is we do whatever we need to do to win each and every game. So if that means you're in a two-minute to end the game and you've got to throw it like we did against New Orleans to get the ball down in a position to score, you do that.

If you're in a position where you're in a four-minute at the end of the game and you're running out the clock to do whatever you need to do to win the game in that particular one and you're running it well, then you do those things.

So I think that's just the nature of how that went. Again, I think any time that you have won whatever, 13, 14, 14, 15, whatever it is, your quarterback is going to be playing well, and Jalen has been playing very efficient. He's taking care of the football. He's playing very efficient. He's playing really good football.

And you know, I know the stats don't look the same way because of different circumstances but I think Jalen is playing really good football at this stage of the year and excited about his opportunity of what he gets to do on Sunday.

**Q. Protecting the football, you mentioned with Jalen, how did he go from having 25 turnovers over a span of 20 games or so to only just maybe I think four over the last 14?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, it's pretty impressive, isn't it? Pretty impressive by him of being able to lead us to wins while also taking care of the football. That's not -- and be

explosive and still take care of the football. That's not easy to do because we talk about that a lot: How do you win the double positive, how do you win the explosive play battle and how do you win the turnover battle? Everybody has hard jobs.

That's a very hard job for a request quarterback to be able to create explosive plays and do the things that Jalen has done while also taking care of the football while running and throwing it. Just an unbelievable effort, and concentration on his part of going to the right place with the football, while also when he is a runner protecting the football like Saquon does or like A.J. does.

And so I can't give him enough credit for that because that's very difficult. And it's really, when you win the turnover battle in this league, it's one of the best stat indicators of what is going to happen in the game. It's really just a great job by him putting our team in a position to win every week because of how he's taking care of the football.

**Q. At the Combine last year, one thing Howie said is that you guys looked after last year and said you need to play young players more. Have you been more deliberate in that, or as injured replacements?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, obviously we've played a lot of young guys. We're young on defense now. At this point of the year where you're 17, 18 games in, you're like, okay, the experience is there. They have played a full year of football and now we are into playoff football.

But I think at the end of the day, we always owe it to ourselves to play the guys that best give us a chance to win, and I think it's just the nature of it that those guys have given us the chance to win, and they have gotten better as the season has went on.

So you know, I wouldn't say any extra. It's worked out that way, and I'm happy that it has.

**Q. Saquon is closing in on 400 touches. What have you seen from him as far as the way he takes care of himself and his fitness level, and how he's managed to navigate the season and play at a high level?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, he does a lot of things just to get himself ready each Sunday, both mentally and physically. I think he's an ultimate pro that knows how important that it is that he's in great shape, weighing what he needs to weigh, working hard in the weight room to do the preventative thing, the pre-hab, the post, is the rehab sufficient. So he does a really good job of taking care of his body getting himself where he can touch the ball that

much and that's a group effort.

I can't say enough about all the guys that work with him as well, the strength staff, the training room staff, the doctors that all work with him to make sure he's on that path, and so there's some things, too, with Saquon that you'll have load management throughout the week to get him ready. I think you guys have asked me that a bunch, and our job on each, every Sunday is to win the game but however we need to win the game. All that matters, what does Jalen say, the main thing is the main thing, how are we going to win this game. So you do everything you can to win the game.

So really, the management of Saquon and how he feels good is what is happening Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and quite frankly, that's the same thing that we believe is like the things that you do Monday through Saturday, whether it's training, whether it's taking care of your body, whether it's the work that you put in the film room or the work that you put on the field are direct indicators of if you're going to win or lose the game and how you're going to perform.

So this is no different. Saquon just has a relentless work ethic in everything that he does, and which makes him pretty special.

**Q. When you look at the first game when Saquon had the 255 yards against the Rams, how much of a luxury is it knowing that they have to pretty much account for that somehow this week?**

NICK SIRIANNI: You know, we know that everyone is going to account for that. And that's not new to us. You know, again, they will see stuff on tape that they will want to do differently and that they will want to repeat and we'll see stuff on tape that we'll want to do differently and we'll want to repeat.

I know that that will be a big film that they watch and it will obviously be a big film that we watch. It's not uncommon, right. We know that we're going to get people's best effort to stop Saquon and that's just been what we've dealt with all year.

**Q. You've had quite a few guys in load management right now that you're dealing with. What's the challenge of practicing like that and do you not worry that veteran guys, if they are on the practice field or not?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Obviously you want everyone so practice and get ready to go for the game but it is, and at this point of the year, and everybody is always in different positions,

right. You fight the hard line of being hard to play on Sunday physically and doing the right things throughout the week to make sure you're ready to play, right, and so if that makes sense.

So you've just got to fight that constantly, and really, I say this point here, it's really something that we do throughout the entire year, what's the right amount to get ready for the game and perfect our craft and refine our skills while also being ready to go physically for the grind of a four-quarter, five-quarter game that you're about to play. That's something that we deal with each week and we feel like we've done a lot.

Again, I get the information from everybody. I have to make the decisions. But I've just got a lot of great people to help me out and to help make those decisions. The players, they help me out with that, how their bodies are feeling, and obviously the trainers, doctors and strength staff.

**Q. You've relied on younger players on defense this year. What's it taken behind the scenes to develop them?**

NICK SIRIANNI: Obviously great effort and energy by that player themselves to get themselves ready to go. A lot of work from the coaches to the extra meetings with the coaches to make sure that you put them in positions that they are going to be in in the game, and sometimes you can't put them in every position they are going to be in the game out at practice. That's what walk-through is for. That's what meetings are for and that's what the extra meetings are for. A lot of work by the coaches and the players to get themselves in that.

Obviously a phenomenal job by Howie and his staff to get the guys in here that are talented like that we have, but yeah, again, all these things, that's what -- I feel like I said that a bunch today. I took this group of people to do that and this group of people to do that. That's what's awesome about an organization and that's what's awesome about football. It's every player working together, its every coach working together, and department working together, and we've got a special organization.

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