

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Seattle, Washington, USA

Coach Mike Macdonald

Weekday Press Conference



MIKE MACDONALD: All right, good to see everybody. Feels good to be back to work on an in-season Wednesday. I know it's our last one. Focus is on really closing the year out the right way and starting this year the right way, too.

So it's not what we wanted to be at stake, but it is what it is. We're going to make the most of it.

Just had a great walk-through. We'll just go play the game we love today and go get ready to go play again this weekend.

Q. What's the opportunity that you see available on Sunday then?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, you're always trying to win your next game. This is the next game. That's number one.

There is broader implications: getting to ten wins; trying to be 4-2 in our division; trying to play our brand of football the way we know how; building upon our foundation for years to come.

There is a lot at stake for us this weekend. It's not the stakes that we wanted, but those are always in play.

Q. What leadership challenge is this week in particular?

MIKE MACDONALD: I haven't thought of it in that lens. You're just trying to get our guys to play our best football. Like you're thinking about what are the stakes and your goals have changed in the last week, so trying to make that clear, trying to stay positive with it, and doing the best we can to go become the team we want.

I mean, it's not an easy situation for anybody, but I think our guys have been awesome. Just really, really impressed with our resolve and attitude over the last few days and the communication we've had. Our guys are

awesome. They've been great.

Q. They announced Garoppolo is going to start at quarterback. How do you prepare for the same offense or how do you prepare for...

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I mean, I'm pretty sure Mike is going to be calling it. You just, I don't know the right answer. Just you're going to prep off the tape like off our first -- same thing, we're playing a game second time, so you're kind of using all the things: latest games, our game the first time, our understanding of their system or the extent of what we understand about it.

And then, yeah, watch Jimmy play through their lens and then we'll watch -- I think Mike called the San Fran game last year, too. We'll watch that one as well.

Q. When you've got guys that are closing in on, whether it's career numbers or kind of milestones, what can reaching those do for a guy either in the final game or as they build towards the future?

MIKE MACDONALD: I mean, I guess it's one of those things where you're probably going to look -- there is financial things involved with it, which you want your guys to hit those numbers. If it's within your power, you're going to try to make that come to life; create as many opportunities for those guys as possible all within the lens of what's best for the team and trying to win.

Might have a couple ongoing jokes with a couple of the guys on some of those things. They're going to be great. They're approaching it the right way, but, yeah, you're working together with that. That's definitely something you want to help the guys with.

Q. Jaxon is closing in on Tyler Lockett's reception record. Is it kind of fitting on what he's learned from Tyler and the way he's helped him they're both kind of in this together this year?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I think all our receivers, just really cool room filled with a bunch of complementary skillsets. Jaxon is doing a lot of things that Lock has done throughout his career. Lock has a style that he's kind of done everything. He's attacked the deep field; worked the intermediate windows; won versus man; catch and run



stuff.

I mean, really how he got his hay and career start, even early in the return game. So he can really mentor anybody. If Tyler Lockett was in my room I would be pretty psyched about that.

Q. You guys put Ken Walker on IR last week. How do you assess his season?

MIKE MACDONALD: I thought Ken played really good football for us. Wasn't as -- he's battling some injury things throughout the year that are probably frustrating for him. We always want him to be out there as much as possible. Wish he would've ran for 2000 yards. You know, it just doesn't happen all the time. We're excited about Ken. We love him. Heck of a back. Heck of a guy. Got a great future.

Q. Mike, it's way too early for reflection, but is there some sense -- I think you talked a little bit about this -- this is the last game of the season; you talked about the opportunity. Is that part of the messaging?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, the message, I mean, part of the message this morning was that this is the last game that this unit is going to be together. Let's make the most of it. Let's go out with a bang, do our thing, and serve the guy next to us and have fun playing good football.

Go win a game.

Q. Will and you Ryan still call plays like usual?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah.

Q. We've asked you about Leo a lot in recent weeks because of his production obviously. As a defensive coach, I know they're rare to find, but how valuable are those interior guys that can create the havoc he does?

MIKE MACDONALD: It was funny, Jared Allen, more of an edge guy, but we were talking about that the other day with Jordan Howard's Hall of Fame candidacy, but those guys -- you don't realize how good they are until you don't have them is the best way to put it.

Such a rare skillset. Only so many of these people that are with that type of ability throughout the league, throughout the world. Like I've said, multiple happen to be on our football team. I know Leo is having a great year, but Jarran, Murph; Hank has done a great job for us; Roy has done a great job for us.

We got a really deep room with that can rush the passes

and play the run, so it's not like you got to personnel it all the time.

Then the position flexibility, being able to play guys on the edge and move them around so teams have to find where our guys are. That's fun for us to do.

Q. When you got a guy that's as unique as Leo, how does his mentorship show up? Nobody can do exactly what he does.

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, I think it transcends just the defensive line room. He's a leader, one the leaders on our football team. I think he's really grown in that role throughout the year. He's really embraced it, taken on that as a challenge as well, as well as stepping his game to another level.

I just think when you get to know him, I mean, he's a guy that loves his teammates and works incredibly hard and has a great attitude every day. He's an easy guy to follow.

Q. Is Sam Howell going to get some time?

MIKE MACDONALD: That's not the plan, no.

Q. What is Olu and Sataoa Laumea shown you the last part of the season?

MIKE MACDONALD: I think we found some consistency at the offensive line spot in terms of just execution and our operation. So I think Olu has done a good job on that front. Sataoa has grown tremendously from when we first got him to his approach.

Again, these things don't happen overnight. Not like we just decided he was good enough to step in for AB. But he earned that opportunity. I think he's had some adversity that he's gone through but he's fought through it and come out the other side.

We're excited about Taa'a.

Q. What Ken has gone through, like we were mentioning, what have you felt about guys like Charbonnet, McIntosh that have stepped up and filled in for him? How would you assess their year?

MIKE MACDONALD: It's tough to like put -- like let's leave the assessments and the whole year into next week when everything is kind of over with. But those guys have done a good job. They've been ready. Executed the ball well. Run hard. Protected the ball. Done a good job.

Q. You gave Jake Peetz a shoutout last week when

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you were talking about some of the scheduling stuff.

MIKE MACDONALD: Uh-huh.

Q. What's his role been like and what has he meant to your staff this year?

MIKE MACDONALD: He adds a lot of experience. I've known Jake for a long time. Just he's been around the block. He's seen a lot of things. People that offer their opinions and that's well thought out, detailed, and built around the principles we want to do, that's a lot of the stuff Jake does, both as a program and with our offense.

Definitely respect his opinion, and may the best idea win. He's been doing that since I have known him. We appreciate Jake.

Q. Coby Bryant's ability to -- seems like he really gets involved on a lot of the big plays and comes through a lot. Did you see that from the start with him when you took over the job here?

MIKE MACDONALD: With Coby?

Q. Yeah, with Coby.

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, guy is a Jim Thorpe Award winner. Heck of a player. I think it was just a matter of finding the right role for him. Sometimes with those guys you try to maybe ask them to do too many things because he can do all these things, when maybe the best thing is to kind of pick one and chose. You know, takes time to find the right thing.

To his credit he's really embraced the challenge. When Rayshawn went down, he was ready. So when preparation meets opportunities, that's when great things happen.

You got to credit him for being ready to roll and then just his natural ball skills and playmaking ability. That's Coby. So we're excited about the year he's had and expect him to take the next level as we move forward.

Q. The Rams have won a lot of lower scoring close games lately. What jumps out about their defense when you watch them?

MIKE MACDONALD: They've won kind of every way. I mean, they won the game against us early on; won the one against Buffalo. Lately it's been lower scoring games, but their defense is playing at a high level.

They've done a great job kind of stacking -- feels like just

stacking execution, stacking the way they want to play, finding identity, playing tough, really good situationally. Been affecting the quarterback. They do a good job.

Q. Those benchmarks you mentioned -- tenth win, fourth in the division -- why are those important to you?

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, the next win is the No. 1 thing. I mean, I don't know if I have a great answer. You just want to win. You want to have a better record than not as good of a record and then you want to move forward.

So you definitely want to end the year with a win. That's for dang sure. That's probably really the biggest thing.

Q. When is the last time you were in this situation, Mike? You weren't in Baltimore. I can't remember the season you were.

MIKE MACDONALD: Where the game didn't have playoff implications?

Q. Yeah.

MIKE MACDONALD: 2016.

Q. And what lessons do you take from John Harbaugh in that week?

MIKE MACDONALD: I wouldn't say anything specifically, but the mentality is the same. Like we got a standard here of what we're trying to build. You can't let all of outside forces affect how we play and our mentality. It's just not how we're going to operate.

That's soft frankly, so that's not what we're going to be.

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