

# Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Seattle, Washington, USA

## Coach Mike macdonald

### Weekday Press Conference



MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, great to see everybody. We had a great camp. Before questions, just want to give a shoutouts. Our equipment staff, absolute rock stars. We had about 70 something guys out here and they got jerseys ready, helmets, all the equipment.

Pretty massive undertaking on their part, and pulled it off seamlessly. So had a good looking crew out there, looking like Seahawks, pro football players, which was pretty cool.

Then just I'll say the personnel department, coaches, all the work that goes into finding the right guys to bring out here for this camp, draft picks, undrafted free agents, tryout guys, we had a heck of a crew out there.

Some high powered stuff going on coaching-wise. Just really excited about the guys that will be joining our team and the alignment we have and all the work that goes into it. Because it's a lot of work just down the line, I mean, position group by position group.

We're really excited about the guys that were here, and just want to thank those guys for the work they've done. It's not easy to get on the same page about some of those things. We feel strongly about all these players.

You know, that's what kind of -- that's the secret sauce about being able to scrimmage things out and have alignment when it comes to who is going to join our football team. Just really appreciate all the work that went into it, so...

But it was a great camp. Really excited about the draft picks, undrafted guys. We got a lot of work to do, but this is a really important first step in these guys' understanding how we operate here, how we practice, the initial schemes they'll be learning, and in that matter I think it was really successful.

Excited to get them back next week.

**Q. You had a chance to watch Jalen at the Senior**

**Bowl and he's told us how he's been working with his mechanics, quarterback coach. First two days here, have you seen any improvement, progression in what he looks like in that regard compared to Mobile?**

MIKE MACDONALD: One thing that you don't have a feel for Jalen watching tape or even watching him in practice, is just the spirit he has from play to play. He's got great energy, great competitive energy. He's trying to get it right. Great command of the huddle. Really takes pride in the operation.

All the fundamental things we're going to be building on from the ground up, he's just got a great attitude about it. Coaches are doing a great job coaching him every play. Goes for all our guys, but him especially.

So if you have that attitude, especially at the quarterback position, everybody else tends to fall in line. In that regard it was really fun to be around.

**Q. What did you see up front working with these guys the first couple times? You have three draft picks. So seeing them work...**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, great group overall. Really excited about our draft picks. Hard to tell, like give it a fair evaluation right now. You can see the skillset, the movement, things we seen on tape, see the attitude.

You know, we will work the finish and all that stuff when it becomes time, but really good first step with those guys. But it's fun to see it come to life.

**Q. Mike, what do you like philosophically about having a true fullback and having that part of your offense?**

MIKE MACDONALD: That's a great question. Good softball. I just think we want to be a physical unit, and there is not a lot of true full backs in the league right now. Hopefully they're making a comeback, but we got a couple on our roster right now that I'm really excited about.

You know, it allows you to get into two-back sets and break the formation, try to dictate some terms to the defense, regulate them certain ways. Some of the schemes that you're able to do with two backs are definitely different than a one-back operation. It diversifies you and also let's you

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play a level of physicality that we're hunting up.

**Q. Talk to the defense a couple times, well done. What did you see from them?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I think right now we're looking for like the intent, the communication coming out of the huddle, putting together all three levels. These guys are coming from all different areas, different experience levels, hearing different language, so to be able to put it together here in day two and play with great technique and great eyes and communication, we're not exactly splitting atoms with the schematics we're asking them to do right now, but showed progress and was just exciting to see it come together there towards the end.

**Q. How do you evaluate a position like nose tackle in two days of non-pad practices?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, there are some in the 11-on-11 stuff. It's tough with the tempos that we're asking the guys to operate at, but a lot of it is going to come from the individual work, seeing them move, how they do the drills, taking it to the field. Like how they -- hand placement, how they're getting out of their stance, playing the blocks. Physicality, it's a little tough right now, but that's the stuff we're looking at.

**Q. ... (indiscernible) this year compared to last year?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, you know, we tossed around having some different ideas about how to operate camp, different ways to go about rookie camp. Slow it down, make it more of an individual thing if you're trying to avoid injuries, all sorts of different ways to go about it. We had a lot of faith in the coaches and how we're trying to operate.

At the end of the day we felt like try and get better at football by doing football was the way to go. So I thought our working camp last year was -- we did a great job as well. I thought we got what we needed out of it, so we built off that.

**Q. Has it slowed down for you from last year? I would imagine everything was moving a thousand miles an hour.**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, you can fill-in the blank, everything slows down.

When you're used to looking at things through a certain lens and now you're looking at it through a different lens, the picture speeds up a little bit.

So now you're staying through that new lens and I think

also through our staff, we have alignment in what we're looking for and guys, the expectations, about what's important to us as a team and what we're trying to get accomplished.

So we're not perfect by any means. There are notes we're taking and we are going to go debrief here and watch the tape and learn from and move on so we're on our A-game when the vets show up on Monday.

Constant reevaluation process and trying to get better.

**Q. Can you clarify there is a conversation after the draft about Jalen and comparing him to Taysom Hill and you said he's just a quarterback. Does that mean that would preclude you guys from using him in special packages for specific scenarios?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, love to clarify it. Look, I think what I was trying to say at the time was we respect the heck out of Taysom Hill. We've gone against him a ton of times and he's a gigantic pain in the butt and a great player in his own regard.

These are independent players with their own skillset and own abilities, and we drafted Jalen to play exclusively at quarterback. What makes Taysom such a great weapon, you have to account for him as a tight end and fullback body when he's not playing quarterback, where we're not going to be using Jalen in that manner.

So when he's in there he's going to be playing quarterback for us. So I think the way we want to operate with Jalen, is if and when he earns opportunities to be on the field, we'll do the things he does really well.

Same as when Sam is taking snaps for us. We're building it around his skillset and the things he does. If you're not doing that as an organization and football team, I think you're doing it the wrong way.

It's going to start with the quarterback, and then kind of everything falls in place from there.

**Q. ... (indiscernible) seems like a pretty good athlete. Kind of seen him out here and kind of getting to see it in person.**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, he did a great job. Great to have him in person. Got a great attitude. Great spirit about him. Practices hard. Does a great job taking what -- seems like we're -- does a great job taking what we're trying to teach him fundamentally and then taking that to his position.



So off it a great start.

**Q. Jalen said that you mentioned that you had interest in doing VR, virtual reality training. How do you see that helping a young quarterback, especially when maybe the reps are going to be more...**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, sure. We are kind of in the exploratory mode right now on that and how that's going to come to life.

So we're in the beginning stages of that project, but that's the intent right now, is to kind of go down that road and see how it can help all our quarterbacks and even other positions, too. Running back protections, punt protection, kind of there is no, you know, end in sight with the possibilities, so that's exciting.

For Jalen and the quarterbacks specifically, you're only going to get so many full-speed reps out there. How do you change tempos? How do you do things like that where you can be creative where you can get these really great cheap reps and stack those on top of each other so when he does get his opportunities in practice, he can make the most of them.

Yeah, I mean, seems like it's all positive all the way around.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, you see the movement skills. You see all the things you saw on tape. Different language for him but he's got great intent. I think he wants to be great, which is a fun characteristic to work with.

Great start. Great start. Be the first to tell you, like all of our guys, you see it and you're like, oh, this is awesome. Now we got to go. We got to detail it up. We got to get our angles right. I mean, there is a lot of fundamentals that we'll be working on when he comes back.

It's going to be fun to work with him.

**Q. When do you expect to see Tory Horton taking some football reps and what's the ramp-up process for him?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, timetable right now, I mean, I wouldn't say it's anything major. When he comes back, you know, he should be close to full go. We'll see how that kind of comes about. But I think we're just be precautious right now.

**Q. What kind of role do you expect for him? Where in**

**the receiver room?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, I'm excited about his punt return ability as well. Possibly gunner. And then in the receiver room, the guy's got legitimate speed, so be able to take the top off.

But I think in this system you got to be able to run all the routes, too, so I think he has that ability on some the intermediate stuff.

Be interesting to see who kind of comes out of the pack on the catch-and-run, perimeter screen game, and he's right in the mix on that competition as well.

**Q. What do you want to see Plumlee and Jamie Sheriff out here this weekend?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, because of the rules we had an opportunity to get them out and just felt like these were going to be great reps for them to take advantage of. You know, Jamie, we're looking at moving his position to off the ball backer and Sam for some more position flexibility, so something he hasn't really had a lot of reps doing.

Felt like it was a great opportunity for him to see those more live and in color before we got to OTAs.

And, Mason -- Plumlee, excuse me, just same. Just more reps at receiver. Just kind of be a part of it and felt like that as of great opportunity for him.

**Q. Sounds like you're bringing Hank into that. Is that... (indiscernible.)**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I mean, this guy is a heck of a player. Excited to get him back. I wouldn't say it's a major void because we have guys that can play in the A gap, but, yeah, I think whether or not you watch tape last year, he played some pretty dang good football for us.

Excited to get him back.

**Q. In offensive staff, how beneficial is it to have guys like Klint, Dennison, and John Fenton, guys you really know and have worked with?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, it's really important, especially just in this system, I've been on teams before that have run a version of this system, specifically Klint's dad. Some of the same guys, like Rico was on that staff. The connection and the detail and just like the shared understanding about what's expected but the timing and the angles and all this type of stuff, you know, was able to get off the ground.

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So you can feel it out there. You can feel it in the rooms. Guys have an understanding of what expected on any given play and all the concepts. I'm the one playing catchup right now professionally speaking.

**Q. You talked about special projects that you and the coaches are taking on in offseason.**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yep.

**Q. Are those now coming to fruition and you go into this time with the players and talk through that stuff?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I think -- well, part of it is self-scout. What you feel like did you well. Giving the guys feedback now when they're back in.

But you don't want to take away if, hey, we're going to a new chapter. We got to rebuild it. Some of it is in the systems we're building and how we incorporate rules, things of that nature. Really an understanding where the league is going is and how you tailor, build stuff, and how you're teaching it.

And then when the schedule comes out, we'll look towards how we want to get ready for sure the season.

**Q. Any of the undrafted guys stand out to you?**

MIKE MACDONALD: A lot of the guys did. I mean, I'll tell you what: It's great group overall. I mean, we can go down line item by line item. I think we did a great job this year identifying skillsets we wanted. Without going person by person, we're really excited about those guys.

**Q. What do you like about Jaxon?**

MIKE MACDONALD: Just going to leave that under wraps right now as we go through the offseason.

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