

# Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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## Cooper Kupp

Weekday Press Conference



**Q. A lot of big games, everybody talks about trying to not think about the bigness the game. Just keep to normal. How hard or easy is that to do?**

COOPER KUPP: I think it's hard to do if that's not how you're taking the approach throughout the year. But it's something that's talked about when we talk about week in and week out here, about our process and how we're going to handle our day to day and winning the day. What's important right now, and handle that.

We're at the great football Thursday. I know it's not that, but it's what we just be focused on what this moment is and prepare yourself. I think because we've taken that approach every single week since back in April, makes it easy to just say this is just another game. We got an opportunity to go play against a really good football team and execute ourself.

**Q. Right before kickoff you still get excited?**

COOPER KUPP: Oh, always. I get the same butterflies I got back first kids game. It's the same thing.

**Q. You were a Seahawks fan back when there was a Legion of Boom rivalry with the 49ers. What do you remember about that year?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, it was pretty electric. There are some, yeah, big moments and stuff, a lot of big moments up on the wall out there.

Yeah, it's great. You love this. You love opportunities to play meaningful games in January. That's a really cool thing. You don't take that lightly.

At the end of the day it's just the competition of this league. I mean, it's just a competitive as can be, best football players in the world that you get to go up against day in and day out week in and week out.

And so obviously when you play at a high level and then

you see some of those teams twice in one year, sometimes you see them three times in one year, that competitiveness gets tight end so that is fun.

**Q. This team is very competitive on the road. You said you like playing on the road. How does that feeling and effort compare to other teams you've been on?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, I mean, compared to other teams?

**Q. How about other years of those teams.**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah.

**Q. Each year a team comes together differently.**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, you're right. And it is. As much as you try -- you try not to make them too much different. I think even when you do travel you try to keep a familiar like rhythm to the week. You obviously -- it's different not being in front of your crowd and what the energy that they bring at Lumen.

You go somewhere else and there is -- we played in some games this year where it's been very quiet and you had to bring your own energy. We've also played in some games where it's rocking and there is some energy there as well you feed off.

At the end of the day you still got to be so locked into what your job is and what's happening in that moment. It's energy that's around you. It's an environment, but you are a part of that environment that's operating.

So I don't know if that answers your question. I got off on a tangent there. It's something that you try to keep -- have separate, stay in your process.

**Q. There is obviously nobody quite like Devin Witherspoon. Who do you think is the offense's equivalent to Devin Witherspoon in terms of a guy that brings a lot of juice?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, I mean, you can't -- there is no one out there in the league like 'Spoon. If you want to know who the energy guy is offensively, AJ is probably our

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energy guy. We got a lot of -- it's typical. I think most offenses I've been on it's like the offense is pretty steady; defense is always the ones talking a lot.

But, yeah, AJ will get in there and say some stuff. You never know what's going to come out of his mouth. He keeps you on your toes.

**Q. What does that sound like?**

COOPER KUPP: AJ?

**Q. Yeah.**

COOPER KUPP: Like a dog barking or some -- it can be anything. It can be any kind of thing. It's very loud. He's definitely got the most nicknames on the team. But, I mean, everyone loves him. You love him. You love guys like that. He's all out for his guys play in, play out.

Definitely the energy guy.

**Q. What's the best nickname for him?**

COOPER KUPP: I prefer Captain Hook is a good one. You'll have to ask him the inside story on the Captain Hook. Yeah, Captain Hook, I'll go with that.

**Q. Say anything at halftime (indiscernible)?**

COOPER KUPP: Oh, yeah, I'm sure he did. You know, yeah, but it's little -- it's not like he's not getting up there and giving you a speech. It's, hey -- I can't even do it. You have to ask him to do it. It's his own thing at max volume. It's great.

**Q. Last time you played the 49ers it was your first game, Sam's first game, Klint Kubiak's first game. How have you seen this offense evolve since week, week one, so much newness to where you are at the end of the year?**

COOPER KUPP: I think when you watch the film I think there is another level of comfortability and understanding of what we're trying to get done, who we are as a football -- as an offensive unit and how we want to operate. I do think that comes back to ultimately just the understanding and mastery of the offense and guys not second guessing anything. Just being able to send it.

I think that's the main thing I've seen just as the year has gone on. It's a testament of what we talk about. The best teams get better as the years go on, as the games are played. You learn from your mistakes and guys just get better and better and better and you're a better team

hopefully in week 18 than week one. When we watch film we feel that.

**Q. Where are you guys better?**

COOPER KUPP: What?

**Q. Where are you guys better than when you started the year?**

COOPER KUPP: I think there is -- I think it's the details. The details, the anticipation I think are there. Everything just happening a lot faster for us, which means the game is slowing down. It's like you're able to anticipate things, see things, understand where runs are hitting, how we want to hit our blocks, how we're distributing the field in the pass game, Sam's comfortability and trust of all the guys.

Being able to sit in the pocket and making some really tough throws, he's done a great job of that as the year has gone on. As I look at just across the board, everyone's game, there is a few areas where there is improvement in that anticipation and understanding.

**Q. What do you think is Sam's defining trait as a leader? Something about the way he leads that stands out?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, I think resiliency. He's as resilient as it comes. I've talked a lot about his consistency. Wherever you want to put those. I think they're interchangeable with him. He's done a great job of that. You have a guy that's going to be himself over and over again.

No matter what's thrown at him, no matter what environment he's in or when the circumstances are, you can count on getting the same Sam leading that huddle, leading the offense, as he's done this whole year. That's who he has been.

**Q. Everybody talks about his even keeled nature. Have you played with quarterbacks that aren't that way?**

COOPER KUPP: I think the best quarterbacks have it. You have to. The quarterback, you're dealing with so much, the flows of a game, all the things that come about. I mean, you're fixing things from offensive coordinator communication. You're fixing problems and handling pressures. There is all this stuff that you're having inputs that you're taking in and being able to give good outputs to your guys so you can lead them and communicate clearly.

So the best ones aren't going to -- those outputs don't start

changing just because there are more inputs or the inputs are louder or more mean. It's like there is a consistency in terms of once it comes in through him, as it comes into the offense, it's consistent. It's the same thing over and again.

**Q. What does the resilient quarterback do (indiscernible) in each player in terms of their assignment and the patience of overcoming adversity?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, I think it keeps everyone in this place where it allows you to play. He takes -- the onus goes on the quarterback right, to take a lot of that stuff and filter out a lot of the other stuff that's coming in that wants to make it its way into the huddle and we can just focus on, you run your play, you get back to the huddle, and you get ready for the next one. You get ready to execute the next one.

No matter what happened, whether you won or lost that rep, you can just come back and play the next play because you know he's not coming in here with any kind of heightened anxiety or pressure for anyone to perform.

Hey, no, we're on the next play no matter what just happened. No matter what's going on here, we're going to go out there and send it again. So guys trust in the ability to come in. The huddle is a great place, a launching pad to go out there and let it rip. That's a big deal for us.

**Q. When you were in? Stands watching football games instead of playing in the NFL, and now, what has been the biggest surprise to you about what you thought was going on getting ready for games like this versus what it's actually like?**

COOPER KUPP: You know what? I don't know how much I thought about it growing up in terms of the preparation, practice. I mean, like when I was a young kid you thought there was a lot less meetings, more time on the field and a lot less meeting time.

We meet. We're in meetings for, you know, three or for times more than we are on the field practicing, so that's definitely different. Spoiler for all those young kids out there hoping to just be out on the grass playing football.

But, I mean, I don't know. As a kid you're playing football, man. You're not worried about all this other stuff. If you had told me the NFL players showed up on Sunday when I was eight, nine years old and go play, I would be like, yeah, that sounds about right.

**Q. Not necessarily saying Jaxon embellished the face mask fumble (indiscernible) but what kind of veteran play was that that he made, showed the whole world?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, it was great. Jaxon Smith-Njigba, Juilliard School of Drama right there. It was great.

**Q. What makes a team better in meetings than another team?**

COOPER KUPP: What makes a team better in meetings?

**Q. Yeah, making better use of that time.**

COOPER KUPP: I think there is a heightened focus. Like regardless of what it is, there is something to be grabbed from all these meetings, and it's really easy -- it's a discussion we've had. It's really easy to be a receiver, sit in a run game meeting and feel like it's your chance to pull your hat down a little bit and act like you're taking notes and just zone out.

But there is something in every meeting for everyone regardless of where you're at. Being present and being engaged, asking questions, because it might not be for you. Might just be something that doesn't look right, doesn't make sense. Coaches have not slept. Like they're going to miss stuff, too. Just being able to be engaged and ask questions because we're all learning together, I think that's -- the best teams I've been on it's like this is a learning thing.

Even installing stuff it's a learning thing for everyone and we all want to get it right. Don't feel like any question is wrong because it might be something that someone else might not have thought of it. So the best ones are in that place and take a game plan early in the week and just continue to chip away at it, refine it. And so that's where it happens, a lot of that stuff is in here.

**Q. Are you the kind of person that you have a memory that you can remember specifics from a game 17 weeks ago or do you need to watch the film again for it to pop out in your mind?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, there has been guys in this league that are known for pulling some crazy plays out. That's not how I operate. I can definitely remember moments and things like that, but that's not how I do things. I like to go back and watch the film and take a lot of notes so I can learn and write -- I feel better if I write things down.

Yeah, I can't boast a photographic memory or anything like that.

**Q. We hear from your coaches and teammates a lot about your football intelligence. Has that always been a big part of your game? Is it something whether high**



**school, college, pros were you recognized, hey, this part of the game really stands out beyond the physical? When did that come to you?**

COOPER KUPP: Yeah, I think it was -- I think early on it was an emphasis, like I need to know things better, one, because I love football. That's the first thing. First things first, I absolutely love this game.

I had to learn stuff because I'm like, I'm just not faster or stronger than people. I had to figure out something. If I can understand the technique, if I can understand the tactical side, the technical side of things, it gives me an edge. I found that I could -- that was what kept me in the game as a kid. It kept me able to keep up because I had that stuff.

As I've learned it, I've learned at every level that there is more there. The hole is like you go into that cave and there is no end. There is more and more and more to learn, and the game, even when you think you've got it, the game changes. You go back and you're like, man, what used to be true is no longer true. It's like this growing amoeba that you're trying to contain and understand, and I love that. I love the pursuit of it.

Yeah, it brings me a lot of the joy to be able to go through those things and be a part of this process to go out there and play this game.

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