

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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AJ Barner

Weekday Press Conference



AJ BARNER: Signed back my favorite player to the Seahawks this week, Charles Cross. Hyped about that. And Abe, we got Abe locked up. Those are my guys.

Q. Why is Charles one of your favorites?

AJ BARNER: I play next to Abe and Charles 70% of the game. They're just dudes. You look at them. They're dogs. Their attention to detail, the enthusiasm that they bring, the personality that they bring.

Obviously our whole O-line, the strides that they've made, give our O-line the respect. We have studs at O-line. They move bodies, so I lot of those guys. I'm hyped about Chuck, so I'm just lit about that.

Q. On that front, you have both of them locked up now. The interior has a couple of more years of runway. How excited are you about the continuity you might have as a unit there over the next little bit?

AJ BARNER: I'm stoked. I went to Michigan, and Michigan prides themselves on O-line. When I was at Michigan, our O-line was a huge reason for our success. I truly believe that it's a big reason to our success this year.

Having those guys play more ball together, it's super impactful. I'm glad that they are going to be here for a while and us tight ends and running backs and the receivers as well that contribute on the run game and all the things. It's a great group.

Q. Charles and Grey have gotten close, and they seem like an odd couple. What is the chemistry between those two like?

AJ BARNER: Man, I think just playing side-by-side. It's something that you can't -- like, when you're in the heat of the battle and go through all the things together, the relationship off the field is only going to follow through with it just because, like, in the game you're obviously verbally communicating as well.

Those two, you know, they're two of the best in the business. Both young players, too. It's exciting to see the direction that we're headed.

Q. Is there anything about practice that feels different this week?

AJ BARNER: I don't think so. I think guys are still getting after it. I think it's more competitive between the offense and defense, because we're not preparing for a team per se. But just going up against each other, you hear Spoon talking, EJ, D-Hall talking. We're kind of playing them this week, so you kind of want to compete with them.

Q. Is there more like ones versus ones this week?

AJ BARNER: Yeah, I think a bit more ones versus ones. Offensive ones on defensive ones and getting the young guys going at it, too. It's been a good week.

Q. What do you think has worked well with the run game the last few weeks?

AJ BARNER: I think just sticking with it, and I think it was just a matter of time. I feel like the whole year we've had physicality up front, the backs doing their thing. I think just collectively at the perfect time it's really coming together.

Got to continue to do that. I think it will be great to run the ball home like playing up here in Seattle, bring on the weather, bring on the elements and let's run the rock.

Q. Another third and really long conversion running the ball three games in a row. What does that do for you guys to get guys kind of fired up when you convert that way?

AJ BARNER: Yeah, it's huge. You look on the scoreboard, and you see K9 got the ball pitched out. You are like, yeah, I'm not surprised that he got it. Just seeing that guy run the rock is something else.

I mean, obviously you can't hang your hat on that. We don't want to be in those third and longs, but knowing that we have an option like that to get a first down is huge.

Q. What will getting Elijah back in the mix do for you

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guys?

AJ BARNER: Getting the E-dog back will be great. It's a guy that can really run from the tight end position as well, get the F kind of more involved and just add another element.

He's been champing at the bit, staying locked in, doing his thing. It's kind of the perfect time for him to come back and make his presence felt, so...

Q. On the broadcast they said I think it was a hip injury that you were dealing with.

AJ BARNER: Yeah.

Q. How are you feeling?

AJ BARNER: Feeling good. Dealing with some bumps and bruises. I think I've been on the injury report every week for the past ten, but I'm going to play regardless, but feeling good, though.

Q. You've been hyping up Sam since the summer. How confident are you going into the playoffs?

AJ BARNER: Very confident. Sam is a pro. Sam is a great quarterback, a pro bowler. He's going to play his best football now. He start to do that.

We're extremely confident in him, and just the offensive group as a collective, we're going to start playing our best football.

Q. With the hip and everything else, how beneficial is this week for you?

AJ BARNER: It's huge. I think all the things that I do outside the building as well as inside the building and just trying to get my feet back under myself. I like to play physical at the end of the day, and that can take a little bit of a toll on your body, but all good on my end.

Whatever I've got to do to be ready for game time is going to happen.

Q. Outside the building, is it hot yoga? Is it hyperbaric?

AJ BARNER: Offseason maybe. Hyperbaric chamber for sure. A lot of massage therapy, acupuncture, some herbal things, like wraps and stuff that you can do. Obviously people in the facility are great something is something. Anything that I can do to help myself heal, I'm willing to do.

Q. (Inaudible) what do you think about 11 and the weapon that that play has been?

AJ BARNER: Love it. Honestly it's pretty easy on my end. Get the snap and try and get as many yards as I can and ride the wave. Sometimes your head gets ripped off, you know what I'm saying, but gets you in the flow of the game, too. Like, good, I'm getting a yard. You're not stopping it.

I think it's a great play. I think the O-line likes it too, yeah.

Q. Who has the hardest job of all the O-linemen on that play?

AJ BARNER: I asked Jalen and Olu what their thoughts were on it, because I was just curious. They seemed to like it. So I guess I would say them. Yeah, I don't think it's myself.

Q. Are you going for leverage up and down or going forward?

AJ BARNER: Really just forward any way I can get it. I just want to stay low, get the cadence right, get the ball. Yeah, maybe run a hot side zone one time, take it off the tackle. We'll see.

Q. Is it always predetermined which way you're going -- are you going right over the center? Are you going left to right?

AJ BARNER: I can go wherever. The coaches haven't said where to go, so get the first down however you can.

Q. How much do you think is that cadence?

AJ BARNER: Yeah, it's intricate, for sure. Different variations that we can do to it, and obviously something that we want to get off on the cadence to get that first down.

Q. You guys are one of the youngest teams in the NFL, and that also means that this is a first for a lot of you. How do you guys kind of approach first playoff for a lot of these guys?

AJ BARNER: Yeah. First of many hopefully. I think that's kind of the standard here. It's, like, kind of our expectation to be in there, but obviously it's a huge accomplishment for ourselves.

At the end of the day, we have our goals. We have the things that we want to accomplish. It's just another step along that way.

It's win or go home at this point, so...

defense, because I was a dog on defense.

Q. What's it like prepping for four potential teams, three of which you just faced to wrap up the regular season and you are familiar with?

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AJ BARNER: Yeah, I think being that we played a couple of the times, that helps. I'm not going to watch any of the games this weekend. I kind of want to watch the film on whoever we play, not get too into it.

You're a part of the game. I don't want to watch the production on the weekend. It's kind of weird. You know what I'm saying?

Whoever we've got to play, we'll be ready for it and be excited for it.

Q. We've heard guys say they don't want to watch it now.

AJ BARNER: Honesty, more so in the NFL. Sometimes I'm watching, and I'm, like -- you know what I'm saying? It's I'm just going to stick to being in the game, you know?

Q. We've heard you described as one of the energizers on offense. I think your coach called you a spark plug. How would you describe your energy on the field?

AJ BARNER: I love ball. It needs to continue to be consistent. I think when I get the ball in my hands and when I'm making plays, obviously I might ramp up that energy, but has to be consistent throughout the game. On our offense, we need somebody that's going to do that. That's just how I am. It's how I play. It's not fake. It's authentic. It's who I am.

Like I said, I love my O-lineman. I'm kind of a bridge between all the positions, so I think that that juice, that spark is important.

Q. What does it mean you guys will be playing playoff games at home?

AJ BARNER: It's everything. It's the vision that we've had since we've got here. To do it in front of a home crowd, we know what it is. It's going to be loud, and it's an advantage for us.

Q. (Inaudible) I love his mentality. He plays like we pay. From guys on the defensive side, what does that mean to you?

AJ BARNER: I just think of my huddle highlights in high school. I'm like, yeah, I think I play defense. Yeah, I play

