

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

Tuesday, January 13, 2026
Seattle, Washington, USA

Grey Zabel

Weekday Press Conference



Q. How are you?

GREY ZABEL: Doing well today. Football Wednesday on a Tuesday. Can't complain. Saturday game, so we're excited for it.

Q. What did you think when you heard you're playing the 49ers again?

GREY ZABEL: Just excited. Excited to be playing in the postseason. A lot of teams don't have that kind of option to play, so at the end of the day it's just a whatever-it-takes-to-win mentality.

Q. You've experienced a lot of success in college. What's different, if anything, about how it feels to be in this playoff?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, I mean, I said kind of in the process of getting to the NFL I'm used to or we're expected to play into January, so it's always awesome when get that chance to. It's just nowadays you wake up and the next day you're a little more sore after playing in January.

So it's a little bit longer season, but at the end of the day if you can play football in January it's a good thing.

Q. ...the last time you played them. What are you expecting from them differently defensively?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, you got to expect they might change some things up. Might bring a little more blitzes. Might play certain formations differently.

So at the end of the day they're going to have a plan for us. They got a really good defensive coordinator that's going to have something schemed up for us. We're going to maybe have to take one or two on the chin to understand what the game plan is going to be and continue to move forward.

Q. Guessing you watched the games with some

friends over the weekend. What was that like watching football?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, I mean, Mike said it perfectly. Like you're rooting for one team and then you're like, why am I rooting for these guys? Then you're watching football and it's so weird watching the games and just being like, I'm not playing this weekend but I'm playing next weekend. It kind of was a little weird.

But it was good to get a weekend off, kind of maybe get away from football a little bit knowing that you're still watching it every single Friday, Saturday, Sunday. But it was good to get away from football, get away from the facility, recharge the batteries, and get ready to roll.

Q. On the Tush Push, what are those blocks like for an offensive lineman compared to your standard run play?

GREY ZABEL: Complete chaos. There is like footwork out the door, hand placement out the door. It's just how much force you can get as you're trying to keep your head down, keep your pads down, and move the line of scrimmage.

So it was cool to see a Tush Push almost score a touchdown from like the ten yard line this weekend. That was sweet. Shoutout to those offensive lineman on the Buffalo Bills.

Q. The Eagles love tackling. Jordan Mailata I think at one point said he doesn't really like that block because it's harder on those guys. Is there something about it that is like difficult, more difficult?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, you wake up the next day your neck is probably a little more sore, your head might be moving a little bit.

It's one of those deals where it's fourth and one. Have the mentality you get the one yard and an inch to keep the chains moving.

Q. You guys have run the ball three straight games over I think over 160 yards, 180 last game. What do you think is going so well on the ground?



GREY ZABEL: Yeah, I mean, it stems from the coaches having an unbelievable game plan to be able to attack defenses at their weak spots, and then you got to give credit to the tight ends, wide receivers. They're blocking their asses off lately. Running backs are unbelievable making plays.

So kind of we're having a lot of fun the past three games being able to run the ball so successfully. If you want to be successful in the postseason you got to be able to run the ball.

That's going to be the mindset moving forward.

Q. Looking forward to getting Charles back playing next to you?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, yeah, super excited. I mean, congrats to him. Unbelievable contract he just signed. Should have paid him more as I jokingly said to John.

I was the first one to give him a hug that next Monday morning. To get Charles back not only as a player but as a leader, as a friend, as just a person, is huge for us.

I mean, kudos to Josh for everything he did the past three games stepping in there playing unbelievable football at a super high level, not missing a beat. But excited to get Charles back and let Uncle Josh heal up a little bit.

Q. As a veteran that you play next to every snap, what has Charles meant to you throughout the year?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, you can't really put it into words. He's been a big brother, a friend, a mentor, a leader, everything you could possibly want from a guy playing next to you.

Especially as a rookie. Like he helps me understand the game more. Helped me understand what the NFL is about, what to do, what to expect. He is a dear friend. I love him like a brother. He's the man. I'm super excited that he's going to be here for four more years to say the least.

Q. What is the biggest thing maybe you feel like you learned this year as a rookie?

GREY ZABEL: There is going to be ups and downs. You're going to get beat. At the end of the day, I mean, I probably had the worst game of my football career against the Los Angeles Rams. Both times I would say I didn't play great.

I just remember Charles telling me -- I'm on the bench

beating myself up, not happy. He just comes up and goes, hey, those guys get paid too. Having that understanding, that -- got to have the next-play mentality. You got to learn from your losses and keep moving forward and kind of keep taking them on the chin and understanding in this game of football things will go south.

It's all about the next play. Having that mentality as a rookie and being able to learn that has been huge the past few weeks.

Q. Last three games you guys have converted on third and 15 plus on the ground with the run. Like what's that like to see when you guys are able to pick one up that way and kind of the whole group effort that has to go into it to make it work and kind of everything that's gone into those for you guys?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, we jokingly say on those third and fifteen, third and seventeen, we just say third and manageable. You're never out of the fight. It just goes to show when you have unbelievable running backs, like you got to have the mentality that my guy is not going to make the play.

Just kudos to the wide receivers too for doing their part blocking downfield. You watched that one last week against the 49ers. Watch Jake Bobo on that play. Throws his body into a safety that's rotating down on a cover three look and made a huge block for us to pick up the first down.

So when you convert on something like that, you just got to look across the board. It's all probably ten guys doing their job, maybe 11 if Sam has a super cool like bootleg fake or something that draws in a safety back side.

It's cool to be able to do stuff like that.

Q. You touched on it a little bit, you expect the 49ers to do some different things. What, if anything, changes about your preparation, how you watch film, what you're watching going into this game?

GREY ZABEL: The only thing that changes is understanding it's a one-and-done type game, win-or-go-home. At the end of the day you got to have the same routine, same day-to-day prep, same recovery, all that stuff.

Kind of on the back of your head it's that nightmare fuel of if we don't win this one we're done for the season. It's Kumbaya, which I'm not ready for that. I don't think anyone in the locker room is ready for that.

We're going to do whatever it takes to make sure we're back in on Monday to the facility preparing for another game.

Q. Your offensive coordinator has got quite a few looks for head coaching opportunities. If Klint does get hired, what kind of coach would that team be getting?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, Klint is just the worst coach ever. Don't hire him.

No, he's an unbelievable dude to start. He's a leader. I mean, the growth that we've had as an offense this year has been unbelievable. One, his football IQ is through the roof. He starts talking and it's like just a blur as you're trying to understand as he breaks down certain defenses and how to attack them.

But I know he's one of those guys you understand that he's going to get an opportunity -- it's not if, it's when -- to go be a head coach.

And I mean, I wish I could say I could have him here for as long as we possibly can in Seattle. When you have an unbelievable person unbelievable coach, unbelievable friend, it's cool to see that he's going to have opportunities. He deserves every bit of success, every opportunity. Every job that he gets down the line.

Can't speak highly enough about Klint.

Q. You've played in a few of those one-and-done elimination games in college. What was the experience like for you going through those? Does it feel similar to this week?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, it's a lot cooler when you win because being on the losing side sucks. You go and watch every single play over and over and over again. That play might have made the game; might have lost the game; might have won the game on that play.

So understanding it's the mentality of fourth and one mentality the entire game. Do whatever it takes to get that yard and an inch to keep going. I mean, we always talk about it like box score doesn't show physicality, doesn't show yards, all that. It just shows points. A win and a loss.

So you want to be on the winning side no matter what. Doesn't matter how ugly it is, how pretty is it. We always say an ugly win is better than a good loss. Whatever it takes we got to find a way to win.

Q. Mike has talked about coaching guys to be their

best, not coaching you to not go out there and make mistakes. Have you felt that, that you're being coached to be yourself?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, it's unbelievable to have as a rookie. I think it goes to show the preparation that coaches put you through throughout the week, to be able to go out there on Sunday and just play free and play fast and have fun.

I think as a rookie you can't ask for anything else from your head coach, to understand if you make a mistake going a million miles per hour, he's going to coach you off it, but he's never going to be mad about giving 100% or trying to do your best.

So having that ability to do that is awesome and makes football a lot funner.

Q. Was it meaningful for you to get some all pro votes?

GREY ZABEL: Cool. At the end of the day like you take a Super Bowl over an all pro. I think every single guy across the NFL will say that.

You just got to continue to win and it's all that matters.

Q. What's the biggest thing you think is different from the run game at the beginning of the season to where it is now?

GREY ZABEL: Just constant growth, and I think it's a big shoutout to our coaches for understanding the type of team that we are and the running backs that we have, what they do good, what they don't do good, and just continuing to grow and adapt to us and letting us play fast.

So as always, we want to continue to grow and continue to get better and be playing your best football at the end of the season.

Q. Everybody on defense talks about Devon Witherspoon and his energy. As an offensive player going against him every day in practice, how much do you hear him out there?

GREY ZABEL: Every play. I might not even see him but you're going to hear him in some aspect of it. It's super fun because he brings the juice, the vibes to practice. Just a super competitive guy. He goes and makes plays on Sundays and you're not surprised because he does it every single week Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

'Spoon is a great player, great person, great leader; exactly



kind of what we represent as a football team.

Q. What do you make of Jalen's season, kind of getting this run as a starter here most of the year outside of the injury?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, once again, I'm not surprised that he's having the season he is. He's a hard worker. You see that through OTAs. I saw that throughout any entire college career. Knowing who he is as a person and player, it's super fun to play next to him and have that connection.

Now it's getting to the point where we don't even say much to each other. We just know exactly what we're doing. So it's cool to play football like that.

Q. How did all those games at North Dakota State help you for this kind of season, 14, 15 games a year?

GREY ZABEL: Yeah, just preparation of how your body will feel late in the year and understanding what you need to do to make sure it's feeling good. Then it just prepares you to play in big games and be prepared for the noise and the hype.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports