

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

Friday, January 16, 2026

Seattle, Washington, USA

Coach Mike Macdonald

Weekday Press Conference



MIKE MACDONALD: All right, great to see everybody. I'm sure you're interested in all our injury situations, so talking about Sam, heard what he said yesterday to you guys. I see it the same way. We're listing him at questionable. We're really optimistic he's going to be able to play.

Right now we're going through all the protocol, one, just out of caution to make sure we're ready to go, and we'll test it out tomorrow, kind of make the final decision.

We're optimistic he's going to play. If he doesn't or at some point he doesn't, Drew is ready to go. That's why Drew is here. He's doing a great job.

Q. Did Sam Darnold throw today? No need to I guess, but...

MIKE MACDONALD: It's a walk-through tempo, so it's part of our plan right now on how we handled today.

Q. In light of Josh Jones being ruled out, what does it tell you about what he gave you in that week 18 game to get through it?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, I mean, just a tough-as-nails guy. We're just very appreciative. Played really great football for us.

You know, offensively great to have Charles back, too.

Q. Charles showed up with a knee as well this week?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, just kind of got tangled up a little bit in practice, so we're working through it. But he's good to go. More of a precautionary thing.

Q. Is there any thought that injury could prevent Sam in any way when he plays on Saturday?

MIKE MACDONALD: Well, yeah. Yeah, it's a possibility. I don't think -- I think right now he's confident he's going to be able to go do his thing at 100%, and we are too. With

these things something could change between now and then or happen in-game. We'll just have to roll with it.

Q. So it's something he could play limited, less than full?

MIKE MACDONALD: I don't want to put numbers on it. I don't think that he -- I don't think we would put him out there if he couldn't do his job. He's going to be to do his job.

Q. How did the players take the opportunity for 18th game of the season, how do you see them take that opportunity the way they practiced, walk-through?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, guys did a great job. Coming off the break I thought we were a little -- you could tell that we had some time off on the first practice, but we had a great football Thursday practice. We had a great day yesterday with all that was going on, considering all that stuff.

Just had a great day today. Guys have done a great job. You can hear them. They're excited.

Q. Did you get Jalen Milroe up to speed in case he has to go?

MIKE MACDONALD: He doesn't take all the reps throughout the week, but he's doing the same thing he does every week. He's been our emergency third for a good bit, so he's got to be ready to go if need be.

Q. The decision not to activate Elijah, what went into that process for you guys? Just the roster being...

MIKE MACDONALD: It's some roster things. A little bit more just how we want to manage it is the easy way to put it. Making sure we're deep enough at certain spots.

Guys have done a great job. They're ready to go if need be. Couldn't work out this week.

Q. How is Elijah looking?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, he's done a great job. Really looking great, so hopefully earn the right for him to play again.



Q. When Darnold felt it, did he take himself out of the practice or did you jointly decide that or he came to you and said, this isn't right?

MIKE MACDONALD: I'm not sure the order of communication, but he felt it and we decided out of caution to go treat him up.

Q. Was he better today, improved physically?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah. Says he feels better. Yeah, I mean, I think you talk to him, he's confident he's going to be able to play. We feel the same way.

Q. Riq Woolen is okay because you didn't out him on there. Was that something new with him?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, he's just working through the oblique and again, we had plan for it. He's done a great job. Worked his tail off over the weekend and ready to go.

Q. How does the schedule look like for you guys tomorrow with a late game?

MIKE MACDONALD: We're going to treat it like we did two weeks ago just in terms of what we're going to do at the hotel. It's a little different being at home where the guys will be on their own getting to the stadium, but business as usual for a primetime game on the west coast.

Q. Ernest talked about feeding off the energy. Is there balance to be found between doing everything you want to do process-wise up until game day and also letting guys take in everything that comes with...

MIKE MACDONALD: Talking about up to the game or throughout the week?

Q. Yeah.

MIKE MACDONALD: I think it just happens naturally. Like how could you not be a part of kind of what's going through your mind. And, yeah, of course you're going to enjoy it.

But I feel like our guys are like this every week. You really want to -- especially being at home. There is a lot of extra energy being at home that you kind of have to channel to make sure you can go play the way you want to play.

The guys, we definitely feel it. Around the city it's definitely buzzing, which is literally why we do what we do, is to bring wins back to our community and our team.

Q. Speaking of Ernest, he had the illness earlier this

week. Is he better now?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, he was able to do a majority of yesterday and did all of today. Looks a lot better than he looked the other day. Modern medicine.

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