

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Leonard Williams

Weekday Press Conference



Q. Who brought the belts this time around?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I don't know where that came from. I was just hype on the sideline of just where we were at that point in the game. I looked over to my right and I seen Jaxon with it. I think he wanted me involved in the fun and I couldn't say no. (Laughter.)

Q. What was your biggest takeaway from that game when you had a chance to really dive into the film?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: To me I think we played our style of football on all three levels, complementary football. I think every team talks about that going into camp just having complementary football, being good on all three levels, special teams, offense, defense.

I think that was a complete football game on our side on all three phases.

Q. How much of a difference does it make to score first or to get out to an early lead?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I think it makes a huge difference. All that momentum swinging in the beginning of the game, then our defense goes out there and gets a great fourth down stop, which is pretty much a turnover. We consider that a turnover on defense.

And then offense gets points. You know, I think playing complementary football like that just builds a lot of trust and confidence within our team, and getting that from play one, kickoff, was just a huge momentum swing.

Q. Rams came out last game and were pretty aggressive on fourth down early on. Is that something you're looking -- expecting again this time?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think a lot of teams are aggressive nowadays on fourth down, especially short yardage situations, especially in big games like this where you have to win or you're going home. I think we do a

great job on defense of preparing for those situations and knowing what's to come.

Q. Going back to the last game, 580 yards, whatever it was, just kind of nobody has really been able to do that to you guys most the season here. What do you look back on and kind of take away as to why that played out the way it did and what do you see needing to turn around for you guys this week?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I would say that definitely wasn't our best game defensively. What I love about this team is going back to being good on all three phases of football, I think we're going to find ways to get the job done, which we did.

Sometimes it's the defense is having the offense's back and sometimes vice versa; sometimes special teams is having our back.

But I don't think we started the way we wanted to as a defense. I think halftime we made better adjustments and were able to stop the run a little bit better in the second half.

I think that is what is going to be a big factor this game, is stopping the run earlier.

Q. Given the way both games against them went and just the success, did this sort of feel inevitable that there would be a third matchup in the postseason?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I mean, I was just expecting it to happen this way. I think it's interesting that only two teams we played in feels like over a month is Niners and the Rams.

But I think it's a testament to how good this division has been this year. A lot of respect for both of those teams, but I have even more respect for my team and confidence in my team, and just the way we make it about us is special to me.

I think every week obviously no matter how many times we've played them we're trying to find new ways to attack them and ways to get after them.

At the same time I think our team does a great job making



it about us every day.

Q. Your comment about Grey the other day, the tip he gave you got a lot of attention. How rare is that that what happens, that guys give specific tips?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I think it's really rare, and I think what's so cool about that clip specifically and that moment specifically, is I think it's even a heightened sense of the type of relationship and team we have, from it being -- you know, I'm a year 11 veteran coming from a rookie. I think that's a very drastic version of it.

I think you see that everywhere in this team from player to coach, from player to player, guys on the same side of the ball, guys on the opposite side of the ball. You see guys hyping up special teams. It's like we just have such a togetherness, and I think that's really been to me -- from my experience in the league, the defining characteristic of our season is just how much we play together.

Q. Why do you think it is that way? Feel like it would be easy to be like, oh, I'm year 11, a vet. I'm not going pour into the rookies. I've got all my money. I can do what I want. Why is that the vets here really want to pour into the rookies and young guys?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I think big shoutout to Schneider and the office up there. I think they're bringing in the right type of people and the right type of guys. I think having a team with no ego, being able to willingly learn from one another with no ego involved is special.

Especially guys who have felt like -- I've been on teams where guys have been players of the year, pro bowls, all pros, and like ego to seep in. I think that's when it's harder to play together as team sometimes in these moments.

This team is truly -- I don't think I've ever been on a team that has zero ego. I think it's special.

Q. You social team just posted a video of Mike's first team meeting with you guys in 2024 and painting the vision of imagine yourselves in the NFC Championship in Seattle in January. What do you remember about that, and do you feel like the trajectory to this day started back then and how has Mike impacted the road to this point?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: Yeah, I definitely remember. I mean, it hasn't been too long now since Mike has been here. He's made a huge impact and difference in a short amount of time, and I think what makes Mike special is he practices what he preaches. He's always talking about chasing edges. Always talking about what's important

now.

I think he is -- he openly will talk to us on what he has to work on as a coach. He talks about where he lacks and wants to grow, and you see the growth. I think him setting that standard as a leader for our team kind of seeps into the rest of the team and allows us to feel like we can be that same way. Allows us to show vulnerability where we are weak and let other guys know that's where we need to grow.

It creates an open dynamic where when we're in the film room and we are coaching on things, you don't see guys getting offended. They're like, okay, this is something I need to attack. We're not attacking the player, we are attacking the problem type thing. Yeah, it starts with Coach Mike. He's done a great job leading this team.

Q. Looking back on Saturday, what was the atmosphere like being on the field in the middle of all that? Did it feel like it was cranked up a notch for the playoffs?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: As far as our team, I think we were -- we showed up and we had the same energy throughout the game that we always do. I think we never get too high or low, and that's kind of what's special about this team.

The atmosphere was just insane. Having the home field advantage during the playoffs is definitely special. It's special for us to be able to bring that to the 12s. They definitely showed out.

My favorite moment was seeing the Darth Vader in the stands representing the Dark Side. I want to see more of that.

Q. Where was that in the stands?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I don't remember. I just seen them up on the JumboTron and that was my favorite moment.

Q. Mike was talking earlier about the loss you guys had in week 11 down in LA. Turns out that was your last loss, and coming out of that game feeling really good about the direction you're going. What do you remember about the vibes coming out of that game?

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I feel like even going all the way back this week one, the losses we've had this year. We've really been able to just grow from them. They haven't hindered us in our belief as a team or losing hasn't discouraged us in any way.

After losses this year we really like turn it up a little bit.



You know, like I said we do a good job keeping even keel after a win or loss. I think sometimes those losses do kind of fuel us and ignite us a little bit more to just find better ways to just grow as a team, and I have think that's what we've done after each loss.

Q. You guys haven't yet sacked Matt Stafford. Curious why you think that is.

LEONARD WILLIAMS: I think if you watch the games he gets the ball out extremely fast. What they do a good job at is putting them in third and manageable downs. I think they have the shortest distance on third downs in the league, which allows for quick passes. You don't have to sit back and drop and read coverages when you only need three to five yards for a first down.

You know, a lot of times he just catches the ball and knows exactly where to put it; sometimes he's not even looking. He's a great quarterback. I think that's why I said I think we're going to have to do a good job on first and second down stopping the run, getting them in a little bit more backed up third downs.

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