

Los Angeles Rams Media Conference

Sunday, December 5, 2021
Los Angeles, California, USA

Quarterback Matthew Stafford

Postgame Press Conference



Los Angeles - 37, Jacksonville - 7

Q. Can you walk us through that play when you got hit in the chest and had to go to the sideline for a minute?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, just holding the ball, tried to work the route to the field a little bit and got hit. Didn't feel great. Was able to kind of walk it off and keep playing. So I'm good now. I feel fine.

Q. Did you get the wind knocked out of you, not feel good, or what?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: That was a part of it. Just a little chest shot. Had to kind of check myself, make sure I was all good.

Q. Is your sternum intact?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: It is in one piece at the moment (Laughing).

Q. A lot of play action, Sony Michel running really hard. Those type of adjustments, what did that do for you guys today and how did it feel getting that clean game?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, I got to give Sean a lot of credit. And, really, the guys that were asked to play more than they played this season, stepped up and played great.

You know, Sony, I thought ran the ball really well. Kind of going into the week, seeing the plan unfold, and I said, This is a Sony Michel type of game.

He's just going to slug it out, wear it on these dudes. He did some nice stuff in the passing game. I got a great view where I'm at of him running the football.

And some of those six, four, five-yard runs, things of

beauty. And, you know, he's a heavy guy. You know, when he starts running, I think the defenders feel it.

So I was happy for him. I thought Joe Noteboom, when he was asked to step in there and played really well. And, really, all of our tight ends played really well, as well. I'm just happy for our guys and happy to come out with the win.

Q. Matthew, having a game like this and being able to get past those other games, how does it set you up going forward?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Each game is its own entity. There's no question about that. It's nice to get a win after three subpar performances.

So, you know, I was to happy for that for our team. Got a big one coming up next week. And we got to find ways to get better.

You know, we got to stay on the field on third down a couple more times. Had a third and one that was stuffed.

Had a couple third downs that, you know, I could probably throw a better ball on the first one to Ben. He'll tell you probably he should -- you know, wishes he could have made that catch.

I had one down the red zone to Van, as well, that -- you know, just opportunities that didn't hurt us in the game, but might hurt us in another one.

It's nice to get a win and clean those things up. But continuing to focus hard on the little things and those will make a big difference.

Q. How does it for you personally after a tough three games with turnovers?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I just try to attack each game and, you know, treat it as an opportunity to go play great. Sometimes that doesn't happen.

I thought we had a great week of practice as a team. You



know, I thought we were dialed in, came out here on game day and played well.

It boils down to execution. And I feel like our guys, you know, did that at a really high level. I tried to make sure that, you know, I wasn't putting the ball in harm's way. And our guys were getting open to make catches. That's nice.

Q. I think I know your answer, but I want to hear it from you. What does it mean to have a running game, what it does to have a running game affect your passing game?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, I mean, I think we did a great job of staying efficient in the run game. You know, it definitely takes an effect on the defense, I think.

You know, Sony was running the ball really physical. Our guys upfront were really pushing the pile. A lot of our runs were downhill stuff and he was doing a great job of that.

But it helps you be efficient and stay ahead of the chains. You know, I would have liked to have converted a couple more third downs off of that and make those things count, you know, and put some more points on the board. But, you know, overall, I thought they did a really nice job in the run game today.

Q. How does it affect your passing game?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, I think in the play action game, we hit a few today. I think they did a great job panic dropping out of some of these, tried to get that on the field a couple times. And those backers were hauling trying to make sure that after they played the run they weren't going to let anything over their heads.

So they did a nice job in some of those areas, as well. I was able to sneak one to Coop down the sideline there. That was really man coverage, but that was a good one, too.

But it all ties into it -- you know, ties into it. And I thought our defense played great. Offense did some nice things. And special teams starting the game like that with BP with the big return was awesome. And, you know, Johnny down late -- you know, late in the game down and inside the five was nice, too.

Q. What sets Cooper apart? He had several good catches.

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I mean, he does everything right, you know? I think -- I don't know, people probably watch him on it of and think he's 5'10 and runs 4.6. He's 6'2, 210,

and runs great.

He's got a great feel for the game. He's a great competitor. You know, he understands the game. You know, he does everything right. He leads that receiver group in the right way.

So I pinch myself every day. Just happy I get a chance to play with a guy like that. And I have a lot of respect for how he goes about his business and how he goes about, you know, attacking each opportunity, whether it be practicing or in games.

And then he's great on game day. You know, run after the catch, getting open versus man, feeling zone versus man. He's got a great feel for the game of football.

Q. A few games with Odell, how do you describe your guys' rapport?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, it's getting better and better. Obviously I hit him for the fade for a touchdown. Hit him on a nice little cross on a keeper, which was great.

You know, just missed a chance at a big one. Love the way he was digging for that ball. I wish I would have -- you know, however far that was, I wish I would have dropped it two yards shorter and gave him a chance.

He's a guy that -- I really am impressed with his ability to step in and seamlessly kind of learn his role in this offense. It's been impressive, you know, for a guy that's unfamiliar with what we do before he got here.

You know, I give him a lot of respect for that. And also, you know, he's toughing it out, feeling a little crummy from last week and was out there. And when he had his opportunities to make plays, he made them.

Q. What changes when your center goes out?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Well, one guy snaps it righty, the other guy snaps it lefty. (Laughing.) That's different.

No, I can't say enough about Coleman. That was a heck of an effort. This game is funny. You feel like you're going into a game, you know the play, here we go, drive one, he's done, drive two, if he was down, able to come back in and play. But I thought Coleman did a great job. Great job commanding.

And that just goes to his preparation as a player. You know, he's got a great coach in Carbs that's coaching him.

And he had an opportunity to go out there and play and I

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

thought he played really well. Are there things that are different? Yeah, absolutely.

And are there things just, you know, that we can clean up that are a hair off? Yes. Certain plays? Yes.

But when he was in there, he was battling and commanding the line of scrimmage, which I thought was great. For the most part, I thought he played really well.

Q. Matthew, when you look at young guys like Van and Ben, not only dealing with the transference of some of Robert's duties to these guys, in addition to their learning curve, understanding that they probably will make mistakes, so what is it for you as a veteran guy to make sure you keep going back to them?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, I think No. 1, push them. You know, because those guys can do it. And they really can. And I got all the faith in Van and Ben and some of the guys that are younger that are getting kind of their first opportunities in this league.

Push them because I know they can do it. You know, I wouldn't sit there and push them if I didn't think they couldn't.

Understanding at the same time those things are going to happen. And, you know, that's okay. You don't want them to happen and continue to find ways to help them learn.

Just help them learn. Hey, got to continue to focus. They can make them 100 times out of 100. And sometimes they don't happen. But I got a bunch of trust in those guys. I'll continue to work with them.

Those practice reps are really valuable. And when we get those opportunities in practice to make sure that the focus is like it is on Sunday, you know, and make sure that, Hey, if I'm throwing you this ball in practice, the chance we get this shot in a game and, you know, just go out there and execute.

So it will be good. I'm not worried about those guys in the least bit. I just want to continue to watch them grow and help them as much as I can and get us to where we want to be.