

# Los Angeles Rams Media Conference

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Los Angeles, California, USA

## Coach Sean McVay

Postgame Press Conference



Rams - 20, 49ers - 17

COACH MCVAY: Okay. First of all, so much respect for the 49ers. It's a great team. Coach Shanahan does an excellent job. They're tough and physical, they fight to the end. It took everything we had.

But I'm so proud of our group, our players, our coaches, just proud to be associated with these guys. So many special men in that locker room. And love this team.

We've got one more. But today was a great sign of the resilience. We talked about that's one of the things that's kind of embodied this group. You go down 17-7, doesn't look good. But the guys just stayed in the moment. One play at a time. Did a great job.

Defense, to be able to close it out, especially after the last time we played them, the way that went. There were just so many great plays today by great players, and just really happy to be associated with these guys and we've got one more.

**Q. When you look at the way that this team has been built, not just this year but the last couple of years, to end the game that way -- Aaron Donald makes a difference in pressure. (Indiscernible) Howard, a seventh-round pick, seals it. What's that mean for this group?**

COACH MCVAY: I think it's a great sign of the stars shine the brightest when they needed to, Jordan. And also guys stepping up when they were asked to.

T Howard has done a great job over the last month. Chris Shula has been outstanding with him. And another guy that just comes to mind as you ask that question is you look at Kendall Blanton. You lose Tyler Higbee, such an instrumental part of our offense and he stepped in.

Wes Phillips does a great job. All hands on deck. Everybody was ready to go. So many key contributors

today. Like I said, so proud of this group.

**Q. What about (indiscernible) but ultimately six straight losses to the same team. How did it feel to get that first win against them?**

COACH MCVAY: We didn't really look at it like that. We looked at just being in this moment, taking care of this game today. It was the NFC Championship. Huge game. Our guys did a great job. And each game is its own separate entity. And I'm really just happy those guys got it done today.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

COACH MCVAY: Thought Odell was outstanding today. To be able to go over 100 -- he had some key and critical catches to be able to extend drives. The one down the left sideline where they were playing split safety, kind of reading the coverage. And the (indiscernible) player didn't get over the top, and he ends up adding on an extra 15 with the late hit.

He's such a special player, so smart, so talented, so gifted. And he's brought such a charisma and presence and really a swag to our team. And he's -- love Odell. Really just happy for him.

**Q. How much did your running game open --**

COACH MCVAY: How about this music? Let's keep it quick. I gotta get in there.

**Q. How much did your running game open things up in the first half?**

COACH MCVAY: It did. I thought Cam ran hard and Sony had some tough runs, then he leveled off. I thought he was able to open up some big windows in the pass game. And I thought our guys did a great job being able to mix up the tempo apply pressure to an outstanding defense where they've been really teeing off on guys.

I was so proud of our offensive line. I thought they held up really tough, battled really every single snap. And you look



at that front, they rotate eight guys through. They're outstanding. DeMeco Ryans does a great job, Kris Kocurek. We knew what kind of challenge it would be.

The run game was very key and critical, even though it was tough, hard-earned yards to set other things up, no doubt about it.

**Q. You guys went out, got Matthew Stafford the last two weeks --**

COACH MCVAY: What do you think the answer to that question is? Here's what I would say: We went out and got him because we thought it was a chance to be able to get a great player of his magnitude. Those things don't come around often.

What he's done, he's elevated everybody around him. He's made me a better coach. He's made his teammates better. He's such a great person.

I think you know, from getting a chance to interact with him, if you don't root for this guy, something's wrong with you.

He's a great competitor. I think we saw that each of the last -- we've seen that, really, throughout the season. But I think it's really been on display these last couple of weeks.

We talk about competitive greatness all the time. Being your best when your best was required. He embodied competitive greatness today. Love Matthew Stafford.

**Q. This was exactly the game everyone expected, very physical and chippy. Was there any extra urgency? How much did the rivalry come into play?**

COACH MCVAY: I think the respect for each other came into the game. And we knew what a physical game it would be. I thought our guys did a great job controlling their emotions.

We didn't have anything where you're giving them something cheap, and I was proud of that. And our guys came out -- they had a good look in their eye, really, the last couple of weeks, but especially this week. They knew it was its own separate entity from the previous games, and they came out here, delivered in a big way.

**Q. In this uncharted territory, you thought what you knew you were getting in Matthew when you traded for him, but this specific moment, uncharted territory for him, how and what ways has he risen to the moment?**

COACH MCVAY: I think he's played like he's capable of. Risen? I think he's played like we thought he would. And

no moment's too big for him, I can tell you that much. He's elevating everybody around him.

We've got one more. We know it's going to be a great challenge. So happy for Zac Taylor and the Bengals, what a tough, resilient group they are.

So happy for Matthew, Andrew Whitworth and Aaron Donald. So many guys I'm so happy for, Jalen Ramsey. We've got more work to do.

**Q. What are your initial thoughts on playing Zac Taylor?**

COACH MCVAY: Really, congratulations to them for winning the AFC. You look at the start of that game, I think they're a great, resilient team. It didn't look good for them. And they've just continued to show why they're a mentally tough outfit.

I think that's reflected by their head coach. I know what a great coach he is. They've done a great job this year. We've crossed over with him a little bit, but I'm looking forward to diving into the tape, figuring out how to put together a good game plan to try to see if we can finish this thing off.

**Q. (Question about Cooper Kupp).**

COACH MCVAY: Cooper Kupp is amazing. He's such a special player. I talked about Matthew, the competitive greatness. Cooper was that today. Just big catch after big catch. He's competing in the run game. He does so many things. We'd have no chance of being here without Cooper Kupp.

**Q. Talk about the team's defense there and being clutch there?**

COACH MCVAY: Raheem Morris, outstanding coach. Mike Jones. He's special. His poise in the crunch time moments is on display. Thought he made some great calls. I thought he put our guys in great spots. They ultimately delivered. Raheem is one of the best competitors, such a great charisma and presence. During the games, he's so steady and even-keeled, I think that's why you saw our guys reflect that, where we had some things that were kind of uncharacteristic, some miscommunication. He got connected with the group. Got it communicated the way we wanted to be able to handle it, and they closed it. Huge credit to Raheem Morris. So grateful for him. He's a stud.

**Q. The Super Bowl in and itself, looking forward, for it to come down and end the way it did against this team,**



**everyone accomplished, a question about whether or not (inaudible)?**

COACH MCVAY: Gary Cline asked that question. And put that out there. But -- you jerk, what kind of question was that? (Laughter).

Go ahead, Jim. No, it did not have to be asked. Go ahead, Jim. Gary, no more questions for Gary for the next two weeks. (Laughter).

**Q. For it to end in this way against this team in that manner, does it make it doubly sweet?**

COACH MCVAY: I wouldn't say that. We knew -- I think we knew what a great team this was. But you guys think it might just be coach-speak, but our guys genuinely knew, hey, we're familiar with this opponent but the previous six games where we didn't find a way to finish have nothing to do with what's going to occur at 3:30 or 3:40 when we kick this thing off.

Those are separate entities. Our guys did a great job of being able to compartmentalize. We always talk about being totally and completely present, having a short memory from the good and the bad, being able to hit that reset button.

I thought our guys did that in a big way, Jim, looking forward to enjoying this and get back to work. Grateful to be working still and love this team.

**Q. What's your take on being the second team in history, previous years (inaudible)?**

COACH MCVAY: I think it's special. I thought the fans were outstanding today. To be able to play at home, you know, in this house that Mr. Kroenke built, this iconic venue is unique, a little bit easier travel schedule for us since we travel all over the country during the course of the year, for the most part. So, just so happy for this group, proud to be associated with it. Thanks, guys.

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