

# New Orleans Saints Media Conference

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## Mickey Loomis

Press Conference



MICKEY LOOMIS: I don't have any opening statement. Just fire away.

**Q. You made the decision to let go of Pete Carmichael. (Indiscernible) offensive coordinator?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, I'm not going to go into a lot of detail. It's just DA and we just as an organization decided that we needed a change, and Pete is a fantastic coach. Been with us for 17, 18 years, done a lot of really, really good things, but we just felt like we needed a change.

**Q. What about the offense do you feel like dictated that change?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, just, again, just felt like we can perform better, and we needed a change in that area.

**Q. Would that be along the same lines with Kodi Burns in the wide receiver room (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, again, I think I'm not going to get into anything specific because I think all three of those guys are good coaches, did a lot of good things, but I think in the assessment we felt like we needed something a little different.

**Q. What was your overall take on the season as a whole?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think our expectations were higher collectively. We had some games that slipped away from us and a couple we didn't perform in well. It's a variety of reasons, that's all. So when you look at a season, you look at how you performed -- there's so many variables. Just wasn't good enough, ultimately. We didn't achieve what our expectations.

**Q. This is three straight years now of missing the playoffs, and there was I think a study posted yesterday that you guys had the oldest roster in the**

**entire NFL based on snaps played this year. Was there a feeling you guys were going for a certain window with a lot of core players and the state of the NFC South and maybe that needs to be rethought now?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Listen, I see some of those stats sometimes, and I think -- look, you've got to look beyond just whatever the raw number is. Got to look at the core of your team, and a couple guys can skew that. I don't look at that like we're an old team. I really don't.

**Q. As far as the development with Trevor Penning, do you think he could be a starting offensive lineman and might have to play guard (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, I think with any offensive lineman, and there's some other positions where this is applicable, too, you make an assessment and a vision of where you have them, and if that doesn't work out, you look at their strengths and weaknesses, say hey, maybe we can place them there.

I think with Trevor, look, we didn't do him any favors. He comes in as a rookie, he gets hurt, misses 10 games. We play him the back half of that season, primarily in a jumbo role, and he did some good things, and then he gets hurt, and he has no off-season, and we throw him in there as a starter week one.

Look, I think a lot of that falls on us in terms of where he was and what he was ready to do.

I'm still pretty high on Trevor Penning. I think we all are. But we recognize that, hey, look, we've got to do a better job in terms of development and preparing him to be ready, and I think we'll do that this off-season. I think we'll have a good plan for him.

**Q. The decision to bring Dennis back, how much did (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, here's what I think. I think sometimes the easy thing to do, the lazy thing to do is to look at the results of a season and say, it's the coach's fault or it's the quarterback's fault. I think oftentimes you



have to look beyond that.

Look, I was prepared for this question, right? Chuck Noll in his first three years, Hall of Fame coach, he was 1-13, 5-9, 6-8. But they recognized this guy is a good football coach. Bill Belichick, here's his first three seasons: 6-10, 7-9, 7-9. Tom Landry, 0-11, 4-9, 5-8, 4-10, 5-8. Hall of Fame coaches, all of them. Bill Walsh, first year 2-14, second year 6-10.

I think the easy thing to do is look at the results and say, oh, no, we've got to have a change. You've got to look beyond that. What are the reasons we were 9-8 instead of 13-4.

Look, it's collective. It's the players. It's the coaches. It's me. It's our personnel staff, our roster. It's variables sometimes that we don't have any control of.

So my assessment is Dennis Allen is a good coach. Again, with Sean Payton, we went 10-6 the first year but then we were 7-9 and 8-8 and I heard some of the same noise. I knew at the time we had a good football coach. I think sometimes the hard thing to do is to be patient and recognize your other shortcomings and get those fixed, and I think that's what we're doing.

**Q. Talk about the culture a little bit. What are some of the things with the culture you feel like need to change?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I don't like the word 'culture' necessarily because I think we've got really good guys, willing. And I think, look, a lot of things that I said to the players, I'm sure you guys are aware of it, were for the players' ears only.

I think collectively, though, that everybody -- if you asked do you want to win, everybody stands up, they raise their hand. Everybody says, are you willing to do what's necessary to win. They all raise their hand. But sometimes we're not doing the things that are necessary to win. That's on me. That's on me 100 percent. I've got to hold our guys to a standard to do the things necessary to win, and I think that I probably let that slip a little bit over the last few years, so we're going to get that recalibrated. So that's my message to our entire building, it's not just to the players or to the coaches. It's to our entire building.

**Q. Is some of that stuff homework, studying, taking care of the body --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, there's a lot of things, and I think I was pretty specific about what those things are. But that's really for their ears, not for your ears.

**Q. You said it's on you, but since you're not the one dealing with the players day-to-day and looking over their --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Look, I'm accountable for that. We have a certain standard here, and look, some of it's out of our control. COVID, league rules, there's things that are out of our control. But that doesn't mean we have to -- that we can't have a standard that we set.

Look, it starts with me. It does. Certainly our head coach and our coaching staff and all the people in the building are responsible for it, but it begins with me.

**Q. I don't know if this has been addressed, and you don't like the word "culture," but as far as the camaraderie amongst teammates, when you look at the victory formation and what occurred there, I don't know if it's been asked, like Jamal Williams, did he have incentive like you score X amount of touchdowns --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No.

**Q. That didn't come into play, so it wasn't like you score a touchdown, you get --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No, look, I think this has been talked about way too much, frankly. Look, I get it. Players wanted to do a favor for one of their teammates and probably didn't think it completely through.

I would rather we not do that. But there was no underlying message to that. It was all exactly what it appeared to be. They're trying to do a favor for a teammate, get him a touchdown, and it just wasn't appropriate in my view.

But it's overblown. I think it's overblown.

**Q. The monetary reasons --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No, there was no incentive or no financial reward.

**Q. I remember I heard 12 games --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: If you scored one touchdown -- yeah, that doesn't happen here. We're not doing that. I understand the question, but that's not part of the equation here.

**Q. (Indiscernible) change when it comes to a potential offensive coordinator coming into the building, but were the moves you made on the offensive side**

**yesterday the only moves you intend to make at this time?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I don't know that that's the case yet. I'm not anticipating anything either way.

**Q. I know another phrase you probably dismiss is "lost the locker room," and I know you dismissed that the other night, but you say most people should be able to look beyond results, but players have felt the effects of three losing seasons, too, and you felt a need to have this talk with them after the season. Is that a danger with players not believing that this coaching staff will have the answers when you go through three losing seasons?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I'm not worried about that.

**Q. Do you feel confident that this team can stay --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah. Look, there's a lot of things about our team that I really, really like, too. I like that we played hard. I like that we finished four out of the last five. Effort, those kinds of things that happen in games, even when things were going poorly, were really good.

I had a lot of individual talks with players, and I came away from those feeling really positive about a lot of things.

**Q. When you said you wanted a change offensively, are you referring to kind of a step away from what y'all have done for a long time here with Sean and Pete, or is it just a matter of getting a new set of eyes?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think that remains to be seen.

**Q. How concerned are you with the future of Ryan Ramczyk, obviously one of your top linemen and with his knee issue?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think anytime you have a good player who's going through a tough thing health-wise, you're always concerned, and yet I have a positive feeling about where he's going to end up, and I think he does, as well.

**Q. When it comes to the offensive coordinator, it's obviously been a long time since there's been a change in that regard. Is that search different from say a position coach? Is there more weight to it, and do you approach it differently?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I mean, it's different because the responsibilities are different. Particularly when you have a defensive head coach and you're looking for an offensive

coordinator. Yeah, just no different than when Sean was the head coach and we went through searches for defensive coordinators.

Yeah, it's different.

**Q. What are you looking for in the next offensive coordinator?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think we have a set of criteria that a lot of different guys can fill. We're just kind of going through that process now, so I think I'll leave it at that.

**Q. How did you view Derek's first game here in New Orleans?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think he did a lot of good things. It wasn't perfect for certain, but he did a lot of good things. Listen, I think that he was hurt for a good portion of the season, probably more so than he would let on or that was out there. I felt like he kind of hit his stride toward the end, and we did collectively, too.

He's not the only player or position that that was the case for.

**Q. Were you surprised how well Andrew has played at left tackle because usually you don't talk about him. I thought he was outstanding how he finished the whole season at left tackle.**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I would say, yeah, he gets thrown back out there and did a good job. He did. Really pleased with that.

I think that gives him some confidence, as well.

**Q. Every off-season is a balancing act between putting together the best roster and staying fiscally responsible. Do you ever get to the point where you're over the cap every off-season, where you look at it and say --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: You mean like every year?

**Q. Where you say maybe we need to look at the financial foundation for the future and maybe make some tough decisions with older players and count on our player development and drafting and free agency and roll the dice a little, counting on younger people to evolve?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think we go through that process every year in the off-season, and I've said this before, that we had kind of a vision and a plan for post

Drew Brees, and then COVID hits and we get this big setback relative to the cap and finances. So that's caused us to recalibrate a little bit.

But the answer to the question is yes, we do do that. I'm not going to tell you what we're doing, but we do do that.

We have to make up some ground. There's no question. Over a period of time here, we're going to have to make up some ground cap-wise.

**Q. What was the thinking behind the timing of reworking Marshon Lattimore's bonus while the season was still going on and making it an option bonus? Obviously some of those --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, it's just cap management. I don't want to get into details of it.

**Q. But there wasn't a purpose to doing that --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, there was a purpose. I'm not going to tell you what the purpose is. It's just cap. It's just cap management. That's what it is.

**Q. The 2017 draft was incredible. Since then, how would you evaluate what you've done since then, and will you tweak your philosophy as far as the draft? Have you evaluated what you might do to get some more results there?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, look, I think a number of these drafts, the results have yet to be written. Look, 2017 was incredible. I don't expect to duplicate that every year. I'd like to duplicate that every year, but I don't have that expectation.

No, I think our philosophies are sound. I don't see that changing.

**Q. Has anybody on the current staff offered (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I'm going to keep that list to ourselves right now. But those candidates will come out eventually.

**Q. A lot of fans have asked me how you're developing the offensive line and the expectations. I don't know if it's just a rumor, oh, he might end up retiring after all the years he's coached. Where do you think Coach Marrone is at with the offensive line right now?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think he's a fantastic coach. I do. I haven't heard anything about him retiring. That

would be a surprise to me.

**Q. You mentioned some of the stats earlier, about not paying attention to them. You've seen this league evolve over decades. How do you reconcile the analytics versus kind of that gut feel, so to say?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, that's a good question. Look, I think that analytics have been around a long, long time, way longer than we've been talking about them. They existed in 1983 when I started. We just didn't call them analytics. I think it's a tool in the toolbox, and you have to view it as such.

So I just look at it -- look, we've got a lot more data, a lot more information than we did certainly then, and even in the last three or four years we've got a lot more data that we need to pay attention to, and so we do. But it's a tool in the toolbox.

Some of these analytics tell you to go for it on every 4th down, right? Well, what if you don't have a 4th down play that you like. What if you have a player that's injured at a particular position that's key to -- so there's just a lot of factors and variables.

I look at analytics as valuable but a tool in the toolbox.

**Q. You just referenced 1983. Rumors get out there with social media and stuff like that; you've been doing this a long time. Your role is not changing. You seem energetic about recalibrating the organization. The front office is staying the same --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I saw a couple things. That was just made up. I know what you're referencing. Somebody just made that up. That's never been discussed or talked about.

Now, am I slower? Yeah, I probably ran a 4.5 when I was 30, and I don't think I could run 5 flat right now, so I am slower. But yeah. I've been asked that question. You get asked that when you get to a certain age, right, whatever age that is.

I've said, look, I'm just going to wake up one morning and say, this is the day. It's not going to be tomorrow, but everything for the next 10 years is open. We'll see.

**Q. When you were asked about DA earlier, you mentioned the stats of other coaches' careers, but what are some of the things he's done the last two years or some of the qualities he has that's led you to believe that he can get the team back to the playoffs?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think the things that the head coach is responsible for, game day management, scheduling, all the things that you guys don't see that I see or that we see internally I feel good about. Yeah, there's certainly areas that he can -- we've had quarterback change, we've had some things change in the last two or three years. We've got to look at ourselves and say, okay, what's our expectations, are they realistic, and if we're not meeting those expectations, what can we do differently.

I don't believe that that's the head coach right now. I like Dennis Allen. I think it's a good coach.

**Q. Regarding the offensive coordinator, do you share that with Derek Carr as far as his input and what he thinks, or is it like, okay, you've made the decision and then he has to accept it, or is he involved in that?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, we don't ask our players to make decisions. We don't. That's not a burden that we put on them.

Now, we talk to a lot of our veteran players about the season, about the things that we expect from them, and they should certainly have expectations from us. But we're not asking them to do any evaluations of any kind.

**Q. Just to rephrase that a little bit, Derek Carr, whatever offensive coordinator you go with, Derek is obviously going to be a big factor in that decision. Like he's got to be able to work with that --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, look, when we make a hire, when Dennis makes a hire, certainly he's going to make the hire that'll work for him, but that's not -- that'll be our assessment. That won't be -- we're not going to ask him if he approves of A, B or C. Does that make sense?

**Q. When you guys do hire an OC, will the new OC (indiscernible) some of the guys he would want to bring with him? How does that work?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, we'll see where that goes.

**Q. If you do -- things that are out there, I know you can't talk about coaches, but Jon Gruden's name keeps popping up. How much of it has to be, you know him as a person but knowing the situation and what happened and how he feels about it, just from a news perspective -- talk about him here.**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, it's a fair question, but I don't really want to talk about any individual candidates for that role. It's a fair question, but yeah, we'll answer that when we hire.

**Q. How quickly do you expect that process to go? Would you like to take a little bit more time, or is it going to be a more rapid approach?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Look, I think one of the mistakes that our league in general makes is we're in a rush and a race to hire people because we're afraid of someone else beating us to the draw. I think that's a mistake. I think the most important thing is get the right guy, the right situation, take your time, make sure it's a thoughtful planned decision. We're going to go through the process, and we're going to make the right hire. We're not going to make the expedient hire.

**Q. Do you anticipate restructuring Derek Carr's contract this off-season?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I don't know. We're going to have to restructure a lot of contracts.

**Q. For him, too, in theory, he could move on after --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, well, that's all part of cap management that we've got to deal with.

**Q. To follow up, the length of time the process, the evaluations, why does it take as long as it does? You kind of being intentional about all that is a strength of this institution, of taking your time, making sure you get the right --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: So what's the question?

**Q. Is that something you view as a strength in terms of it's not necessarily just kind of twiddling your thumbs, like there's a process that you go through?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah. I just think that any decision of this magnitude just has to be a thoughtful, well-thought-out process, and you have to -- look, there's an obvious group of candidates, but there's another group of candidates that might not be quite so obvious that we need to make sure that we take a look at.

We'll do that.

**Q. Have you always been that deliberate, or is that something you've learned?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I'm pretty deliberate. I've always been deliberate. I think that was one of Sean's complaints about me occasionally is that I'm too deliberate and he's too impatient, so it was a good match, right?

**Q. (Indiscernible) front office, how are you approaching that? Do you anticipate any changes?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I don't know. Look, we've got great candidates inside our building, Khai and Jeff and even Michael Parenton. We have some top-flight executives in our building, and I'm rooting for them to get an opportunity, although if they get one I'll probably rue it.

**Q. I know Carolina announced they're interviewing Khai Harley, and it was reported that Jeff Ireland is going to be interviewing with the Chargers. Have they been asked for other interviews?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No, they haven't yet.

**Q. If I can go back, just to peek for a second, obviously it's professional, but when you spend 18 years with somebody, there's a huge human component, relationship there. Howie motional is that when you've been through so much with somebody --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, it's really emotional. Pete is such a great coach. Not a good coach, he's a great coach.

Listen, we had historically good offenses here for a long period of time, and Pete was a much bigger part of that than he gets credit for. Really brilliant.

Look, in his first game as a play caller, I think we scored 60 points.

Yeah, it's emotional, and he's such a good person and such a great representative of the organization for all these years. It was emotional for me. That's for sure. And it was emotional for a lot of people.

**Q. (Indiscernible) plan in place for -- you don't want to --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, again, that'll be a thoughtful, intentional process if one or both go. No different than it was when Terry Fontenot went to Atlanta and Ryan Pace went to Chicago. We've got great people behind those people, too, so I'm really confident in the people we have in the building.

But that doesn't mean we won't look outside the building, either.

**Q. What was your overall assessment of the defense this season?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think it was a lot of good things, some ups and downs. Felt like we had some young

players develop and improve. I'm excited about the prospects for our defense. I really am.

**Q. You seem kind of fired up compared to some of these other lead-ins. You have a lot of challenges going forward, including a three-year drought from the playoffs. How do you feel personally being the guy who's got to steward the organization through all these challenges?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, I'm excited about it. I'm excited about the prospects of the guys that are on the team. I'm excited about the willingness of all of our people, players, coaches, staff, to look inward and say, look, I've got to do better. Yeah, including me. It gets me fired up.

Look, I hate doing these press conferences. You guys know that. So typically I'm very stoic and unenthused, right?

But I think we need enthusiasm. I think we need a boost in energy and excitement in our building, and so again, all that stuff starts with me.

**Q. How much do you appreciate Ms. Gayle as an owner compared to say other owners around the NFL where they have no patience, whether it's the Eagles or Dallas --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: You can name them all.

**Q. But appreciate your ownership and your process --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, absolutely. We just have the best owner in sports. We just do. I felt that way about Tom Benson, too. Tom was more emotional. You know that. And yet, man, he just gives us everything we need to be successful. So if we're not successful, it's not on her or wasn't on him. It was on us. That's all you can ask for in my role and our coaches and our players.

There's never a -- it's never no when we need something to help us win. So that's so valuable. It's hard to even describe.

We can look around at different franchises and different sports and say the problem starts up here. Well, it doesn't start up here with our owner. She's fantastic.

**Q. There's a lot of coaching openings. There's going to be a lot of assistant coaches in demand. Does that play a factor? Will that be something you try to lure an offensive coordinator here that --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, that won't be an issue.

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**Q. You've talked about enthusiasm. What are your thoughts on some of those games where the fan base were booing or sold their tickets. How do you get the fans back --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, you have to win. You have to perform well. That's on us. Look, there's a little bit of a double-edged sword. We just watched the Detroit Lions and their season and how fantastic that environment is and winning for the first time in a long time. We experienced that here, right? We experienced it in '06, '07, '08, '09. You raise the bar. We raised the bar. That's a good thing.

So now that we've raised the bar, we've got to meet it, and if we're not meeting it, that's on us.

The only thing I really don't like is when we sell tickets to the opposing team and allow a big group in our building. Look, that's popular here because New Orleans is a destination. When our opponents look at their schedule and they see New Orleans, that's the trip I'm going on. We understand that.

It's just part of the deal, part of being in a great city like New Orleans.

But in terms of booing, the crowd reaction, that's on us. That's not on the fans.

Look, if I was in the stands, there's a couple times I might have booed. I don't know.

**Q. Back to the question about the age, obviously that's 50 something divided by something, but very clearly some core players, almost everyone who has made an All Pro on this team are in their 30s. What does give you the confidence that this roster is strong enough in the guys in their 20s to maintain that?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Demario Davis was All Pro. He's 35 years old, 34 years old. Cam Jordan basically played on one leg for more than half the season and was productive.

You know, age is a number. I get to say that because of my age. It's more about the performance. Am.

And I like some of these young guys that have come along, Alontae Taylor and Paulson Adebo and Carl Granderson. I can name a lot of players, Erik McCoy, the receivers that we have. There's a lot of really good things.

Look, these guys -- remember this, around the league. These guys are under contract for generally three years, right? So it's not like you have them under contract for 15

years. You have them under contract for three years at a time, and then you make a decision. That's just our league. That's what it's about.

I'm comfortable with -- I don't feel like we've got a particularly old team, and usually -- I didn't see the one you're looking at, but usually the spread between the oldest and the youngest is like 12 months, 13 months. It's not like it's -- we've got a team that's got a bunch of 35 year olds and another one that's got a bunch of 23 year olds.

**Q. When you have guys that are hurt and not playing, how does that affect your roster building and your approach?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, it affects it. Listen, you can't -- these injuries are -- I don't want to say coincidental. That's the wrong word. But they're not controllable generally. They happen.

Look, you hate when it happens, and Payton, for example, was doing some really good things and got hurt again. That's tough. But it's not like you're trying to get hurt. Trevor Penning has had a couple injuries that have slowed their development. That's different than misevaluating the talent. I don't know how to answer it otherwise.

**Q. Is there a contingency plan because it is a little uncertain because of that confidence level --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, we have a contingency -- we have to have a contingency plan for everything. Injuries are indiscriminate.

**Q. When you look at like last off-season to okay, we've got to play better against the run, you had to be (indiscernible) seemed like we took a step back in that regard where we're basically giving up four and a half yards a run and we're obviously not running the ball as well as we want to. Does that need to be flipped as far as what we give up and what we actually have? How is the disappointment of when it's actually being able to stop the run?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, I think you go into any season wanting to stop the run. Run first, right, and then pass second, generally. By the same token, we wanted to improve in takeaways, in our takeaway turnover ratio. We did that.

We weren't as good in the red zone on either side of the ball as we've been in the past, and yet I felt like, man, back half of the season we really improved in that area pretty significantly. So there's improvements that happened during the season, although the end result, the end statistic

may not be where you want to be. We're looking at all those areas and saying, okay, what did we do right, why did we do that, and how can we improve on it. Then we're looking at the things that we didn't do well that we have to improve on if we expect to get the record and the results that we want.

It's a good question, though. We've got to look at every one of those single areas and say, we weren't as good as we expected to be. Why?

**Q. What did you make of Michael Thomas' season?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Look, I thought he was doing well, and really excited about where he was, and then look, we had another injury. It's really difficult for us and for Mike to have to go through that. He's such a great competitor.

He wants to win so badly. He wants to be out there so badly. For him to get hurt again was difficult.

**Q. With that being said, seemed like the (indiscernible) left to believe at least the last couple of games that Marshon Lattimore and Michael Thomas would have been available --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No, if they were available they would have played.

**Q. Dennis was asked this question. It's been a long time since we heard a prominent player booed at home in the Superdome. Do you think what Derek went through was a little too much from the fans?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah. That's the nature of the quarterback position, though, right? You get more credit than you probably deserve, and you get more blame. It's what I said at the beginning, is that the easy and lazy thing to do with results is to blame the coach or the quarterback. That's what fans do. That's what the media does. I hear ex-players doing it. And they don't really know.

**Q. A week ago, Dennis said he thought you guys were close to getting back to wherever you wanted to go. Do you concur?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, I think we have the potential to be a really good team. Now, I thought that coming into the season, as well. But there are some things that we have to do collectively and individually to get there. Actions are going to speak a lot louder than any words, so we'll see how this off-season goes.

Yes, I'm excited about the potential of our team, but we've got to do it. We've got to perform.

**Q. With Dennis, are there schematic things you've been impressed by during his tenure?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah. Dennis is a fantastic defensive coach. Fantastic.

**Q. You referenced today that you had some ground to make up. You've kind of said in years past that you want to maybe look at how you're doing that. Is there going to need to be a little bit of a change in how you operate just with the management of it and with the restructures and (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I don't know that "change" is the right word. We've just got to be conscious of making up some ground in the next few years, and there's different ways to do that.

I've said this to you guys before. Sometimes you have to look beyond the numbers, and you have to look -- okay, how many guys are under contract. What's the roster. What are your core players. There's lots of different things to look at.

If you're \$50 million over the cap and you have 30 players under contract, that's different than being \$50 million over the cap and having 70 players under contract. There's just a lot of different variables.

**Q. With Dennis, you listed off Belichick and the records there. Does his experience not matter at all because if you throw that in, it would be year five rather than the first few years.**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, it matters. It matters. Where you were at matters, the experience.

Look, I think having any head coaching experience is valuable. You learn a lot of things your first time around. Again, you have to look beyond just the record. What was the circumstances when he was in Oakland? They basically were way over the cap. They had to tear down the team. The quarterback situation. There was a lot of variables there that -- and he was given a short amount of time. You've got to look at all those variables.

**Q. Have you ever heard the need to have a meeting with the entire team at the end of the season like you did this year? Has that ever happened before?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I've had meetings with the team before. It's been a while. But I felt like there were some things that needed to be said to the players, just like I think there's things that need to be said to the coaching staff and to our



football operations staff, and that's going to be said.

Again, I think maybe we've gotten a little too comfortable over the last few years, and so I want to make it uncomfortable.

**Q. How does that marry with - using that expression "we've gotten too comfortable," and also, you guys made it very clear you didn't think the culture needed changed; you kept most of the staff after Sean left. What are the pros and cons of that?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, you're commingling terms. Culture means a lot of things to a lot of different people. We've got great people in the building. I want to make that really clear. We've got really good guys, great representatives of the organization, hardworking. There's a lot of really good things. But there's some other things that I felt like we need to clean up, that we've let -- I don't want to say "slide." That's not the right word. But a few things that kind of have deteriorated over the last four or five years that were kind of core beliefs.

Again, that's my responsibility. That's why I spoke to the players. Look, DA spoke to the players, as well, so it's not anything different in terms of what the head coach does.

**Q. What was last week? I know assistant coaches were away from the building. Was it you and Dennis and some other core decision makers evaluating what are the major changes we want to focus on first, and offense came away as one of them?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Look, last week, the first thing, I don't think you ever make really good decisions in the aftermath of a season when it's still emotional. So we're giving the staff off, and everybody was really off a good part of last week. But it gives Dennis a chance to give some thoughts, and me, and it wasn't anything formal.

**Q. The main takeaway, obviously, you said it'll bear out the results or we'll see what happens. Since the offensive changes, does it feel like that is kind of one of the major things you've identified that could change the fortunes of this team?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, obviously, yeah. That's why the major changes.

**Q. Is there one game this season that you look back and maybe regret or think, that game could have changed the course of the season?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah. Yeah, there was a few things that happened that fourth quarter that were out of our

control that I didn't like. That might have changed the outcome of that game. But there's always things. There's always a play here or a play there.

Look, it's a one-game -- it changes the entire course and narrative of the season.

**Q. When that's happening, at the time do you think that?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I do, because I've experienced it before.

**Q. I didn't know if early in the season you think --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I said to someone, the last week we had to have certain things happen for us to get in the playoffs. We handled our part. But I've been in that situation in my career probably four or five times, and not one time has it ever happened like you wanted it to happen, right? So I hate getting to the point where you're relying on someone else to do their job for you or do our job for us. We can't put ourselves in that situation. That's on us.

**Q. When you watch Tampa do what they did, does that add to that element of it?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yes. They played a great game. They've become a good football team. They've won a lot of games in the last six, seven weeks. It's a credit to them and a credit to their coaching staff and players.

**Q. When you say "too comfortable" and "make it uncomfortable," when you have a body of work like you do combined with history, is that kind of like maybe in '08 when Garrett Gibbs left and Brett Williams got here or in '13 with Lance and Roman? Is that what you're alluding to that may be a little bit of a change, or is that just the power of --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: No, I think there's some similarities there, yeah. What's the old thing about keep doing the same things is the definition of insanity, right? We've got to do things a little differently if we expect a different result.

**Q. Officiating has been in the headlines a lot this year --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I'm trying not to talk about officiating.

**Q. From your perspective --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: At least cryptically.

**Q. From your experience as someone who was a victim of one of those high-profile mistakes, admitted mistakes, this is not a specific call against your team or anything like that, but how would you say you feel generally about the evolution of officiating since then to now? Is it disappointing or -- did you hope there would have been more changes designed to minimize errors, minimize the headlines?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Oh, man, I'm not going to comment on that. I'd like to, but -- I have some thoughts, and I've shared those with the league. That's their responsibility. Above my pay grade.

**Q. How critical do you think it is to get that finally fixed and get back to the playoffs?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, I think every year it's important to get back to the playoffs. That's the first standard of a successful season. Make the playoffs.

If you don't make the playoffs, then I don't think you can say you've had a successful season. We didn't have a successful season this year. We want to have a successful season next year, and we'll evaluate next season when next season is here.

**Q. The idea of a window as you were talking about earlier, do you guys internally see that -- you mentioned player contracts and three-year -- do you guys view kind of a window to how this roster is built, as well, or taking advantage of a window?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, I think you have to -- I probably wouldn't describe it like that. I think you have to assess your team and have realistic expectations. But I think making the playoffs is a realistic expectation. I've said that -- that was a realistic expectation this year. We're close but not close enough.

**Q. With Joel Thomas take headed to the Giants, was that a spot, running back coach, that y'all were considering making a change at already, and also --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: That was Joel's decision to pursue that. You'd have to ask him about the reasons behind that. But Joel is a fantastic coach, did a fantastic job.

**Q. You could have blocked it, though. Is that --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I don't feel that's fair to do. Look, when someone has been here for a good period of time and done a great job, they have the right to -- self-determination. Generally speaking, that's how we approach it.

**Q. Have you talked with Dennis about this, this you can watch a number of games where you see poor tackling? Or did you see throughout the league --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, that's a good question. I think that's one of the things that we need to assess is how are we approaching the off-season, how are we approaching training camp, how are we approaching the preseason games, because I felt like we got off to a really slow start in a number of those fundamental areas, and so is that a result of the way we're practicing, is that a result of the way we play the preseason games.

Look, it's hardest on your O-line and D-line, right? It's hardest on them because it's a contact sport in pads. So what's the right amount of practice and preparation for those situations. Same thing with tackling. We don't do a lot of tackling in training camp or certainly in the preseason if you're not playing a lot.

These are all the things -- look, I was telling someone when I was in Seattle in 1983, I think we had 60 three-hour padded practices for training camp, something like that. Bobby, you experienced it. Now we have 17. And none of them are three hours.

It's a different amount of preparation. I'm not saying that that was right to do it that way, but the preparation time is just different. So we have to adjust to that.

I think that's a really hard thing about coaching in this era of football, is that do we have the right amount of time to get those fundamentals squared away and ready to go week 1 of the regular season.

Look, I don't have the answers for it. I'm not a coach. That's a coach's responsibility. But it's something that we need to talk about and examine; are we preparing the right way relative to the rules that exist.

**Q. Does that examination include potentially (indiscernible) for training camp like Greenbrier or something like that?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, sure, yeah. All of it's open for discussion, yes.

**Q. As of right now, you only have two picks in the first four rounds, maybe a couple additional picks coming your way. Is that an area maybe where you'd seek to add to that pool just to kind of help with the financial flexibility of the roster?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, sure. Yeah. Yeah, because

look, when you have a young player on a rookie contract, that's a different cost and cap than having a veteran player, so it becomes part of the elements.

Look, we want to put the best roster together that we can put together. I always believe you can acquire players in all three forms really, free agents, draft picks, trades. So we're going to look at all those areas, and if we can improve our roster, that's what we'll do.

**Q. Along the same lines as the question about practice and being able to practice, have full contact and things like that, Cam talked the other day about the changes in the technology around the league and how -- the convenience of being able to study film at home, but then the complications that come with that, as well. How would you measure sort of the technological advances of the league and balancing the conveniences but also some of the problematic things?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I think that's part of the equation is that -- look, when somebody wins a championship, one of the very first things you always hear is man, we had great chemistry on our team. We loved each other, played for each other. There's a trust and a relationship.

Yet today we have -- we're all guilty of it, particularly young people. They're at dinner and they're on their telephone. They're on their -- they're texting. They're not conversing and developing that relationship. So I think that we have to be conscious of that.

It's hard to develop chemistry and trust if you don't know your teammates well. 15 years ago or 20 years ago, there would be a group of guys in the position meeting room watching film together after practice. Bobby, I'm sure you did that with your receivers and some of the other guys on your team. You're conversing. You're watching the tape. You're watching your opponent. You're talking about it. You're sharing information.

Today they go home with their iPad a lot of times and do that same study. So they're putting in work and effort, but it's just not the same.

That's one of the challenges today.

We have to have a right balance between the technology and then developing the relationships and trust.

**Q. Do you have as an organization the ability to maybe mandate certain things --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Not really. Everything is voluntary

these days. Here's what's mandatory is a commitment to winning. That's what's mandatory.

**Q. It's basically asking the players to do extra, I guess, so you can't say you have to comment and do extra film study because they've already had their film study and their normal meetings, right?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah.

**Q. So does that fall to the team captains to organize that, or even the leaders of the specific groups or whatnot? Is that entirely a player-driven thing?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: I think it's everybody. It's what do you want out of your career. What do you want as a player, as a coach, me. What do we want out of this.

It's what I said before. We all raise our hand when we say we want to win, and we all raise our hand and say we'll do whatever it takes to win. But then you have to do it.

A lot of these things that you're talking about you have to do if you want to have a successful team.

Yeah, it's simple as that, right? You've got to work on your craft. It's not a part-time career. You've got to work on your craft, and you've got to be thinking about that in some way, shape or form 24/7, especially if you don't think the other 31 teams are doing that. What gives you -- the NFL is so close. The margin for victory is so narrow. What are we doing differently? What are we doing better than everyone else? It's not just, hey, the roster is better. That doesn't happen very often. It's the teams that do the things necessary to win, and there's lots of them. There's lots of things.

**Q. Not to diminish it to like a quality over quantity kind of thing, but it feels like when you're doing the film study away individually, it's a different quality of work than doing it in a group, sharing, things like that. Is my assessment of that -- is that accurate, or am I --**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, look, we've got to get right back there, and he's done it, so ask him. Bobby, I see you nodding. I think you agree with me. There's things that you have to be committed to do.

Again, it's not mandatory things. There's not consequence -- there's not a consequence for not doing them.

But here's the thing. None of it's mandatory, and if we do every single thing, it doesn't guarantee that we're going to win. But if we don't, it kind of guarantees that you're not.

**Q. How do you feel -- it seems like the NFL goal where we are right now, you can look, and over half the league, might have been right under 20 teams, were either 7-8 or 8-7, then you look at the 49ers, you look at the Ravens. But is that ideal -- all the fan bases, everybody wants to win and everybody is not going to win. At least every year, six, seven, eight coaches get fired, and that's never going to change because everybody wants to win. It's demanding. Do you think it's good, the parity, where everybody is hovering around .500?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Well, my perspective is a little different in that, look, I was in the league before free agency existed, so you build a good roster and a good team and then you could keep it together for a long period of time. If you built a really good roster and you weren't losing anybody, you had these teams that year in and year out for a good period of time were really good, and the rest of us are trying to catch up.

Now it's just different in that it's hard to keep an entire squad, a good roster together for more than three or four years because of free agency. I think that's a good thing.

I think every year, every city and every fan base wants to have a chance to win, and I think we have that in our league, and I think that's a good thing.

But the result of that is that you have a few teams that haven't got their roster to the point where they can win yet. You've got a few teams at the very top that are really good, and then you've got the rest of us in the middle right now fighting to be 11-6 or 7-10.

There's a lot of variables within that, right. Yeah, look, we're the most popular sport for a reason. That's one of the reasons.

**Q. Following up on that, can you explain just your personal philosophy or the way you look at it when you're constantly trying to be competitive out here instead of (indiscernible) hard reset, wanting to extend that kind of (indiscernible)?**

MICKEY LOOMIS: Yeah, I don't know if I can explain it. You know, I just -- look, I look at things glass half full. I look at a roster and a team and say, man, if A, B and C happen, we can be really good. And if it doesn't or you have some injuries or you get some calls that don't go your way, then it goes the other direction.

Look, we can point to these last three seasons, 9-8, 7-10 -- what was the year before, 9-8? And say, man, there was three games there that could have easily went the other

way, and now we're talking about 12-win seasons, right?

Look, I think we've got a good roster. I do. I think that we've got to do some things better.

I probably didn't answer the question, but...

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