

# HEAD COACH SEAN McVAY

## POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE

November 17, 2024



Rams 28, Patriots 22

SM: Okay, guys. First of all, a lot of respect for Coach Mayo and their group. They did a great job, giving us everything they had. Really, it was a strange game. I thought offensively, after we have nine plays in the first quarter, end up not converting on a third down, even though he had had explosives in between there.

Then we got rolling. It was a quick drives. A one-play scoring drive, a two-play scoring drive. I thought Matthew was in command the whole day.

They did a good job of possessing the football so we didn't have that many snaps, even though we were able to get good positive yardage. Would love for us to have come away with points at the end of the half. You get all the way down, there's a great drive by the offense. For us to not come away with anything, that was frustrating.

Overall, I'm proud of this group. They are resilient, and they had some good momentum going, and then our defense does a great job getting a stop right there. Kam Kinchens coming up with another big play. Seems like Fiske made his presence felt. Puka was big-time today. And then congratulations to Matthew being top ten in touchdown passes all time. That's a major accomplishment. I thought he was lights out today.

Really, if it wasn't for a couple of those third downs where we just missed, even in the last drive where we're trying to be able to run the clock out, we had a big play to Demarcus. They did good job being able to get their hands up. But he was in command. Unbelievable job of just kind of I thought he saw the field really well. Recognized the zero, ended up hitting Cooper on the 69-yard touchdown. He did a great job today.

**Q. Sean, no sacks and then also, not just the pass game but the run game in the middle parts of the game, you guys were able to get it going. How did the offensive line play today in your mind, and what went into replacing --**

SM: Just what we thought would be best, Jordan, kind of like what I talked you guys about. When you're able to run the football, other things can come off of it. It's what offensive ball should look like when it's quality. And I

thought there was a lot of examples of that. We have to be able to build on this.

I was proud of that group. It was a weird day, like I mentioned, because some of the minimal opportunities. And then some of the snaps we had in the first half were more situational ball or a sudden change in the red area. They did a good job. The one drive we're talking about where Kyren got a couple of runs, I thought our left side did an excellent job. You can see Alaric was really coming off the football. Steve did a great job. I was proud of the group overall. They did give us a couple different things. They'd shown some stuff. I thought we held up really well in protection.

There was a couple times where there were some stunts they brought that forced to ball to come out earlier than we'd have liked. I was really pleased. Thought Coach Wendell did a really great job. Cool to have a handful of guys that were here. This place meant a lot to them, to be able to come back here and get a win.

**Q. A couple of thoughts on Drake Maye and what's striking about him now that you've seen him in person?**

SM: You look at it, and you can really see his ability to create off schedule. I thought he did a great job of being able to make plays in the pocket today, extend drives. I thought he was patient, taking some underneath check-downs where guys were able to create. We had tighter coverages, and he was able to fit the ball into tight windows.

He looks like a stud. I didn't do too much work on him coming out. I do know a lot of people that studied him really hard that I truly respect their opinions loved what he was all about. You can see just the impact that he has on his teammates, the way people talk about him here. He looks like he's going to be a special player for a long time, and he gave us fits today.

**Q. At the end of the game, when you decided to punt and not kick the field goal, difficult decision?**

SM: There wasn't a lot of reason to feel great about that operation today. And so felt good about the defense. I thought Ethan and our punt team did a good job of being



able to pin them deep. Knowing they needed a touchdown, there wasn't a whole lot of back and forth. Felt pretty convicted in that decision right there.

**Q. Three for four in the red zone. What was the difference in that area?**

SM: Execution. It always is. Really the one we didn't was at the end of the half where we were more competing against the clock. It was execution. The guys did what they're capable of doing. I thought the coaches did a great job of this week of being able to provide clarity. They had the courage to be able to go for it.

That's what we want. They did a good job mixing it up. There's a lot of different personnel groups, a lot of different people they play defensively. So we've got to be able to build on this. I was proud of the group and, obviously, finishing with touchdowns instead of field goals or those field goal attempts, that was the difference in last week's game and arguably the difference in this week's game.

**Q. I know Puka came back into the game. Was there any worry when he went out with an injury?**

SM: They were being cautious with him because he threw up. He fell on the ball. He's crazy like that. There wasn't anything with his head. He's okay.

**Q. I know you talk about this in L.A. You have two wide receivers. One of them dominated the first half. Second half, Kupp, a big second half. Both over 100 yards, both big plays. Can you talk about the importance of that not only balance on your team, running and throwing, but having two go-to guys.**

SM: I think you mentioned it. With the question, you answered it. To be able to have two capable guys. I think Demarcus Robinson, Tutu Atwell has been really reliable. It was good to see Colby Parkinson make a big play for the touchdown on the keeper.

Puka and Cooper have been -- Cooper obviously has been doing it for a long time. He's so steady. He maximizes his moments. There's a couple of ops where we missed him in the first half, even though we were able to get the touchdown to him.

I thought the touchdown coming out of the half, the second play of our opening drive, that was big. Zero blitz. He's running a seam across his face but he's always kind of just -- that's what he's been. That's what makes him great, and I think his influence has rubbed off on Puka.

Puka is a stud. No moment is too big for him. I thought it

was a huge third down catch that he had to be able to extend the drive to run some more clock off. And the best thing about Puka is he'll probably tell you he wanted to make the one we didn't make where we could have extended it down inside their tight red area if we end up making that play versus man coverage. But they were both great. They were instrumental in today's win.

**Q. Sean, to follow up on that, on the zero blitz, did Cooper deviate? So did he read that as --**

SM: He read it right. That was the adjustment you want with that specific route and that coverage contour. He and Matthew were on the same page. It was a 69-yard touchdown. We like those plays.

**Q. To follow up on defense, they've been taking the ball away. That sequence in the fourth quarter, the Patriots scoring drive with the two big penalties, any concern there? What are the teachable moments?**

SM: The teachable moments are that we can learn from those things. That was the thing. Jared Verse is -- he's going to be better from that. Those are the types of things when you've got a young, youthful group, they've got a great spirit about them. How do we rein them in and not allow them to extend drives by things we can control.

That's absolutely something we've got to be mindful of. We'll get it fixed. Our guys are the right kinds of guys, I have no doubt. That could have cost us and, fortunately, we don't have to learn the hard way. I trust we'll be better moving forward. It starts with me making sure there's clarity. Love the guys, but that was something we gathered them up and talked about it right after that drive. Like I mentioned, could have cost us, but I do believe we have the right guys that will learn from it.

**Q. Sean, you're 5-5. Are you guys a .500 team? If not what do you have to do going down to the last seven days to change that?**

SM: Take them one week at a time, Gary. Here's what I know. You're really starting the second half of the season. However you want to look at it, we look at it as those first nine games or the first half, here's the second half of the season. It's about how you finish. You've seen that. You've got to be able to earn it every single day.

We can't play two games now. We can only play one game this week. We can have a great week of preparation. We've got a super-hot team coming in town that this is what you love. It's a great challenge. We are 5-5. That's what our record is after ten games. I fully believe we are capable of continuing to trend in the right

direction and continue to improve. What that looks like, I'm excited for us to be able to go swing and see what the hell, you know, I'm sitting up here saying. And maybe you'll be asking hey, you're 6-5 now. But you've got to earn it. We'll take it one game at a time.

**Q. Sean, on the wide receivers, it seemed like you were kind of stay away from Christian Gonzalez a little bit. I should say Cooper and Puka were able to stay away from those guys. Is that a scheme thing?**

SM: It kind of just worked out that way. There were some instances where we got a lot of respect for them. I had a lot of respect for the secondary, the different things they could do. Gonzalez is the real deal, does an excellent job, and I think it worked out that way. There were some instances where we said if you can avoid him, let's go ahead and do that.

**Q. Is that something that you thought about entering the game?**

SM: You know, I mean, you always look at -- it's always about, all right, your players first, our team, and then what are those match-ups. And if you have the opportunity to be able to stay away certain things, then you want to be able to do that.

But he's a great player. I think it just kind of worked out that way. Then there were some instances he was at the point of attack. All things being equal, if you had your choice, you'd say let's stay away from him.

**Q. Hunter Long, his continuing growth blocking for you.**

SM: He's done a great job. I've been really pleased. I think Nick Caley's leadership with that room in general has been on display. You look at Hunter, you look at Davis, you look at Colby, all those guys have continued to improve. We'll look forward to at some point getting Tyler Higbee back. Hunter's been awesome. It's been great to see him stay healthy. He's had great ability, works the right way. He's all about the right kind of stuff, and he's been a key contributor. Been really happy for Hunter.

Thanks, guys.