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Offensive Coordinator Todd Downing

Q: Do you believe the level of intensity has been ramped up and executed this week in Florida?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, we have a really prideful group and we all share in the responsibility of falling short of our expectations. So whenever you find yourself in this situation, if you're prideful about what you do, you're going to work as hard as you possibly can. So I think that's what he's alluding to, just looking for every detail that we can improve on, every area that we can kind of tighten the screws up a little bit and everybody across the board is doing that."

Q: What did you see on film from this past week after not being able to take a lot of shots down the field like you did against the Chiefs in the previous week?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, you know I've had a couple people ask me about that. We ran some people down the field. It's not like we didn't call the shots and run people in those spots. They either covered it or their progression may have taken them somewhere else, but it certainly was not a complete change in approach saying, 'Hey we're going to take shots against the Chiefs and when we're in Buffalo we're not.'"

Q: How do you encourage Derek Carr to be more patient in the pocket to view all of his reads?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, he's been really dedicated to his footwork, and being on time and taking the proper amount of hitches to throws and things like that. Derek does a great job of seeing the field, he diagnoses coverages very well. And there are times where I think he can manipulate zone defenders with his eyes a little bit, so we're working on that and just keeping him comfortable and getting him through his progressions. He's dedicated to doing everything we ask him to do."

Q: How fine is the line between taking what the defense gives Carr and taking what you want as an offense?

Coach Downing: "I think that is a fine line, and I think sometimes the defense is giving you more than what you may originally think. So, it's my job to design a good game plan that attacks the softness in defenses or the vulnerabilities, if you will. And [it's] also my job or the coaching staff's job to get people in the right place at the right time so that we can go out and execute. So, we'll continue to improve in all of those areas and look forward to the second half of the season."

Q: Is it more a matter of Carr reading the situation better?

Coach Downing: "We all have an equal share in improving this thing and becoming more explosive on a week-in and week-out basis. We're looking forward to seeing what it looks like from here on out."

Q: What does it mean having Seth Roberts healthy and able to practice this week, and what does it do to your offense to find out he's not available on gameday like last week?

Coach Downing: "Seth is extremely valuable. He's a really, really good slot receiver in this league. He understands coverages extremely well. He understands how to fit into the timing concepts extremely well verses different looks and navigating zone defenders in those underneath routes and so on. We missed Seth, but it's 'next man up.' And we've always had that mentality whether it was when Derek was banged up or Seth gets banged up, whether it's seven days before the next game or seven minutes before the next game, it's the next man up mentality and that's something that [Head] Coach [Jack] Del Rio has done a great job of infusing in this team from the day we got here. We're excited to get him back but we certainly missed him on Sunday."

Q: On the final play of the first half on Sunday, do you think Carr should have went for the Hail Mary throw?

Coach Downing: "You know, we've had a lot of good discussion internally about that situation. I can do a better job in that situation. Derek and Jack are on the same page there. It's not like they're divided in the thinking of it. It's just a matter of their game review being in a little different moods I guess. The important thing is we're all on the same page and going forward we'll all execute better."



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Q: Do you think he should have gone to the end zone with the ball though?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, I think if we're calling a vertical shot, giving three guys a chance to go up and get the ball that we give that a shot. Derek had his logic in that moment and I got to do a better job of coaching."

Q: Is the up-tempo offense a weapon for you guys?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, we've had a little bit of mixed results. It's something we like to do. Certainly don't want to divulge too much as to why we like to do it. I started to try to get into it last week and we ended up with a holding call right after a 40-yard gain. We were getting cranking a little bit and made us stub our toe. But, we mix it in as we see fit week by week. There's different criteria that might lead us to like it a little bit more than other weeks."

Q: Do you see the offensive line being as precise as a run-blocking unit as they were last year?

Coach Downing: "I think we're an evolving unit. I think we're growing, I think we're learning each other's styles a little bit – getting Marshawn [Lynch] back adds an element into the run game there – so it's going to be a growing process. Hopefully we've grown to this point in the second half of the season and we're able to put our best foot forward."

Q: Would you anticipate a similar load for Lynch as he had before he was suspended?

Coach Downing: "Yeah, now that we have our normal group back, I think you can anticipate a similar workload as people have had. And as we've discussed before, the more first downs you get, the more opportunities you get and the more chances you have to execute your game plan. So, look forward to those guys toting the rock for us and showing us what they've got."

Q: How valuable is Lynch's ball security especially after a game where turnovers were costly?

Coach Downing: "Regardless of who's carrying the ball for us, we put a huge priority on protecting the football, whether it be passing the ball or carrying the ball. A guy like Marshawn that's an example of consistency in his ball security is certainly a nice thing to have back when you're stressing that after a game where we did not take care of the ball very well."

Q: What does Jon Feliciano bring to this team?

Coach Downing: "We get a chuckle every once in a while on the sidelines. There's a big play down on our sideline and you can see our bench and Jon Feliciano is always one of the first guys celebrating or helping up the ball carrier as he's gone out of bounds. The guy plays the game with passion and joy and energy and a nastiness and tenacity that I really, really respect and appreciate. We're fortunate to have Jon. I talked to you guys about that a number of weeks back. He is a starting caliber player in this league and we feel very, very fortunate that if Gabe [Jackson] can't answer the bell that Jon is ready to go."

Q: He's valuable as a kick returner too...

Coach Downing: "*(laughter)* That's right. That's right, no doubt."

Defensive Coordinator Ken Norton, Jr.

Q: How do you feel about your run defense after how LeSean McCoy played on Sunday?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "McCoy was good. I think that up until that point we were pretty solid and sound. You got to give him a lot of credit and the offensive line a lot of credit for putting bodies on it. At the same time, we missed a tackle or two on that play. Not very happy about it, and we've certainly cleaned that up."

Q: What does it mean to cut it loose on the defense?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "It just means making plays. Getting off the field. A lot of enthusiasm. Flying around. The ways we expect things to go. We're excited about the challenge."



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Q: Is it a fine line with getting picks and not putting the defense in jeopardy of having a big play go against them?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “We understand that there’s a certain process. There’s a certain technique. There’s certain defenses that you call. It’s about mastering your defense, mastering your technique. Then putting yourself in position to make plays. Study well. Watching a lot of film. Really understand the formations that you’re getting. I think that the process of being smart and adding your hustle and your enthusiasm to it, it puts you in a position to make plays. You have to obviously play the defense, work with your teammates. Anticipate plays and then make your plays.”

Q: Has the presence of NaVorro Bowman brought out the best in Cory James?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Absolutely. We talked about this before. I think NaVorro has been a fantastic influence on the defense as well as the linebacker room. I think the young linebackers that we have really need an example. A guy sitting in their ears. You got to watch in the way that NaVorro when he first got here prepared for a quick game and how effective he was. I think it was a positive influence for the young players to see about mastering, about the studies habits, about taking working home, doing extra work and then the results. I think young players today, they respond to results. They see what NaVorro has been able to do with his career.”

Q: Shalom Luani has really good instincts, but how do you walk the line of teaching him to trust his instincts knowing he’s a rookie who might make mistake?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Every player has a certain value that they bring to the table. You have to really understand what that is and work around it. It’s about experience. It’s about understanding what you can and cannot do in certain situations. Understanding and anticipating the routes you way get on certain downs and distances. Instincts are really good if you use them correctly. I think at his age, you have to go through the bumps, you have to go through the tough times and learn and get your stars. Then they really teach you how to use you for the better.”

Q: The secondary is dealing with a lot of injuries. How do you feel like the guys who have played in their place have done?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “The guys are working hard and the guys who aren’t in are helping the guys who are in. They’re working. They’re practicing well. They’re doing a great job in the study room. They’re playing very solid.”

Q: Did you see guys get away from trusting the scheme on Sunday?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Well you know runs are going to happen. I mean you fit them up, some guys get blocked. Some guys fall down. Some guys don’t get off of blocks. It’s going to happen. You wouldn’t have the great running backs if you didn’t have the great runs. So, it’s going to happen. You just want to keep them down to a minimum. You want to keep explosives down. Then you find out where the break down was and you fix it. That’s what we’ve done.”

Q: How do you tap into that sense of urgency while not letting it distract from what you’re trying to do?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “We all love the game. I think we all have a certain vision of what the season was going to be like. I don’t think anyone envisioned the first half going the way it has. At the same time, there’s still a lot of football left. We’re very proud coaches and players. We are very talented at what we do. We’re really excited about the very next game. Excited about getting on the road. You can’t get going until you get that first one. It’s going to happen. We know it’s going to happen, we truly believe. It’s about going out there and not talking about it, going out there and doing it.”

Q: As a defense, how do you change your approach to your lack of interceptions?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “If you’ve been around a long time, you know they come in bunches. Sometimes you get them really fast. Sometimes they come over a period of time. Sometimes you get none and then they all come. You have to understand the believe in your principles. You have to understand and believe in your fundamentals and the way you work and the way you practice and know it’s going to come. Sometimes you just don’t see things, but you know, you have faith that your work ethic and your principles and the things that have going you to this point. You’re here for a reason. It’s going to come. We know it’s going to come. It’s just about working, keeping the belief and knowing



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that we know what's out there. It's just a matter of when. We'd like to see it sooner, but we aren't in charge of when it comes. We're ready to roll."

Q: Is that guy who gets the first interception going to get a steak dinner?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "I don't know what he's going to get, but we're all going to be pretty happy. We're going to be pretty happy."

Q: What do you want to see out of Obi Melifonwu on Sunday?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "We'd like to see him on the field. That'd be pretty good. After that, he's a long, strong, good-looking athlete. Really excited about him. We were really excited about him on draft day. Really looking forward to seeing him run and use his speed and his size. He matches up well with the tight ends we have to face in this league. It's just a matter of getting him on the field and playing. Then just going from there. I think he's the same way. He's excited about playing. Nobody wants to be injured, it's just a part of the game. We're excited to finally get him here. Welcome him on the team and in the group. Hug him up and have him hit the film, just like the rest of the guys. We're just excited to get him out there and see him sweat and be a part of this whole thing."

Q: How do you keep someone like him who's inactive the first half of the season a part of the process?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "He's here every day with everybody. He's gone through the process of the rehab. He's in the meetings with everyone. He's at the prime of his life. Just imagine doing the very best thing you love to do and being really good at something and just waiting to do it. He's the best at what he does. He's in the prime of his life. Football is his thing and now he's time to play."

C Rodney Hudson

Q: How does getting Marshawn Lynch back this week help the offense?

Hudson: "It's going to help us. Anytime you can have the experience back and that type of player that he is, it'll help us for sure."

Q: You guys have such depth on your offensive line, in the event that Gabe Jackson can't go, Jon Feliciano has proven that he can step in. What does that versatility mean to the line?

Hudson: "It helps a lot. It's always tough to see one of your brothers hurt, but it happens in football. We wish that we could get Gabe back as fast as possible, but Jon is ready to play and step in. He's done it before and we feel comfortable with him there."

Q: What does he bring?

Hudson: "He plays hard. He's a smart player. He works really hard. He studies. Whatever play is called, you can count that he's going to give everything he's got."

Q: When you look at the run blocking thus far, are you guys as precise as you'd want to be?

Hudson: "We always want to get better. Try to get better every day, every drive. We just have to keep working and focus on the little details."

Q: After last year, you guys were seen as one of the most dominant lines in the NFL. How would you assess the way you've played so far?

Hudson: "Last year was last year. I don't really focus on last year. I can't even remember half the stuff that happened. We just focus on today and trying to get better, and take it one play at a time. We always can do better. Last year, we were saying the same thing. That's always going to be the case. I've never played a perfect game and I know my teammates don't feel like they've ever played a perfect game. Until that happens, which will probably never happen, you just want to try to get better."



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Q: What does Ndamukong Suh bring?

Hudson: "He's a good player. He's been making plays for a long time. Plays hard, plays well."