

**Coach Holmgren**  
**January 16, 2006**

**(Opening statement...)** “Needless to say it was a pretty good meeting with the team today and we’re all feeling pretty good about what happened. Tough ball game against the Redskins. They were a very physical team but we did persevere so now we get to play for the right to go to the Super Bowl, which is very, very exciting for us. It will be a normal practice week. We are a little sore, a couple guys are a little sore and stiff and we have to get them ready to go. Very, very excited about the opportunity.”

**(On Shaun Alexander...)** “Our running back I think is pretty good. When I saw him at our meeting today at 1 o’clock he said he was feeling good, he’s fine. So, I’m assuming unless something happens, I’m assuming he’ll be ready to practice.”

**(On any tests he took...)** “I don’t know. I haven’t talked to the doctors. I’m assuming he did and I will talk to them probably this afternoon sometime after this. I had that feeling right after the game even that he was a little bit better than I have seen other concussion guys. I think in this day and age we’re being more careful with that type of injury and that’s the right thing to do.”

**(On if he lost consciousness...)** “I don’t know. He was pretty wobbly. I’m sure that any time something like that happens for a little bit you’d kind of go out.”

**(On what exactly happened...)** “It looked like a knee. It looked to me like LaVar Arrington came in on a tackle and Shaun was going down and it looked like his knee got him in the side of the hat.”

**(On Alexander’s fumble...)** “I’m not worried about it. When he sees the film he’s going to kick himself too because he started and he cut back. If he just stayed with the play he would have walked in. It would have been a really fine football play and a good way to start that game. He’s made things happen by cutting back and when he sees it he’s going to kick himself.”

**(On the other injuries...)** “D.D. Lewis is a little sore although he played in the football game and did pretty well. That situation with his foot is going to kind of last until we’re all done. (Darrell) Jackson’s back is sore, he’s a little stiff. He got a shot in the back and it was a really good one. He took a hit in the back I should say and it was a really good one so it’s bruised, he’s sore and (Bobby) Engram the same thing.”

**(On the punt return situation...)** “I met with Bob (Casullo) and we’re going to make some changes on that team. I’m not going to go into great detail as to what we’re going to do, but that part of our game, it’s too bad because our coverage teams were so good in the game, I mean so good and Jimmy Williams who is a very, very confident catcher and a good catcher of punts, I don’t worry about him too much when he’s back there, and this can happen. The first one he kind of let bounce and then the next one he tried to catch. He wasn’t quite sure I don’t think when went back there what he was going to do. I think that position of all the positions of play, that guy has to know exactly and be confident in what’s going to happen. And then in his defense we didn’t block very well for him.”

Anytime, if you're returning punts and you have a punt and you think things are going to get blocked and you get smacked, I don't care who you are, I think that sticks in your mind just a little bit. We will make some changes. It was not a good part of our game and hopefully we can make some improvements in that area."

**(On his thoughts after watching the Bears/Panthers game...)** "I thought Soldier Field, the actual turf wasn't very good for the game. I like ours a lot better. I thought it was two teams just slugging it out and I thought it was a great game to watch. It will help us; it will be a good game to study. Both teams I think have real heavyweight defenses yet both teams moved the ball. Give credit to both teams."

**(On Steve Smith...)** "Special player. He's one of those guys that when you prepare for them you better have a plan to try and do something to make it a little more difficult for him otherwise he can take over a game by himself, you've seen him do it, he did it yesterday. He's done it before."

**(On the advantage of a depleted running game in Carolina...)** "I will say this, a guy like DeShaun (Foster) gets hurt or Shaun Alexander gets hurt or anybody who is your runner gets hurt, I think you have to be careful of saying now we can relax and we can look over there. They have the young man that they put in the game that was running the football is a very good player. You can not ignore their running game and we won't do that. I think every defensive coordinator that I have ever met really focuses in on defending the run first usually because if you can't do that you're in for a long, long, long day. So we'll do the same thing. You know they have Steve Smith and they have other good players. Losing the runner while it's a tough injury, we are not going to say 'ok, because of that we can focus over here'. I think you would be making a mistake if you did that."

**(On role players making an impact this season...)** "For us it's been everything. I happened to see Matt's (Hasselbeck) comment when he talked about something I have told the team all season long and I mentioned it you before that for us to have the season we have had our best players, the guys you really count on, the 'Pro Bowl' type guy, must have their best seasons for the team to do well. I believe that and I still believe. But then Matt said the nice thing, the good thing and a correct thing, he said that while that's true, this team wouldn't have been where we are if it hadn't been for the Sean Locklear's, the Marquand Manuel's, the guys who came in, Joe Jurevicius, the guys that have come in and substituted for a guy that has been injured. We have had some injuries. We try not to use it and in fact I won't let them use it as an excuse, but there have been good football players that we have missed this year. Fortunately the young men that have come in and played have more than exceeded our expectations, I mean they have been very, very good. I think it's a great example of team and it's a great selling point to be able to talk about that with the rest of the guys. I mean, they practice hard too. Maurice Morris, he doesn't get a lot of reps during the week, but he's always been ready and had to be ready on Saturday and played a tough, tough football game against a very physical defense and got the tough yards for us. Caught a very, very big pass at the end. That's a great example. I think those things happen not just to the Seahawks, but to any team. Very few teams are fortunate enough to go through without injury, very few. And if you get this far and you have had some injury, every team has had great stories and I think our team this year, there

is a number of them. They have been ready, prepared themselves properly and when given the chance they played well.”

**(On if it's a reflection of veteran leadership...)** “It's how we do things. Every team we have had here I talk about a lot and the players know this, it's our sport more than any other injury can happen and happens and all of a sudden, it can happen the first play of the game and you better be ready. And we talk about that and talk about not changing the type of play or the plays we're going to call. If I'm calling this play with Shaun Alexander, I'm going to call this play, the same play, with Mo Morris and be ready to go and he did that. I think we talk about it so much it's kind of in their thought process, that's the first thing. the second thing is the type of player and the type of team we have this year, I think those guys, its kind of coach talk every once in a while and you have to be ready to go, but if you're not practicing and no one ever talks to you at practice. To say that you're going to be as ready as the guy here I'm not sure that's ever possible. But the amazing thing about this group is that those guys have been ready and it's a credit to them. It's a credit to the guy starting in their position that they're encouraging them and they're talking to them and we have that type of feeling on the team. I think it all has made it work this year.”

**(On taking a peek at this week's game last week...)** “Yes we did as a matter of fact. Any time you have a bye, in fact I passed this consensus thing around with all the coaches and said pick who we're going to play, and I wanted to see who they wanted to play and all these things. They all filled them out and I added them all up. I separated the staff, I had two game plans up on the board and we did some preliminary work on those teams. One of the reasons we had just played Washington and Tampa, we didn't know, so we took that, in fact I was thinking last night and when we played Washington we came in and erased everything and the boards were just full of stuff. We erased everything and got to work on Washington. Last night I woke up in bed and I said ‘I wonder if we wrote down or someone copied what we wrote on the board’. I came in and Gary Reynolds, bless his heart, said ‘coach, I do that all the time’ so I said thank you. So we did get a little bit of a start on Carolina so our film study it was good and I'm glad I did that.”

**(On how much he felt he needed to have success...)** “Did I feel we needed it? No more than normal, that part of it. Did I want it? Yes. All the things that were talked about and any number of things this season, I joked about it but it was true. I'm human just like anyone else. My record after the bye as Mike Sando always pointed out was 0-27 or whatever it was so winning the game after the bye finally, that was nice. That was one of my old demons I could get rid of. A playoff win for this organization and this city, yes, to say I didn't think about that during the week, I'm human, yes I did. Now, did it change what I did or how I went about my business? I might have been a little crankier than normal at times at practice, but no I think I just approach it how I approach. No, we wanted it bad for a lot of reasons. It was sweet, it was special.”

**(On if there is a lot of pressure for this week...)** “The Championship game is still the Championship game. If any player is thinking that way, I'll change their mindset because as you go along and you guys know this it just builds and builds and builds. No, this next game, as important last Saturday's game, this next one is more important.”

**(On if he saw what he's been trying to accomplish with Matt Hasselbeck...)** “Did you happen to notice that one whirly bird he did? And then threw the ball? He doesn't do that very much anymore. He had another fine football game. I'm very, very happy for Matt and that is no secret. It's a good story to me because he overcame some adversity at the beginning of his career and he played through some injury. He's a mentally tough guy. Like all of us there is a period of becoming a little more humble. And then kind of coming out of it and going. That is the great thing about sports and he's done that. I'm very, very pleased with how he's playing.”

**(On Hasselbeck's ability to change plays at the line of scrimmage and how it's developed...)** “I still have my moments with him. It appears as though he has never had the ability to audible before and that is not the case. We went in in years past and we have an audible system and he always has had the ability to do that. I've always said ‘but, if you change my play to your play, your play has got to work other wise it will hurt my feelings’. He has to approach it that way. In a big audible game for us, it would be six in the course of a game. If he's having to do it much more than that then I don't think we're doing a good job of setting it up or calling the game, so having said that you have to do more. The difference this year I think is that we have put together a package and he now has the ability to audible to some runs. Not that he couldn't do it before, but we spent more time as a coaching staff putting that together and I think that has helped, I know it has helped. The play to Mack Strong was an audible. He just didn't pull that out of the air it was something, he got a look, bang, here's the audible. The guys handled it well, the line blocked it right. That is a difference from what we've done in the past. He still could audible to passes and still change some protections, he's always had that ability to do that, but I think because of our offensive line's experience and because of our running game, we have added another dimension to that which has been good. He's handling it well.”

**(On it taking some time to change it...)** “Absolutely. I think it comes with experience because typically you'll see quarterbacks, if it gets down to it, and you saw it with Matt three years ago, that if you watch a football game and the quarterback and it gets a little frantic in there, and the clock is going down and he gets a little frantic, watch how many good times good things happen. Whereas if you see a guy and I'm not talking about movement like Peyton Manning, I'm not talking about that, I'm just talking about underneath the center and doing what he has to do. If you watch Matt now, very, very controlled as I would say it, in his movement, in his thinking and it really takes some of the pressure off making the perfect call in that tight situation. He's done a good job of it.”

**(On how he compares to Brett Favre when he was heading to his first Super Bowl...)** “They are different guys. As far as leaders, the similarities are competitiveness and the leadership that they show. Matt appears to be a little more serious whereas Brett was always kind of a little more lousy, goosey in his demeanor and so on. There are some similarities. They are both kind of young in their development. Matt hasn't been the quarterback for a long time. The teams were a little bit different in the make up. As far as the quarterback is concerned, they were good decision makers and they were pretty hot when you needed them to be hot. When you're in the latter part of the season and into the playoffs, they're playing well. Hopefully it continues.”

**(On if there was a turning point with the offensive line...)** “Keeping them together I thought. Coming into this season after last season and then coming into this offseason when you had Walter (Jones), (Robbie) Tobeck, Chris Gray, (Floyd) Womack were all free agents. In something that really needs continuity, your offensive line; we were close to having to replace a number of them. And then when Mike Reinfeldt came back and we were able to get going and get some work done in contracts, keeping them all together was huge. There was a nice blend of youth and maturity there. Tobeck and Gray, it’s been important to have those guys.”

**(On setting the line up being tougher than he thought...)** “Not being able to sign Walt (Jones) in training camp those couple, three years whatever it was had an affect on us because we had to play different combinations in training camp. This year when Walt signed, it kind of set the table for everything. Until Pork Chop (Womack) got hurt, it was pretty much set on what we were going to do. I think the club should receive some credit to be willing to draft linemen, offensive linemen high. You get into the draft and even this last year, Chris Spencer, he hasn’t played a lot so you go ‘gee, your number one pick was a center and not only was he a center, but he didn’t play very much’. And you go ‘ok, but’. Without those guys up front and without some continuity, you don’t have much of an offensive team, you really don’t. Picking (Steve) Hutch high, (Sean) Locklear pretty high, Walt was there and resigning Womack and then drafting some real good in my opinion young guys, its not as I say, its not always the sexy pick. You guys are all down there and the Seahawks pick a center and you sigh, and then you go have lunch. It’s very, very important and I think that was one of the keys.”

**(On players saying this during the week before games and if he says anything to them...)** “I have already done that and I do that each week even during the season. One I think it’s foolish to say anything about your opponent unless it’s something good. If you don’t have anything good to say, don’t say anything. There are coaches that concoct bulletin board material if you don’t say anything. So if you’re going to say stuff. The players are human too and they are going to be fired up for the game so why do you need to give them any extra ammunition? Really, when you get to this point of the season, we know Carolina is good, and hopefully they think we’re pretty good. It’s the Championship game for Pete’s sake. No one gets there by just walking in the back door usually. I talked to them about it today and like I’ve done. Its kind of what I do on Monday’s during the season.”

**(On quarterbacks being drafted late and the unpredictability of development at that position...)** “I think so. That will be a talked about and written about for years and years and years I’m sure because it happens. The hard part of that is if you’re a team that needs a quarterback and there is one of those guys available in the first round, that comes out of college with a lot of stuff said about him, its almost impossible not to pick those guys if you need a quarterback because they don’t come around. They don’t come around very often. But that also means to draft up that high and then you have one of those bad seasons and you had a season where your record is not very good. I think this though and we felt this with Brett Favre when we traded a number one pick for him and really when I brought Matt here, its no different, I believe this, one mans opinion, that if you do your research and think about it enough, he may not be exactly the player that he was but then its my obligation to make him the player you want to be. You have got to commit to that guy and

sometimes you go down with the ship. But the only way it has a chance to work is if you commit. It's a little bit of a crap shoot at times, but if you study the position and figure you know the position and they are willing to commit to that person once you make the decision, most of the time it should work ok."

**(On Lofa Tatupu...)** "He's not telling me to introduce the special teams anymore if that's what you mean. He's just an amazing young man and I'm very, very happy he's on our football team and he's just going to get nothing but better. He's mature beyond his years and he has been the real glue on our defense I think. The amazing part about it is he's a rookie. Can he do anymore than he's done? I don't think so. I don't think we can ask him to do anymore. I've taken him off of most of the special teams otherwise he'd run down on kickoffs. He made a play Saturday in the deep middle of the field running down there with somebody. He made me a little nervous to see our middle linebacker 40 yards down the field covering a wide receiver. So I politely buzzed John (Marshall) and I said 'John, is that what you wanted?' He's a great kid and we are lucky to have him, lucky to have him."

**(On the experience Jake Delhomme has with playoffs and if it gives him experience over Hasselbeck...)** "Matt has been in playoff games now and we've been in the playoffs three years in a row and we finally won a game. I think the load on his shoulders last Saturday, I don't know if it will ever get any more of that if you ask for a player to perform. I think it's to our advantage that we're playing at home, I think that will help. Matt is a pretty mature guy. What they've done, gone on the road and won, you know he's a tough guy. He's a good football player. I think both John Fox and Mike Holmgren are happy with their quarterbacks right now."

**(On if he'll limit Shaun Alexander at all this week during practice...)** "Not unless I have to. If they tell me he can go, he's going to go. He didn't get very tired on Saturday, so he should be pretty fresh. I always do what the doctors tell me to do on that. We're not going to take it lightly. He said he felt good today. I have to meet with the doctors and if he can go he will practice regular practice. No one is going to hit him too hard during the week I promise you that."

**(On Sean Locklear's status...)** "I have to wait for details on that. I'm aware of the situation but I don't know the details yet. Right now I have no comment other than to just say that as soon as we get some definitive answers, we'll release something."

**(On if they really did preliminary preparation for other NFC teams...)** "We did do that. That was the truth. We set it up and we worked on those two teams. Again, it was preliminary but we did get some good film study on both those teams."

**(On having Alexander back...)** "It feels great. I mean, he was the MVP in football and a big part of what we've done this season. More importantly I'm glad. Any time you see a player, any player go down like that, you're nervous for him, aside from what he can do for you as a football player. I'm glad he's ok. It's kind of like when my daughter Gretchen first got her drivers license and I got a call saying there had been a fender bender and the first thing I said was 'is she ok?' Once I found out she was ok, then I had to put the

hammer down. Same thing with Shaun, is he ok? I'm glad he's ok, now lets get to work and he's got to get this thing done for us."

**(On if he gets an extra level of satisfaction in preparing his players...)** "It's a special week. I think anybody in our business, it's a long hard season and if you can get here it's such a cumulative effort by so many people in the whole building that it's special. It's a special week. The Championship game is a big deal."

**(On how happy he was with his pass rush...)** "I thought our defensive line had a good game. Against the Packers they weren't very good at all and I mentioned that to them and I kind of challenged them a little bit. I thought against an offensive line that was big and strong, I thought both Grant (Wistrom) and Bryce (Fisher) kind of set the tone from the outside and allowed those inside guys to work just a little bit. They had good games."

**(On this weekends game...)** "They have a similar type of situation, they have a big, physical offensive line and they are talented. They are talented up front so it will be a big challenge for our guys. Most teams that we play I think look at us and we're a little bit undersized up front so we have to do it with quickness and tenacity and some smarts. We're just not going to out physical too many people in that area, but we have great effort and it makes the difference."

**(On if he's worried about the Locklear situation being a distraction...)** "Not really. From what I know about it so far and again I don't know everything, it should not be."