

Chicago Bears Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

Matt Nagy

Postgame Press Conference

Buffalo Bills 41, Chicago Bears 15

MATT NAGY: I'll start with some injuries for you. To start Bilal Nichols had a toe. Javon Wims has an appendix that we're getting him looked at right now, and then Calitro with a hamstring. So we want to make sure we stay on top of that.

A couple other bumps and bruises that come with the game that we're going to have to just keep an eye on and make sure they are taking good care of themselves as we head into the next couple days off for this final game.

You know, the positives from today, which obviously it wasn't, there was more that wasn't good than good, but the positives I thought with our Brian Johnson, the field goal I thought that was good for him in that situation.

The touchdown catch by Rodney Adams. He just had a baby last night, so he didn't get much sleep. So to take advantage of that was good.

Edwards, Mario having the two sacks, Travis Gibson with one and Kamara with one getting the two takeaways, that's the good.

Unfortunately there was more stuff that we need to get better at and the penalties today for us offensively was one step forward, two steps back and that's where we want to make sure that the discipline of making sure that -- like there was no rhythm today, at all. We didn't have the rhythm going.

So we want to make sure that when you get a first down, or it's first and ten or first and five you're not getting a false start. You're not getting an illegal formation. You're not getting a chop block, etc. Defensively, you know, they had -- this couple first series there where they were getting first downs and they had the time of possession and scoring touchdowns.

And then special teams. We had a lot of stuff there on



special teams that we can improve at. So overall, I am happy that it's preseason so that we can evaluate because in the end, I know we all want to win and we want that but we were just talking in there, it's like last week, right. We felt good and there's a high but you've got to be careful with that; and it's just like here, now, too, it's low, but you've got to be careful.

We want to make sure that we stay right in the middle ground and understand that today wasn't good enough. That's my job to make sure that we are better. We have got to practice better and we've got to play in the game better but in the end, the evaluation process is for us is to see where these guys and are now a week away from making more decisions.

Q. How much does the score mean particularly at halftime?

MATT NAGY: I mean, it matters because you don't want that. We care about that. But for us, what we've got to do, and it's easy to do, you get to a point where sometimes you start playing when it gets out of hand like that, you start getting to the point like it's a real game and you can become one-dimensional which the balance is, you still want to try to stay within your plays that you have to be able to evaluate where the guys are. That's the hard part.

And so when it gets out of hands like that by the first half, you have to regroup. Justin came in and I thought you felt like we were moving the ball a little bit. We had the first series but then we started moving the ball and we got down to the red zone and we stalled. And again, we got to look at the plays, see what we're doing well, what's going on and get better.

But we care about the score. But in preseason, we don't put the emphasis on it like we do, last week or this week.

Q. You knew some of what you're going to be getting from Fields when you drafted him, but seeing repeated examples of him improvising when a play would be dead for a lot of other quarterbacks.

MATT NAGY: Sure.

Q. What do you make of that strength that he brings to the table?



MATT NAGY: When he's back there doing things, how many times did we see where the pocket collapses and all of a sudden you go, okay, here we go again, he's going to go outside of the edge and take off. The other thing is he's being super smart and he's not taking dumb hits. You always are scared down there when you're down there that he's going to take a senseless hit when he's scrambling.

But I love the fact that that's a weapon when you have him using his legs like that. That's real. And I think we've felt that the last two weeks with him and it's neat to see.

The one thing that you notice with him is you get to game day and he really gets that laser focus on game day. You feel that. So I know he was itching to get in there a little bit earlier and now he got going in the third.

Q. When you see that high potential and you know not every quarterback can do that, can you game whether he's ready to start in the NFL, how do you weigh that against riding out rookie hiccups?

MATT NAGY: Yeah, that's the million dollar question, and I think when you look at a guy like Justin and you see the things that he's doing, are there some things that he can get better at? Yeah. For sure. That's going to be -- we're going to say that three years from now. But at the same point in time for him there's also things that he's doing better probably than we thought coming into this which is good, too. We want that to happen.

I'll also say and again, when you look at Andy and his situation, going out there to start and he's got Mooney and a couple guys that are out there that are starters but he's got several that are not out there, too. And I'm sure there's some frustrating there with that with the balance of where guys are health-wise and him being able to really get in a rhythm with the guys.

So that's what we all got to just continue to understand but then I was happy for Andy to be able to get the ball to Rodney for that score.

Q. What about the protection break down on the big hit?

MATT NAGY: We put something on there that's going to take a little bit longer and that's a learning lesson for Justin. It was SCAT protection, and the guy came off the edge. He's got to get rid of the ball there, or else -- at least what they were ceiling me on the sideline. Justin said, hey, man, I learned from that. It's a play where SCAT, they have one extra than us and between the offensive line and the quarterback and the wide receivers and the coaching

staff, everybody, that's one you take, okay, next time we see this, we've got to go like this; we've got to do this or do that.

I'm glad he's okay. Always scares you when the helmet pops up like that, but Justin is tough. He's a tough dude --

Q. The quarterbacks --

MATT NAGY: It's everybody. It's everybody, man, it's not just one person. It's everybody.

Q. You were saying at this time last week that you were going to try to get Justin more work with the ones. We didn't see a ton in practice. Can you evaluate him when he's playing with third-string guys and is there any plan in the next week or nine days to see how he looks alongside guys who have a better chance of making the team?

MATT NAGY: Right, so the first part of the question would be with our one, whether it's wide receivers, tight ends, the running backs, we're trying to make sure that they are good and healthy for Week 1, so like in practice with how many reps they get and they do, and Andy is not even really necessarily getting it a whole lot.

For us, do I believe in Bill Lazor and Flip and the rest of our coaches, myself, in regards to understanding where Justin is at, to be able to know and take that into account. Like continue to get stuff, routes on air and different things with them.

But at the same point in time I just think that he's playing really well right now, Justin is, and that's a good thing. You know, you never know four weeks ago, I couldn't have told you that but he's doing well so we want to keep that going. I guess some of that, you just have to assume that it would be good.

Q. Playing behind an offensive line today that had one NFL start between the five of them does that concern you?

MATT NAGY: It does. You want to be careful and especially you want to try to be careful getting too one-dimensional but again, the evaluation process of seeing those players, the depth players, it is what it is. It's just kind of the situation we're in right now and there's not much we can do for that, and so we've just got to keep doing our best to evaluate him based off of that play that time. You know, taking everything else, put it aside, how did he do that play.

Q. Working with Mitch as long as you did, preseason,

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vanilla stuff but what do you think of the way he moved the ball?

MATT NAGY: I thought he looked really good. He was playing very efficient, making good throws. Again, you know, for us, the personal side of that, it's always -- you spend three years with somebody, and you try to help and do everything you can and he does the same.

He's on a new path and we're on a new path, and I think he did a good job today. They did a good job coaching. So it's a credit to them.

Q. There was a break in the action with the officials, was that the crack back?

MATT NAGY: Yeah, that's part of one of the new rules they are putting in. We're learning through that but it gets really gray with where that tight end box is, right, and the alignment of the guy.

So what I need to do is make sure that if that's a rule, if that's the new rule that they are putting in, we've got to be aware of that and we've got to be really good with making sure that doesn't happen.

The referees were awesome. They were great with explaining it and stuck to what they said and what they saw, so we have to make sure we adjust. Same thing on a two-point play. I think it was Khalil that got called for cutting and that's a brand new rule. That's a play in our playbook for a long time and now we can't do that.

Our guys know that but it's hard because you're in the moment. So we might have to teach that a little different.

Q. The throw back, what did you see from Justin and Jesse on that play?

MATT NAGY: We were working on that this week and I thought it was great time -- the timing of Justin, didn't have as much time this time and he had to make a good throw and for Jesse to make a great diving catch and stick with it.

Those are chunk plays. We want to get more of those, but you have to credit the offensive line and Justin and Jesse and everybody else for running that play pretty good.

Q. When you have so many different variables in terms of guys out, starters out, and whoever your opponent is playing, if they even have starters out, how much stock can you put into what we have seen in the last couple weeks where it seems like your first team offense is pretty stagnant with the exception of the deep ball, but then Justin comes in and seems like there's a spark and you're moving?

MATT NAGY: Sure, there's variables in all that, in that question and in our day. As much as I tell everybody I love the preseason, I hate the preseason for that reason, too. Because there's some of that, it's hard, you look at the coaches on the sideline and you're just like scratching their head because a guy is out and you have a guy here at this position. You don't even know who some of the positions are. For instance, wide receiver, if you go three wide-outs, we are mixing and watching guys who are an X, Zebra and a Z, and you don't even know who you are calling plays for because there are substitutions and guys get dinged and that's both sides, not just us. That's the most challenging part of preseason.

That said, we want to make sure like you're saying, we want to make sure we understand the variables of all that, but we've got to still play clean. Like we've got to play clean. The penalties, all that stuff that, can't happen, or at least it needs to be minimized.

Q. Does that make it more or less tempting to want to see what Justin could do earlier in the games?

MATT NAGY: It does. It does.

Q. Could we see that?

MATT NAGY: Yeah, there's a possibility of that, but those guys, too, are they playing? Like you look at the teams across the league right now, of the guys -- like the guys for the bills that played today, you know what I'm saying. So there's that fine line because you want to get to Week 1 and you want your guys for Week 1. We know what those starters can do.

So that's why when you have -- when you're trying to develop a quarterback like we are with Justin, we're going to look back at this and you say, man, it's hard to get to that. It's hard to evaluate with the variable -- it's not hard to evaluate but it's hard to be perfect with all the variables so we value.

Q. So the plan continues, Andy is Week 1 and Justin is the backup?

MATT NAGY: For us, again, what we said is we're going to continue to always evaluate that position and see where they are at, and I think that again, you have to look at Andy and I know like he's more frustrated than anybody right now. He wants to get that rhythm. He wants to get that swag. He wants to get those first downs. He wants touchdowns with his guys.

Because in practice when we are out there with those guys

and rolling, we feel it and we see it. That's the part we like. We know that. I think in the end we are also super excited of the fact of how Justin is playing when he's out there. You feel it. You feel what he can do. That's a good thing.

We want to make sure that our staff understands that and then we've got to -- as we are rolling here, you know, those guys have just got to continue to keep competing and playing, every opportunity you get, try your best.

Q. As far as Andy is concerned, how much time do you put into his preseason performance and is there any correlation between that and the regular season?

MATT NAGY: The stock for us in Andy is going to see what he does for us during the season. We have to see what can Andy do during the season with this team and with these guys. That has been our plan this whole entire time.

At the same point in time we also need to evaluate and see where Justin is at and what he can do, and again he's doing everything that we are asking him to do. He's doing great. So I think it's a good situation for us, and I understand, I truly understand the -- I don't know what the word -- for people to want to see more of Justin, I get that.

But we also understand where we're at and how -- what the true plan is and all we can do is ask Andy to keep playing and Justin to keep playing and Nick to keep playing.

Q. In the regular season, does he open up more fourth and short aggressiveness for you because he can make plays?

MATT NAGY: Again, when you have a guy like him that can use his legs, it's going to stress any of these defensive coaches out. There's a benefit of that and again, the preseason is a little -- obviously some of these calls, you wouldn't make out here. But we are trying to get more reps to be able to see what he can do. Yeah, certainly, he's done that his whole career. He's played quarterback but used his legs when he's had to. That part I like.

But overall, those quarterbacks right now, the quarterbacks the first two games, it's been frustrating not getting first downs and scoring points and we know that and we understand that.

But our guys know it, too. They know it and they feel it. Like the David Montgomeries and Alan Robinsons and Mooneys, they are on the sideline like talking through, hey if we see this or that happens, they are like coaches. So you know, it's a credit to them and that's the part is all in all, is this who we are as an offense right now? No, it's not

who we are. But this is an evaluation process for us and for every coach in the NFL now.

Q. When you said appendix, is it a fear of appendicitis?

MATT NAGY: That I don't know. I'm honestly not sure. I just know he's being looked at right now. So hopefully he's okay.

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