

Philadelphia Eagles Media Conference

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Coach Nick Sirianni Weekday Press Conference



Q. Congratulations, Coach.

NICK SIRIANNI: Thank you.

Q. Make it back to the Super Bowl. Throughout the week you talked about adversity. During your playing days for the Purple Raiders as a wide receiver you suffered a severe leg injury which could have been life altering. You came back and helped lead Mount Union to its third straight national championship. How did that mold you into the person you are today and create the NFL coach you are now?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, again, embracing adversity is huge, right, for life, for football. And as bad as that injury was and all the stuff I kind of went through with that injury, you know, I see now why I had to go through that.

Really a lot of people were there for me at that time: My parents, Coach Kehres, teammates. So now I'm able to use that story that I went through to kind of help players that we have that are going through injuries and share that story.

Because there is no doubt in my mind it taught me how to endure, be told I couldn't do something and stand up -- like I wasn't supposed to play football again, and figure out a way to with the help of the trainers and doctors, and, again, my teammates.

So it's really helped me be able to have a story to connect with the guys as far as when they're going through hard times. I think one of the biggest connecting and being a team, there are so many opportunities to do that in the season, but the time that the team needs you the most and the players need each other the most are in times of adversity.

Looking back on it, as hard as it was for me to go through that at the time, it's really helped shape me who I am and helped connect with these guys.

Q. On the night before the game two years ago you changed your plan and opened the floor to the team to speak. Is that the plan again? In that meeting, what do you remember from that night?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, we'll see how that goes. We're still talking through that. That was kind of actually a tradition at Mount Union that we did, and probably we'll see how that is.

But just what you got to see just how much the guys cared about each other. The whole conversation was just when guys got up there just talking about how much they mean to each other and how they're going to play for each other.

Again, it's not the best groups of individuals that win; it's the best teams. So it was a good moment for our team and we'll see how that plays out.

Remember a lot of things from that, a lot of different guys talking. Yeah, it meant a lot and probably try to recreate that.

Q. Two years ago a clip of you went viral from you crying during the National Anthem. Can you just talk about your emotion during that moment and do you anticipate being that emotional again on Sunday?

NICK SIRIANNI: You never know. It's hard to plan or say, hey, this is going to happen or that's going to happen. First, you know, it was a really good rendition of the National Anthem, and I think really why the emotions were there were kind of twofold as far as just being grateful to be in that moment, and then just to think about and just thanking God in that moment and the gratitude that I had in that moment.

And then also all the work it took to get to that moment. The injuries, you know, coming from a player to a coach and all that. And thinking back on when we were all -- at some point all of us that are going to be on this field have thought about playing in that game. I think as a little kid you think about playing the game. I don't think you ever think about coaching in the game, but I grew up with a dad as a coach so maybe I did a little bit.

It was more about playing in the game and just being in that moment of something that you thought about your



entire life, fantasized about your entire life. For that to come true it's a grateful moment.

Q. Coach, you got a good chunk of guys on this team who are Georgia Bulldogs. They have been very key and vital to the defense. Most specifically Jalen Carter, Jordan Davis, Nakobe, and Nolan. Can you just talk about those group of guys from Georgia, what they mean to this team on defense?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, Kelee has done a lot of good things, too. Has really been huge for our special teams.

Yeah, is obviously their talent speaks for themselves but they also have -- they've been playing together for multiple years. You know, the couple they've been here together and then all the years they had on those great defenses and teams they had in Georgia under Coach Smart.

So you have this connection on and off the field that's huge. Like when we drafted Nolan Smith, you know, I remember how excited he was. One of the first people that he embraced was Nakobe who was at his Draft Day party. That's so cool.

Again, when you have a relationship with the guys and the guys have a relationship with each other, they will go a little bit harder because they got a little bit more on the line and because they don't want to let each other down. I think that's a big part of it.

Some of those friendships we have on this team are developed through the year or through the couple years they been playing here, but their bond goes back. I think that's important and a huge deal.

Yeah, and they can fly around and make plays. They're tough. Coach Smart and his staff have done such a good job of getting good players there and developing them. We just tried to continue to do the same thing. Love those guys. Big part of why we're here today.

Q. Two parter: You're one of the more aggressive coaches in the NFL in terms of fourth downs, plus 50, on two-point conversions. Does the Super Bowl and going up against an offense in Patrick Mahomes call for more aggressiveness? And in terms of OT decision making, does anything from last year influence how you'll approach that?

NICK SIRIANNI: As far as your second part of the question, overtime, I mean, we thought about that going back to last year. You get ready for that. You think about what you're going to do in those scenarios. Obviously I'm not going to sit here and say here is what we'll do in an

overtime scenario, but we've been thinking about that since the new rule has come up.

We have our plans and our thoughts for that.

As far as the other option, every game is a little bit different, different factors that go into how the play the game. The flow of the game plays into it. So many things that play into it as far as your decision making in-game.

Everything will be accounted for as far as overtime, just like we do each and every week. Everything is accounted for. Who you're playing against offensively, defensively, the plays that you have, the players that you have, you know, the analytic charts, all these things play into it.

We'll see how the game unfolds.

Q. I wanted to ask you about what you learned about offensive staff transitions. You've done it a couple different ways. Internal promotion and then an external one. In term of reaching for success in the system, does it require an external voice as you build? What have you learned about those two transitions?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, every situation is different. You know, you kind of think about the first one, too. Like Brian was internal; Kellen was external, but still had a relationship with him and knew him from other things.

Shane was internal if you want to go back to that, right? Even though we weren't together prior to, coming in together. So every situation is a little bit different. You try to learn from every experience that you have.

Yeah, we're not really thinking about anything like that right now. We're focused on winning this football game. That's all our thought and focus is on right at this particular moment.

Q. What are your recollections of your very first conversations as a staff on the push play and the way you're going to approach the quarterback sneak? Who threw it out there? Was it based on any particular thing? And the first reaction, was it we know we're onto something here or more skeptical, let's see how it goes?

NICK SIRIANNI: You know, before I got here to Philadelphia, and I was with Coach Reich in Indianapolis, you know, Jacoby Brissett was really good at the quarterback sneak. Was really good at it.

And the reason we tapped into that with Jacoby was because of all the success Frank had here with Carson



Wentz prior in '17, '18, '19, the season with Carson of the quarterback sneak.

And then fast forward to when we're here. If you look back to 2021 as we watch some of our tape from 2021 as we study the game as we study our Chiefs game, there are third down situations where it looks a little odd because we're not in that formation or in the push play or in the quarterback sneak.

It just develops over time and you start adding players and complements to it where the defense has to make sure they're playing honest. Yeah, so it's just something that's developed over time, practice.

Dates back to, again, '17, '18; Coach Stout is so good at teaching that. Again, you don't run the play either unless you have the guys to run the play. I think someone told me that -- I don't know it's always a topic of conversation, should this play be banned or anything like that.

But the success that we have is not replicated always throughout the entire league. We saw it last week with the game plan we were studying against -- that Kansas City did against Buffalo and stopped them in a critical situation.

I guess I'm lobbying to never change the rule. Because we're successful at it, but we're successful at it because of the guys that we have up front.

And again, it keeps layering as you get better and better and as you get more experience with it.

So truly a group effort of how we've continued to develop at this play and have the success we have at this play. You know, Cam Jurgens, Landon Dickerson, Jordan Mailata, Mehki, Lane, Jalen, that's why it's successful at the end of the day. We're successful at it because those guys know how to do it and make it work.

Q. Thinking about Saquon, Zack, Cooper, and Quinyon, all first year eagles and all nominated for some big awards. They been making a big impact for guys this year. How are you balancing that talent with the fact this is the first super Bowl for all four of them?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, I think someone asked me this question early on in the playoffs. Hey, you guys are a young football team, really young football team and they don't have big game experience. Well, you tell Cooper DeJean that the Iowa-Iowa State game is not -- maybe to the outside world Iowa-Iowa State is not as important as the Super Bowl, but in that moment for Cooper it is, right?

And when Iowa is playing Michigan or Iowa is playing Iowa

State, it's all relative to what the outside feels like and what the player feels like in his heart. It's the same thing for Zack Baun Wisconsin versus Iowa. Who else did you mention there?

Q. Quinyon.

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, Quinyon with Toledo versus -- who is their arrival?

Q. Kent State.

NICK SIRIANNI: Kent State, Akron, any of those teams. These guys have big game experience. They're not rookies anymore with Coop and Q. They've played -- what game are we on, 27? So they played so many games and have so many big game experiences that that doesn't -- again, it may be good from the -- like I don't want to say a good story from the outside, but may be something on the outside it looks one way, but I know how much these guys put in and empty the tank every time they go out and play and every week that they prepare.

Q. You mentioned yesterday you had the opportunity to work with so many great quarterbacks throughout your coaching career. What makes Jalen stand out in that group?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, just all that he can do. Man, he's a great passer and reads the defense great. And then he has this ability that when something breaks down, to make big plays happen that way as well.

And he just knows how to win. His work ethic, all the different things, so many different things there. He's won so many different places he's been and won big. But I would say that, again, the ability to be a great passer and great at reading the defense, and then also his ability to create and extend.

Q. Being from Jamestown, what --

NICK SIRIANNI: You're from Jamestown?

Q. Yes, sir.

NICK SIRIANNI: My man.

Q. What does it mean to represent the city on this big of a stage?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, I think just being able to come from a town in western New York and grow up and be in this position, hopefully that gives hope to people in Jamestown that they can accomplish their goals. I would say you



accomplish your goals by working your butt off. You can't have an off day. And then embrace adversity because you're going to go through ups and downs.

Yeah, just obviously proud of where I came from and the family that I grew up in. Jamestown helped develop me to the person I am today as well.

Q. Kevin Patullo is a guy we don't hear from often or isn't talked about a lot. How important has he been to your success this year? Talk about the relationship you two have having been together for so long.

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, very important to the success that we've had. He wears a lot of different hats. Helps me a lot with different things with head coaching things, and I can't tell you that I make a decision without saying to Kevin first, what do you think? That's in everything: in-game, out of game, scheduling, offensive stuff. You know, that's with game management stuff. I lean on him a lot.

And then him and Kellen, I mean, they're together at all times talking through the offensive stuff. He's that same sounding board for Kellen on the offensive side.

How many years -- this is eight years with Kevin, so, again, that continuity is really important. He knows what I'm thinking in certain situations, how I want things to be taught. He's been a great resource for me the entire time. Our success this year, but really the success we've had since we've been here.

Can't be great without the greatness of others, and that completely is definitely a fact with Kevin Patullo. I trust him with everything. Man, got a ton of the trust and faith in him. You know, yeah, he's awesome.

Q. You talked a little bit about overtime. It seems like the Chiefs find a way to always win games late in the fourth quarter. What are you doing to prepare your team? What's the message you're sending to the team if the situation comes where it's a late game?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, we prepare for all those things. To say that you get to that point and say, all right, now here is how we're going to win a close game, it doesn't work that way. You go through that the entire year. You don't cram -- I used to cram at Mount Union for tests and stuff, but you don't cram for these scenarios.

It's your daily habits of the situational football that you go through, the two-minute, four-minute, all those different things you go through the entire year. You continue to work on them this week to get a little bit better at them.

If you continue to stack things to get a little bit better, you give yourself a chance to be successful in those scenarios.

But, again, it's about detail. One of my favorite quotes is victory favors the team making the fewest mistakes, which is an old -- Bobby Knight had it in his office. That's how we think about it. We think about that with our situational football, with our fundamentals, and that's something we been preparing for from OTAs to training camp to the regular season to postseason, and we were working on this stuff yesterday.

Obviously they're really good at that. When you watch their tape, got a lot of respect for their coaches because you can see how detailed they are, the Chiefs are, in all those areas as well. We pride ourselves in that, too, so be a good battle.

Q. AJ Brown had a big game in the Super Bowl two years ago and seemed to reestablish himself in the NFC Championship game; looks healthy. With all the attention on Saquon, how important can AJ be Sunday?

NICK SIRIANNI: Yeah, obviously AJ is a phenomenal player. You know, you say reestablished himself. He missed three games and still had almost 1100 yards, three or four games, and was in and out the second half quite a bit this year.

So it was just the way we kind of have won this year, but he's still the same dominate player that had 1400 plus yards the last couple years and had a couple less yards for different circumstances this year. You saw that in the NFC Championship game.

So again, we don't really care how we win. We just want to win. So if that means throwing it 50 times and running it once, AJ and DeVonta and Dallas, that's going to be good. If it's vice versa, those guys are so selfless, which I love about this football team, they're so selfless they're going to catch a big time block that's going to help change the game.

And so, yeah, we'll see how the game plays out. You can't really tell that until you get into the game and see the flow of the game. I got a lot of faith in him of what he can do and Jalen delivering the ball to him. Got a ton of faith in that operation.

Two of the best players right there in the world with Jalen and AJ, so we got good options there.

Q. You faced scrutiny in your opening presser when you were introduced as the Eagles coach. Recently we



saw Liam Coen with the Duuuuuaaaal thing. What was your reaction to it? How do you feel about coaches getting viral and getting scrutinized for these opening pressers?

NICK SIRIANNI: At the end of the day we'll be scrutinized for wins and losses, I know that. So really that to me is whatever, you know.

Yeah, we don't train to do media. We get work at it and now that I'm four years into the job I've gotten more work at it, over and over again. We train to be football coaches. We train to be football players. If I'm training when I'm the offensive coordinator to get ready for opening press conferences, I'm shorting -- I would have been shorting the Indianapolis Colts.

My mindset was how do I get better at coaching and helping they guys develop and reach their goals. Yeah, I think too much has played into that. I mean, I've said it to the guys. My first press conference sucked. I wasn't getting ready for that. I was trying to get ready to help this team win, to get to know my players, and fortunately for me, you don't get a win and loss based off your opening press conference.

Now, did people still talk about it? Oh, my God his opening press conference was terrible. Yeah. I mean, I think I'm doing better now. You guys would agree, right? I'm doing a little bit better now. I'm waiting for when they're going to drop that narrative. Whatever; it is what it is.

You know, again, our focus is football. Thanks, guys.

Q. We ask players all the time what their pre-game ritual is. Do you have anything you do in particular or any superstitions that you love by?

NICK SIRIANNI: I'm really -- my superstition, which somebody told me the other day is a superstition, is to be opposite of superstitious. So if I put my left shoe on and then right shoe on then I'm going to switch it the next time? Like I don't believe in that.

You know, you make your breaks from the way you prepare and the habits you have. There are some things -- I don't eat before games. Not eating might be one. Just get nerves sometimes.

And then, yeah, I don't have any routines like that. I'll go through game management stuff before the game and stuff. That's part of my habits to get ready for the game. But not anything like, hey, I got to wear this shirt or these socks or whatever it is. I did that as a player and it -- I tried to start doing it as a coach. I had so many other things to

worry about that I didn't want one more thing to do that.

I'm not superstitious, which I know I'm kind of in the minority there as far as that goes as far as this profession. I know all our coaches, you didn't sit there last time. I'm not sitting there this time and I'm moving. My superstition is to change what I'm doing all the time so I don't fall into that.

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