

Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Houston, Texas, USA

Ryan Tannehill

Press Conference



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Q. When they scored, did a part you almost expect to be taking a knee, and what kind of went through your mind when you heard you were going to go for a shot? And kind of a follow-up, what was the exuberance like when the kick goes through?

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, I didn't know what the plan was going to be. I asked Coach Vrabel as the kickoff team was lining up what was the plan. I said, Are we going, are we taking it to overtime? He said, We are going.

At that point it was just get ready to go. Didn't know what call was coming in or what the defense was going to look like.

Call came in, liked the call, got a good look for it from the defense, dropped back, put it up, and AJ made a big play for us.

And you mentioned the kick. I saw it hit off the post and my stomach sank. Then I saw it drop down and I think I said, I think it might have went in. Sure enough, refs put their hands up and it was in.

Q. Just talk about kind of the resilience? You guys had opportunities to fold in this game. You blew a lead and then they took a touchdown away on a holding call, yet you kept coming.

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, our guys are a very resilient group. Been a bunch of games all year where we fought through adversity. It's nothing new for us.

Obviously you don't like to let the lead go, but we were able to fight through. Guys believe in each other, this team, and as long as there is some time left, we're going to keep playing our tails off and try and win the game.

That's when we did, and fortunately enough we were able to come away with the win.

Q. Besides Corey not reaching that 1000 mark, AJ Brown today, Derrick Henry, the 2000 mark, how special was it as the quarterback to really see your guys get those marks?

RYAN TANNEHILL: It's cool when you see guys reach marks that they're going for. My stomach is sick for Corey. I really wanted him to reach his mark as well, but doesn't take away what a season he's had. Four yards doesn't really change the season he's had.

I know on paper I guess four yards makes a difference, but to me and this team and how he's played and what he's meant to this team this whole year, it's pretty cool.

So pair that with AJ and Derrick getting 2000, it was a cool day.

Q. Talk about what makes the play where you fake it to Derrick there in certain situations and you're able to bootleg out off the read option. What makes that play so successful for you guys? It worked about four times today, and its really worked all season long.

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, just reading the defense. I think really nothing too special about it. Obviously teams are accounting for Derrick and his ability to run the ball, and we're just reading the defense off that.

Q. Picking up on that, are you surprised sometimes when you see the degree of space and you've kind of been stacking them on top of each other that teams haven't been able to account for a little bit more.

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, I think we just got to play what we see. Called on him really all year, and sometimes you get the look and sometimes you don't.

We'll continue to stay true to our roles, and if defense want to hand back then leave space for Derrick at inside.

So at the end of the day, we just have to execute what's called and play what the defense gives us.

Q. How much fun is that, to run in and see that you're going to go standing up?

RYAN TANNEHILL: It's cool. It's always nice to finish a



run standing up and not taking a hit.

Couple big plays today, and thankful we got the win.

Q. Ryan, not every 2000 yard rusher has a long run in the playoffs. How much of winning in the playoffs is a burden on Derrick and how much of that burden is shared?

RYAN TANNEHILL: There is no burden. I think that's a rough word for an opportunity that we get. We look forward to this opportunity. It's the first step in what we set out to accomplish this year, is win the division, and then obviously now into our second season.

So the onus is on everybody. We have to be able to execute. O-line has to block, receivers have to get open, I have to make throws, and Derrick has to run. It's not on one person or one group, it's on everybody.

Q. Obviously AJ has had a great year. What does he say to you and what do you say to him after a few of the recent drops started to accumulate for him, and did you see anything different about his focus today?

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, AJ came up big for us all day. Never lost faith in what he can do. He has consistently shown he can make plays for us and get himself open.

Third down I threw a little bit behind him late in the game and he was able to go get it through contact. It was a huge play for you.

Later in that drive CD made a tough catch, guys draped all over him, and he was able to convert on a big third down there late in that drive. Then you mentioned the big one over the top to AJ.

AJ and CD have made big plays all year, and I'm thankful I get to throw to those guys. It's a lot fun to be able to throw to guys like that.

Q. I know rightly or wrongly a lot of times quarterbacks are judged by team accomplishments. I wonder what it means to you to have been here just two seasons, two playoffs spots, first division title for the Titans since 2008, what are some of those accomplishments mean when there weren't necessarily a lot of them, I would guess, in Miami.

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, it's fun. I enjoy every opportunity I get to play this game. Obviously winning the division was something we wanted to do when we set out this year. We were able to finish on that today.

Came down to guys really battling through. Texans did a good job of making us earn it, and our guys just battled through. I think that's symbolic of what this team is about, how we believe in each other and we're able to fight to the very end and do everything we can to win.

So as far as doing something cool as a team, this is the first step, and look forward to our opportunity next week.

Q. On AJ, he's been working through that injury, the ankle injury. How did the wheels look to you on that long pass right there?

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, he's a tough guy. Been fighting through stuff all year and he shows up for us. Thankful for that, thankful for his toughness, and obviously making a huge play at the end when it counts is clutch.

Q. Following up a little bit on that, Derrick obviously makes history today; you have the greatest statistical season for a quarterback in Titans history. Can you appreciate a little bit of what you've been a part of here, especially with you two in that backfield?

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, it's fun. I enjoy, like I said, every opportunity I get to go out and play on Sundays or Saturdays. You know, it's something that when you go through what I went through over the past couple years, you appreciate it a little bit more.

So to be able to get into the playoffs for a second time, win the division, it's definitely a moment I'll look back on and really appreciate. Obviously enjoying this one tonight, but going to have to turn the page quickly to get ready for next week.

Q. I wanted to ask you earlier, but I know it's quick. Just really quick, just kind of take us through the final moments as Derrick was getting closer to 2000. What that was like in the huddle?

RYAN TANNEHILL: Yeah, I didn't know exactly where he was at. I knew he was close, and I looked up and saw our rush yards were over 200, so I knew he was close. I still really don't know which run it happened on.

Yeah, it was important for us coming in. Obviously we knew we wanted to run the football, something we talked about during the week. O-line was fired up and wanted to make that happen for Derrick, and obviously Derrick earning it.

But, yeah, it was cool to see it actually be able to come to fruition here today. Our guys really played their tails off and obviously Derrick made some huge plays for us.

Q. I was just going to say the same thing. Winning this division, that first goal, to take that step and take it the last second of the final game of the regular season, how big is it to be able to go home and know you're going to get one game at home?

RYAN TANNEHILL: It's huge. It's huge. Like I said, it's something we set out this year to do, is to go win the division, and we were able to do that.

We'll enjoy that. We'll enjoy being able to play a playoff game at home and have a big opportunity this week to go get another win.

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