

Houston Texans Media Conference

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David Culley

Press Conference



Q. What makes Tyrod so special?

DAVID CULLEY: He's been around the league, and he's a veteran. He's been there and done that. He's just one of our guys right now, and he's been doing a nice job. He's got a lot of experience. He's been a starter in this league. He's took teams to the playoff in this league.

Right now with our competition that we're having right now and he's just right there in the mix and doing his things.

Q. The players on that side of the ball called him a leader. What do you notice about his leadership?

DAVID CULLEY: Well, he's 11 years in this league. He's been around. He's been a starter. He's a consummate pro. I don't use that loosely. He's a consummate pro. He's the first guy in this building every morning. He's usually the last guy to leave, and that's every day. That's just who he is.

You won't ever hear him a whole bunch talking about this or talking about that. He just goes about his business.

Q. What kind of progress have you seen from Ross Blacklock in his second season?

DAVID CULLEY: He's playing fast. He's playing fast. He's a little bit more comfortable than he was last year although it's a new system. He's flying around. He's flying around, and you see that. You see that.

Q. What about with Whitney Mercilus? What are some of the things you see that might be different in him than last season?

DAVID CULLEY: This is a different season than what he's been in before. Listen, he's one of those guys that's a consummate pro. He's what I like to call, regardless of his position, he's a football player. He can play down. He can play up. Whatever we ask him to do, whether it's inside or whether it's outside, he's a good enough football player to be able to do that. We'll use him in that way.

Lovie does a great job of putting those guys in position at what they do best. He's pretty versatile with that and gives us a lots of options that way.

Q. What can you tell us about the defensive line competition, trying to figure out exactly where to play them?

DAVID CULLEY: Just talking about the defensive line, it's the same thing -- and I say this -- across the board with our team right now. There's a bunch of guys in there now that's competing and playing very hard. They're getting after it. I'll tell you what about that group, I always start practice down there with them because they get on that sled, and me being an offensive coach for all those years -- I mentioned this earlier. When I was in OTAs, I went down there, it was the first time being able to look and see the whole team.

So I'm down there on the defense, and Lovie starts to drill with hitting that sled. Man, it did something to me, you know. I'm talking about it's like they were firing off, they were hitting, kind of like they were doing today when we were playing football today on our offense, and I love that. I mean, I love that right there.

But that defensive line group, I'm always down there to be able to start where they are because that's where the sled is, and just to see those guys -- I mean, those guys are the heart and soul, that offensive line and defensive line, of what we're doing and where we're going to be, and those guys are fighting and crawling down there and just doing everything that you want them to do with competition.

Q. With you putting on pads tomorrow?

DAVID CULLEY: I'm not going to put them on, but they asked me one time if I would get on that sled. I got Allen, one of our coaches, that's on the back of that sled, and when they pop it, it goes back up. Let me tell you what you will not see happen to me out there, you will not see me demonstrating anything. Been there and done that.

Q. Can you wait to see them get in pads?



DAVID CULLEY: I can't wait to see them get in pads. Here's the thing. You don't find out if someone can play or not until you see them in pads. Training camp, we're still in that ramp-up period. We've got another couple of days. Tuesday we'll get into pads. When we get in pads on Tuesday, then we start to really be able to evaluate. That's what we're doing right now all across the board.

Q. Will Deshaun practice with pads?

DAVID CULLEY: Nothing has changed from previous times.

Q. So pads not until Tuesday?

DAVID CULLEY: Not until Tuesday.

Q. How have you come through the first two or three days health-wise?

DAVID CULLEY: Health-wise, it's been good. We've had some dehydration, which happens in training camp. This is Houston. If our trainers didn't give me all that Gatorade and water coming by and telling me to take it, sometimes I refuse it, and they say, no, Coach, you'd better take it, because if you don't, we'll be giving you an IV. The last thing I want is to be an IV.

Q. Marcus Cannon and also Lane Taylor, is there some hope they'd be ready for the start of the season?

DAVID CULLEY: They're making progress at that. They're both right on schedule when the surgeries happen and whatnot, they're both right on schedule right now, and their rehab is going great. We'll just see as it goes, but we anticipate that happening.

Q. Back to Taylor, do you feel for him after that freak thing that happened to him health-wise last year that kind of cost him the starting job and being able to have another chance to come back and try to play to his potential again?

DAVID CULLEY: I don't know all the details that happened with that, but I know him as a person, and I know him as a player, and right here, he's been going through adversity basically his whole career since he's been here in this league. I feel good that -- I mean, he's doing exactly what we thought he would do. That's not an issue.

He's a pro, as I said before, and he's doing everything like nothing's ever happened to him.

Q. He was so valuable in the run game for you in

Buffalo, but he's a few years older now. Do you have to modify that a little bit or change your expectations how much he'll run?

DAVID CULLEY: I don't believe so at all. I think he's still got the same quickness. He's still that guy, when he's back in the pocket, that can beat you with his feet. Maybe not like he could five or six years ago, but he can still do that.

Speaking of that, when you get in third down and they know you've got to throw the ball on third and long and whatnot, having that back there, knowing that guy right there can beat you with your feet is so valuable for us.

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