

Houston Texans Media Conference

Friday, July 30, 2021

Houston, Texas, USA

Whitney Mercilus

Press Conference



Q. What's it feel like being a crusty old veteran out here?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Man, you know, aches, pains, all that. I'm feeling what the guys told me in 2012.

Q. Which was?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Man, hey, you're going to feel everything. All your years, all the reps and everything. Feels good. I get to impart a lot of knowledge on the young guys. Just like you all, I've seen a lot of things in this organization -- ups, downs, hills, valleys. I just try to keep those guys as focused as possible on what they need to do, how to be a better version of themselves as individuals and just as a team.

Q. When you were in the off-season, you said you felt rejuvenated training in Arizona. How do you feel now in camp, and do you feel sort of like Arizona helped you bounce back from last year?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Yeah, facts, definitely. Got back to my routine. I was in Arizona for about six months, trained, about 110, 115 degree heat, but it's nothing like Houston, especially on the first day when I came back. I do feel better. I feel stronger. I feel leaner, faster in every kind of possible way. My mind and my spirit is all in one, intact. I'm ready to go.

Q. What do you think about the pass rush with the four-man front, and how much do you weigh?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: I weigh about 265. With the pass rush with the four down, it's nice because now it's like, all right, everybody doesn't really have to think, especially with the outside linebacker. Especially for the ends, whether we've got to drop or anything like that, it's just see ball, go get ball, hit, react off the tackles, react off the tight ends and all that, and go make a play.

Q. What's the biggest adjustment for you playing with your hand in the dirt? I know you probably haven't

done that in a decade or so. What's the biggest adjustment for you?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Just putting my hand in the dirt honestly. I can't see nothing. When I was standing up, I could see everything, the formations, understand what's coming my way. I see the down and distance. I understand what situation we're in, things like that. Now with my hand in the dirt, I'm kind of limited, so I'm depending on what the tackle is giving me, whether it's the screen, a pass, a run, zone, things like that.

My keys is different honestly. So I've got to get my presnap reads down, put my hand in the dirt, and just rely on instincts. That's it.

Q. Does that make the game more fun?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Sure, definitely. Don't think, just go. You mess up, just mess up big honestly. If you're going 100 miles per hour, you're good.

Q. When you're on the other side of the ball, just as a teammate, what do you see from Tyrod as a leader? How do you compartmentalize Deshaun is still on the team, but he's requested a trade and Tyrod is the starter.

WHITNEY MERCILUS: I knew Tyrod a couple of years ago. Really good guy, cool, calm, collected. He is a great, great leader, especially what I've heard across the league and all that. Couldn't be a better guy just to take on that role right now, especially with everything going on.

With Deshaun, that's my guy. Love him to death. Hate what's happened to him. Just bring it for him every day honestly. Man, everything will sort itself out. God got it. I know that for a fact. He's my guy at the end of the day.

Q. What did the Arizona trip do for you? Did you get away from that? Is that as well as a physical thing, is that a bit of a mental thing for you getting back to basics?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Definitely. It allows me to get



away. Really just focus on my mind and just on me. Get my body right, my soul, and my spirit, everything, because you need to be able to do that. Especially with the season we had last year, you've got to be able to decompress, recenter, refocus, get yourself back right so you can come back stronger.

It didn't happen last year. Of course the entire country was shut off, so I couldn't really get to training. When I did find a trainer, it was kind of sporadic here and there. What I had is a consistent regime, especially this year since February and whatnot, it's allowed me to be a whole lot better and be my best self.

Q. What do you expect from Blacklock and (inaudible)?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: I expect a lot honestly. They've got the speed, the quickness, the explosiveness, and the length too. They tie all those things together and be able to work cohesively -- and not just them, but everybody on the line. If we can all work together, it will be a pretty special group.

Q. Since you've been here, you've seen everything now. How do you feel about where the team's at? So much change, all of it's pretty much out of your control. What's it like being the veteran on this team knowing everything that this organization's gone through in the last 18 months or so?

WHITNEY MERCILUS: Good question. Just seeing all the changes and experiencing the different changes, there's different expectations. As long as all those expectations are outlined and responsibilities, you just control those, and you control what you can do out here. Everything else, as much as I -- you know, it's above my pay grade essentially. They control what they want to control as far as the corporate side and everything, but we control what we control because we've got to win games. That's what these fans are expecting. That's what you guys are expecting us to do.

If not, I mean, you all are tearing us apart, let's be real. So honestly at the end of the day, we are going to control what we can. We just need to check everything at the door, come in, work, just lean on each other and trust each other.

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