

# Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

## Lovie Smith

Press Conference



**Q. Lovie, you got the first couple turnovers Saturday night.**

LOVIE SMITH: After the first couple?

**Q. After the first couple turnovers.**

LOVIE SMITH: You say after we took the ball away two times, take-aways. Keep going.

**Q. Camera got to you and you had a nice smile on your face. For lack of a better term, you looked like you were a proud papa. How would you describe it?**

LOVIE SMITH: It's something that has to be done, to me, if you say you're playing good defense. You can't just play even and rely on punts and things like that. So, yes, that's an emphasis that we put every day we're coming out here, there's a certain amount we would like to get and to see the guys be able to get that done and see what a take-away does. Puts an offense in good position, momentum, all of that.

So there should have been a smile on all of our faces with that one, and that's something we need to be able to do throughout the season.

**Q. Lovie, what did you see from Grugier-Hill's run to the ball?**

LOVIE SMITH: Kamu, all right. He's been like that since he got here really. Came from a similar system. We thought that he would fit in well. He's been a great special teams player, of course throughout his career, but football-wise, we didn't play Zach. He backs up Zach Cunningham. To see him make plays like that is pretty special, and I know he'll keep doing it.

We're really pleased with how all of our linebackers played this first game.

**Q. What do you think about the potential of Lonnie now that he's been here for a little while?**

LOVIE SMITH: He's a good football player. Eric Murray and of course Justin Reid have been -- they're good players and have been locked in. Lonnie has missed a little bit of time for certain reasons, but he's back out, he's healthy, and you've seen in practice he's showing up each week, he's a prototype safety -- perfect size, he's got good range, has good hands -- but he needs reps, and he's getting those. He should only get better and better.

**Q. Talk about what you've seen from the D-line so far.**

LOVIE SMITH: Well, it all starts up front for us with the defensive line, and we have some numbers. First of all, we have good training camp competition, legitimate training camp competition. So all the guys are going to get reps, and they showed up. I thought we played the run well. It starts up front, playing the run, being gap sound and playing hard running to the ball. They did all of that.

When we get in situations to rush the passer, we want to just see the guys, just not a lot of blitz in the first game, see them rush the pass and passing downs. Jonathan Greenard, Jacob Martin, a lot of guys did a good job with that.

**Q. Speaking about the blitz, last time you said it's not going to be a defensive blitz a lot. The philosophy of that, I'm curious from the point of getting pressure on quarterbacks and such and not blitzing. What is your philosophy?**

LOVIE SMITH: You must have misunderstood me. As far as blitzing is concerned, we don't want to have to rely on blitzes to get pressure. We're basically a coverage team, but we will blitz and all. Maybe you should get that out to our opponents that we're not going to blitz. That may be a good thing, setting them up a bit.

No, we believe in blitzing. We don't want to just rely on that. In the preseason games, we want to win the football game, but we want to see the guys get in one-on-one situations and see exactly what we can do. If we can win without blitzing, in an ideal world, we have a four-man front. You would like to be able to get pressure with our



guys, and the only way to know we can do that is to put them in as many of those situations as possible right now.

**Q. Lovie, what you thought about Maliek Collins, and how much has his experience helped?**

LOVIE SMITH: We're very pleased with what Maliek has done. We brought him here to do that, though. He's a good football player. He's our profile for our under tackle three technique. A guy with size, he's a 300 pounder with loose hips, he's athletic, he can rush the passer. Those situations of one-on-one, to me, it could be a good defense if you get your -- one of your -- your three technique one-on-one with the guard. Maliek's going to win most of those, and that's a pretty good defense for us.

Pleased with what he's done in practice. I can't wait to get him some game work.

**Q. Now that you've been with this team for a few months and you're a few weeks into training camp, how have you found -- and you've been through everything in the NFL and college football, but how have you found it personally just getting back to these guys, being able to put your stamp on that watching them mature and grow, and just this whole process is so rare in football?**

LOVIE SMITH: I know it's coach talk, but I'll give it anyway, it's been rewarding. It's been a lot of fun. Our guys, you've had a chance to be around them. They show up every day. They take coaching. They're like a sponge. They're hungry and just buying in to what we're doing. Then to just see -- it's been, what, three weeks or so now. We're getting to know each other a little bit better, but I like the process. You've got to like the process.

We know where we need to get, but the grind of training camp, seemed like they like it because we haven't had a lot of guys miss. I mean, not a lot of injuries. As you can see, we sweat every day. You have training camp in Houston, you sweat every day quite a bit. So I've loved it.

**Q. St. Louis, Chicago was obviously different, Tampa. How is this situation different compared to those? What makes this more appealing from a coordinator perspective?**

LOVIE SMITH: I have a short memory. I can't tell you about too many old girlfriends, you know. You just have this spot now, and I just know that this opportunity was something that I really looked forward to from afar, and now that I've been here and we've gotten a chance to go through everything, the competition each day, I like where we are.

It's probably universal that we're the underdog in the NFL, right? So we kind of like that position too. Eventually, the score is going to really count, and we'll be ready.

**Q. What about two of your younger guys, Roy Lopez and Ross Blacklock? What did you see from them?**

LOVIE SMITH: They showed up, starting with Ross first. We talk about Maliek Collins at the three technique, Ross is the same thing. He's athletic. He played the run well. He can rush the passer. So we like what he did. And Roy Lopez too, not just the sack, but we've been seeing those same things from the guys -- Bobby King and Allen Smith do a good job with them, but we've been seeing those things from them daily. We have some young players that have good potential.

**Q. What have you thought about the synergy and the chemistry that has developed within the coaching staff?**

LOVIE SMITH: I think it's been good. Maybe that's what you expect. When David Culley is going to put together a staff, as he was put together a staff, you know what kind of guy he is, what kind of guys he's going to have on his staff. I know I've enjoyed a lot of the guys -- I knew some of the guys. Most I did not. That's been a lot of fun too. We talk about players, coaches getting to know each other, same thing with the coaches. I can't wait for us to have a long relationship together.

**Q. That was Culley's first game experience as an NFL head coach. How did that go behind the scenes? Like working with him on the sidelines. How did that go?**

LOVIE SMITH: It went well. You're right, it's David's first time as a head coach, but he's been on the sidelines quite a few times. I know I've been on the sidelines a lot, and David's been on the sidelines more than I have. When you're prepared, you have an idea of how it's going to go, and again, he had us all prepared for every situation. That will be the case each week.

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