

# Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, January 9, 2022

Houston, Texas, USA

## Head Coach David Culley

Postgame Press Conference



TITANS 28, TEXANS 25

DAVID CULLEY: First of all, just want to congratulate Mike and John and the Titans on getting the first round bye and winning the division. Good football team. Played well today. Go ahead.

**Q. David, there's a lot of speculation about your job being in jeopardy. Have you been told by anybody that you're safe for next season?**

DAVID CULLEY: No, I'm just looking forward to tomorrow with our exit meetings with our players.

**Q. You had mentioned days before that you guys know what you want to do offensively going into next year. Today starting off with the run game, y'all didn't run at all on first downs in the second half. What went into that change, and do you feel like Davis Mills in the second half kind of has to do with what you see in this offense's future?**

DAVID CULLEY: I think the reason we didn't run as much is because we were down three scores in the second half, and that's why we went to throwing. We went to a more up tempo huddle, and when we do that, obviously, we have three scores down, and we felt like we needed to change the tempo to get something going because we didn't have much going in the first half.

**Q. Today in the way the offense played, you mentioned that you 100% expect Tim Kelly to lead the offense again. What from today --**

DAVID CULLEY: Still do expect that.

**Q. And how much conversation with Caserio and all that do you see from the evaluation from today?**

DAVID CULLEY: Haven't had any conversation at all. We're just looking forward to tomorrow and our exit meetings, and then we'll go from there.

**Q. What does it say about your team that y'all were able to play so well down the stretch and beat one team in playoff contention and play two others really close?**

DAVID CULLEY: Well, today we knew what we were in for with playing this football team. That's a very good football team. This football team has always played hard. We haven't always played smart, but we've played hard, and today I think we played hard. We played smart. Today I thought our penalties were down. We just had a tough start in the first half and just wasn't able to get anything going, but I thought we finished strong. Again, never questioned this locker room about how they play. They're always going to play hard.

**Q. I know it's early, but what's your own assessment of your first year as a head coach, and do you feel like you've done enough in your first year to warrant a second year as head coach?**

DAVID CULLEY: I didn't feel like we won enough ballgames. I feel like we needed to win some more ballgames. I thought there were some ballgames that we had that we could have won that we didn't win. Basically, I'm just looking forward to this offseason and moving forward.

**Q. When you were hired last year, what was your understanding of what set you apart from other candidates? Did they communicate with you what it was about you as a job candidate that they liked most, the reason why they hired you?**

DAVID CULLEY: I'm not real sure about that. All I know is I feel like they made the best choice.

**Q. When you look at what Davis Mills did, the way he finished his rookie season, what do you feel like his upside is for you as your 2022 quarterback? Do you feel good about him being the guy?**

DAVID CULLEY: I feel good about him. I got questioned right going into halftime whether I was going to make a chance. No, not going to make a change. He is our

quarterback. I feel good about him. Obviously, the way he played in the second half, the way our offense played in the second half with him directing it just goes to show that he is good enough to do what we need to get done here to win football games.

**Q. You've been asked a couple of questions about your performance and your job. What do you expect next steps to be as far as talking to Cal, talking to Nick, and what do you hope for? Is this something that you're very passionate about? Would you like to coach this team next year, obviously?**

DAVID CULLEY: As of right now, I feel like I will be coaching this team next year.

**Q. How difficult is it for you to not know for sure whatever is going to be happening and the speculation around it and all that stuff?**

DAVID CULLEY: I haven't had any questions or doubts at all times about what's getting ready to happen. I'm looking forward to being the head coach of this football team next year. Haven't thought about it one minute.

**Q. In the first half y'all were not able to throw the ball with any success. When you went to the more uptempo down 21-0, what did you see in Mills in the second half that helped him be so successful?**

DAVID CULLEY: Well, again, when you are down three scores and we went uptempo, they play you differently. We were just able to get some things going in our passing game. Obviously, we weren't going to be able to run the ball like we wanted to run the ball in that situation because of getting scores and with the clock situation. It was just something I felt like I needed to do. I came in at halftime and said, look, we needed to go uptempo just to change the pace because we weren't doing very well in the first half. We were kind of stalling out there.

**Q. When you have those exit meetings tomorrow about your future, what would you point to as the reasons that you should be the head coach moving forward?**

DAVID CULLEY: Those exit meetings are all with players.

**Q. But whenever you meet with Nick to reassess the season, what would you point to as the reason --**

DAVID CULLEY: I'll let them make that decision.

**Q. Going back to the second half with Cooks out, did that make Mills' performance even more special, the**

**fact he didn't have his best receiver?**

DAVID CULLEY: The fact about it, John, was when Brandin went out, we basically ran the same offense we've been running. Some guys ended up getting more balls thrown to them because he wasn't in there. Not because of us changing what we were doing. It was just that the coverage allowed those guys to be able to do what they did. Had Brandin been in the game, some of the catches would have probably been his.

**Q. I know that the message will vary player to player, but is there anything in those exit interviews you want to get across to your players?**

DAVID CULLEY: Just the fact that I'm proud of them. Proud of the way they stayed in there. Proud of the way they bought into what we're trying to do here. Moving forward, for better things for next year.

**Q. When you looked at some things that can be improved, what are some things that jump out to you beside the running game, and do you think there will be staff changes? Do you expect that everyone will be back, or do you think that's going to be possibly up in the air with the staff?**

DAVID CULLEY: I expect everybody to be back. I expect us to get better at everything that we're doing. Not just from the run game, but our pass game. Get better on defense. Get better on special teams. I think, overall, we just have to get better in all areas and looking forward to going through that this offseason. Self-evaluating ourselves and figuring out what we need to do to get better and then move forward with it.

**Q. You mentioned Tim Kelly. What from this year would you give -- if you were evaluating him, what reasons would you point out that warrant him being back next year? Why you have so much confidence in him?**

DAVID CULLEY: I feel the same thing about our whole coaching staff. I've got confidence in the entire coaching staff. Not just singling out one guy. I would want this whole entire coaching staff back.

**Q. With Davis in the second half when you all were making those moves to go more uptempo, spread it out, what with him do you think worked so well through it, and why you all were confident that he would be able to get that done?**

DAVID CULLEY: He has been very good in the two-minutes situations, which is similar to when we go

uptempo, except the clock is not an issue. We're not in a hurry-up. We're just in a quicker mode of getting lined up, and he has done very well in that, and he feels very comfortable with it. I asked him when we came back out, did you feel good about doing this, and he said, yes. Simply because he has been very effective in two-minute offense, and it's a similar tempo except we're not worrying about the clock.

**Q. What did you think of what Danny Amendola was able to do today; and then as a second part to that, how impressive is it considering your history with him, considering his age, considering his size and everything else?**

DAVID CULLEY: Listen, his age and size is not an issue. He is a flat-out football player. He has been that way his entire career in this league. When he has been healthy for us, he has been very productive. Obviously, today he came up big for us when we needed him to come up big, but that's what I expect out of Danny. He is like some of those other players that I've talked about that have been veteran players that we've had on this football team that are pros' pros that do the right things, that are very good in the locker room, and Danny is one of those guys also.

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