

Houston Texans Media Conference

Wednesday, June 1, 2022

Houston, Texas, USA

Jerry Hughes

Press Conference



JERRY HUGHES: For not only the organization but my teammates as well to come out and to support a huge cause. You know, last week, 19 people lost their lives in a tragic event, and for us to come together as a team to kind of voice our concern but also want to be a part of what this orange shirt means and how we can do our part in the community around Texas, just to kind of make life better for everyone.

So it was great that we had an open forum with Coach Smith. He led the topic in our team meeting and it was great for everyone to come together and figure out what we were going to do so we can come out and help those people, help that community because it was very tragic and very sad to see everything displayed for the Uvalde community as well as for the parents and family members.

Q. What's it like to be playing this close to home and be back where it started?

JERRY HUGHES: Oh, man, it feels great, honestly. I was telling my wife this last night, I feel like I'm back in high school, just to be back in the city driving around. We used to play games at the stadium dome. Very familiar with coming out this way and things like that. Just being part of this warm environment, football city, where everyone is looking for the Texans, even though it's baseball season, everybody still wants to know what we are going to do and how the team is looking. I get that just by through walking through H-E-B and things like that. Just being close to family, high school buddies, college coaches, things like that. Not being so far or being in a different time zone, it's been real relax for me being closer to family honestly.

Q. Where do you see your game at this stage of your career and having this much productivity?

JERRY HUGHES: Bring that sharp mentality to this team. We have got a very young defensive line, so myself as well as Mario, we try to emphasize having that Alpha male mentality up front. We dictate what the offense is going to do, not really settling for just being in our gaps. We want to be able to go out there and make plays, be around the ball,

causing turnovers. We understand the importance of the ball. Coach Smith talks about it every day during a team meetings, so for us just being that game-changer, being that force on the field, I feel like that's something my game has been about my whole 12 years throughout the league and so just trying to show those guys that we can be a difference-maker on every down, really. If the offense is out there and we have four guys on the field, let's just go out there and let's hunt.

Q. The emphasis on core veterans, you and Mario, what do you feel like in terms of experiences that you can impart to the other guys?

JERRY HUGHES: Just bringing that leadership mentality and also helping them understanding the whole grind of the season, how through preseason, first month of the season, you're going to get scout. How to change your game up. What little nuances to look for. How to do pre-snap reads. How to be able to take information from your coaches, data people. You know, this organization has so many people that are going to give us information. I think how to use it and play fast. I think that would be a real key point for the young guys. We have so much talent in that room, it's just getting them to understand how great they are.

Q. What are the similarities besides the four-man rush --

JERRY HUGHES: Just playing on the opposite I'd of the line of scrimmage is probably what's key right now and getting those guys to understand that we are not reading. We're fast, we are violent, we are up the field and we want to dictate what the offense is going to do. We are not really going to let them get settled or comfortable. I think that's been the whole main point and getting those guys to understand that by us playing fast and practicing fast, now it's just going to transition to the game so by us doing in this heat, I think it will be a pay off for us.

Q. Being a native Texan that, probably played a major factor in where you wanted to finish out your career, but Mario and Jock, did that play a factor?

JERRY HUGHES: Absolutely. Mario signed probably



about a week before me and then once I saw his news break across, I was watching one of the local channels here, just seeing his name it threw me off. I gave him a call and he was talking scheme. I'm a big football guy. I love to hear the scheme and as far as what he was saying about Lovie was talking about, about how we get to play fast, we are not thinking, we're reading keys, getting off the ball, that's something that I wanted to be a part of.

Then being home, being able to do that from home and still be a part of my kids life where I can take them to the swim team practice and things like that, that's just like icing on the cake right now. So I'm just having a great time.

Q. Coming from Buffalo -- how do you feel about just things like that still going on?

JERRY HUGHES: Yeah, I mean, you know, it's tragic that we still have to deal with kind of gun issues. We have to still deal with people being reckless and not really thinking and being compassionate for others and things like that. I think for us as Americans, we've just got to really force our law makers to kind of come up with a decision where it comes back to what they signed up for, what their job detail is, is to serve and protect us. I believe that's why they got voted into office. That's why they are there doing their job. We just have to hold them accountable more.

I don't have the answers as far as what that could be but I'm sure we've got 50 people who they are paid for a reason. I feel like if they can come together and put their differences aside and just focus on the kids; kids who are losing their lives at play grounds, losing their lives at schools due to guns, it shouldn't be that way. I think we should all be able to let our kids go outside and have fun and not worry about things like that. Going to school, I don't think you should have to shop around for a bulletproof backpack, I think this that's just ridiculous. So if there's any kind of answers or any kind of sovereigns that we can get from this, it's just that we need a change and we need a change fast.

Q. Lovie said that this team has shown, more so the younger generation, has shown that they are willing to act and not wait for things to change. What does that say about the maturity of the roster and do everything they did and to dough mate the \$200,000?

JERRY HUGHES: I like it just because the younger generation doesn't mind asking questions. They do their research, their homework. They know who the policy and lawmakers are and what their jobs detail. For us to go out and raise \$200,000, for the McNairs to match that offer and for us to find an organization in Uvalde that's actually working with the community, I'm talking like principals,

mayors, superintendent are the head of the first bank down there who is putting everything together and for us to give that money to them so that way it goes directly to those families, directly to that community, doesn't get lost in the shuffle, I think that's huge.

That's really great for our younger generation and it just shows you the direction in which our country going where people don't mind doing the research and putting in the extra time to get the right answers and make sure everything is right and justified. I think that's perfect.

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