

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Christian Kirksey

Press Conference



CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: First and foremost, we send our condolences to the families, and also just want to just make sure that the world knows, and especially our fellow Texans know, that we're out here and we're able to help.

We're not just football players, we're role models, so we take our responsibility to make sure we extend a helping hand, and that's something that we want to make sure everybody knows, that it's important to us. We have a fellow staff member Roland who is close to a bunch of people that's there. That's his hometown. So it definitely hit home for us, too, just when one of our staff, that his family has to go through such a tragedy.

I think it's unbelievable to know that stuff like this is still happening in 2022.

We just want to do our part to be leaders in this community.

Q. What about on the football field? What are you noticing from you guys as a defense? Lovie talked about wanting to make some -- saying that you guys have to make up (indiscernible) how do you feel like that's going in the early course, some of the things you're trying to do?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: You know, practice has been going well. We've got a lot of guys -- one, we drafted really well. Those young guys, they're plugging in there. They're learning the defense fast. Older guys that came back, the veteran guys -- anytime you have a second year of learning the defense, you feel more and more comfortable, so guys are out there making plays, and we feel very good about the guys that we have on this defense. We're just flying around, guys playing different positions, guys learning different positions, and that will be good for us to mix and match different players and put the best 11 out on the field. This OTAs has been going great. Lovie has been extremely well. Even though he's the head coach he's still down there on defense taking charge. We're progressing and we're definitely improving and we're excited to finish year two in this defense.

Q. How do you go about building those relationships with those young players that you drafted, building those relationships and helping mentor them?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: Yeah, this is a brotherhood. We're a family. When we draft guys, we expect guys to play. We know this game of football has a lot to do with next man available because things happen and injuries, so we want to make sure these guys are prepared, so we bring them in, take them under our wing. We were all rookies once before, and I had a lot of vets and a lot of older guys that showed me the way, so we want to give that same knowledge and experience to the younger guys, whether it's on the field or off the field, teach them how to be a pro, what to expect. You want to make it as easy as possible for a transition for them.

You've just got to get to know them, know where they're from, know their life experiences and just make them comfortable and make them feel welcome.

Q. It's obviously an unbelievably tragic thing, but what was your reaction to Uvalde? You obviously had the connection with your trainer, but the genesis to really try to do as much as you guys could considering you could be doing a million other things?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: You know, when I first heard the news, it was -- I was devastated by hearing that it's children. I'm a parent myself, and I can't imagine taking my child to school where they're supposed to be safe -- that's the safest place they can be, and you get a phone call from a principal or a police officer saying that there's a shooting in the school. My heart just goes out to those families, to those parents.

No words can help the parents. I know we're giving money and giving things and giving our support, but at the end of the day they're still hurting. It's going to take a while for them to get back to their regular life routines because their life has changed forever. They don't have their children anymore. Like I said, I'm a parent myself, and I can't imagine going through that and having to live with that the rest of my life.



I was definitely hurt by hearing that, and it's in Texas, and that's right down the road. Just one of those things where it's like, we've got to keep God and we've got to keep praying and pray for the families' mind, however way we can giving them comfort and peace in this time. That's what we're here for. It just goes to show you, guns is real important. It's a responsibility that comes with having guns. I think we've somehow got to find a way to get guns in responsible people's hands and not let guns get into the hands of the wrong people that don't need it and use it for the wrong things. Guns are meant to be for protection. I think people are out there using it wrong.

However it is to find a way to limit that, we need to find that. But it's definitely a tragic happening, and my prayers just goes out to those families.

Q. Christian, when you look at a guy like Garrett Wallow, Lovie said that he's a player that hasn't taken a day off since arriving. What have you seen from him and the maturity of what he brings to the linebacker room?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: I mean, he's only a year two, but he seems like he's been in the league for five, six years. He's very smart. He picks up the game fast. He plays fast. He can play any linebacker position on the field, whether it's Mike, Will or Sam. He can plug himself in and be of impact on this defense, so I'm very proud to see where he's came.

I thought he had an extremely good rookie year, came in there and made plays when his number was called, and this year he's definitely taking those strides. He's definitely working. He showed me some of his off-season routines and workouts that he was doing, and just say that he was working his butt off, so I can't wait to see what's in store for him this season.

Q. Lovie also said that the younger generation takes action (indiscernible) what's that say about the maturity of this roster, the foundation (indiscernible)?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: Oh, you know, guys are not about just talking about it, they're actually doing it and showing that we care. I believe that as a player group, we came together with \$200,000, and the McNair family, the organization, they were generous enough to match that donation, so in total \$400,000, and that can definitely help the situation, but it doesn't shy away from the families' feelings. Like I said before, money and all that, it definitely helps for short-term, but long-term, I just can't imagine what those parents are going through and the children that was at the school and things like that.

It's almost like what do you do to help. Like I said, it's a very sad moment. I can't imagine it. But we're doing everything we can in our power to show them that we care. It's going to take a while for them to, like I said, get back to just normal living. It's tough; their life is going to be changed forever.

We've just got to stay with them and keep them in our prayers.

Q. How special is it to wear that shirt? You see that shirt all over the place down here.

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: Yeah, it's special. One thing, this Friday, we're going to all wear these orange shirts, just because, like I said, it's our responsibility to not just come out here and be on camera to play the game of football but be role models and be leaders, and when our voices can be heard, we're willing to show it, and we want to bring all the awareness to people that guns is a serious thing.

Right now guns is really affecting our nation, and we need to figure out how to stop the gun violence.

Like I said, I don't want to take away people's rights from having guns, but you've got to be responsible. You've got to be responsible, and it has to be in the right people's hands.

Q. On the football side of things, there's another Christian in the linebacker room. What are your early impressions of Christian Harris?

CHRISTIAN KIRKSEY: Man, he's quiet. He doesn't say too much which is good because he's a sponge. He's soaking up all the knowledge he can and the kid is fast. He's athletic. Obviously coming from a great program in Alabama, I know that Nick Saban polished him well and got him ready to go, but I've seen flashes of him being able to go out there and contribute.

Now, you don't see that all the time in a rookie, but he's picking it up fast, and I'm happy that he's here. Also, that's the third Christian; it's myself, him, and then my son, Christian Jr. So there's a bunch of Christians all over the place, which is cool.

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