

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Coach Lovie Smith

Press Conference



LOVIE SMITH: We had a chance to watch the video, and not a lot has changed. A lot of things we thought happened both sides of the ball, some things we have to clean up, obviously, starting with the penalties. Good things that came out from the game, whenever you can get through a preseason game without any serious injuries, that's a good thing, also. Some of your questions you're going to ask, how much will certain guys play this week. We don't know that.

How we're handling this week is we have preseason games, but I still -- in a training camp mode for us. We're not going to start game planning the Rams until a little bit later on. Tomorrow we have a typical training camp, offense, defense, good-on-good day, and excited about that. There's a lot of things that, as I said earlier, that we need to get accomplished.

I'll take your questions.

Q. Week 3 was like a regular season mode, if you will. Do you take that approach, or how do you view that?

LOVIE SMITH: Yeah, I think it's a little early to talk about that. We have a plan, I'll say that, on how we're going to play our guys. But again, right now we're kind of still in training camp mode a little bit. You know, our guys will be playing for the season, most of them will get extensive amount of time with one of the games.

Q. After watching Eric Murray, Jonathan Owens again on the tape, where do you think they are in their progression?

LOVIE SMITH: You said Eric Murray and Jonathan Owens? I'll talk about them individually. Eric has been around here. He's played a lot of ball. He's been watching practices. He's been working with our second unit for the most part.

Jonathan Owens has been working with our one unit for the most part. There's a reason why we have them in those positions. Like both of them. Both of them bring

something a little bit different to the table.

I feel like we have some other guys, Terrence Brooks has stood out in training camp practice at the safety position, too, and of course we talk quite a bit about Pitre.

Q. What was it in particular, what do you recall about Pitre that allowed him to establish himself early on?

LOVIE SMITH: A few things. You start talking to him, right away, knowledge of the game. You do, when you have young players coming in, new players coming in, you look at their history and some of the things that he's done. You want to confirm some of your thoughts.

We were able to do that early on.

Again, every day we've been out there with him, there's something he's gotten that we like.

For our young players, though, if you talk to Jalen, what he's going to tell you, is that wrapping up on some of the tackles, we have young players that's never really done anything live yet. You kind of anticipate that a little bit. But he should take another jump, we think (audio interruption).

We have a goal of three each game. We were able to get that. We didn't score a touchdown. 3rd downs were not as good as we would have liked, but I thought the guys played hard, too, with effort, which we were looking for, and the situational football, two-minute, we had to get them stopped at the end to get the ball back for our offense. Defensively we were able to do that.

Pass rush, when you have certain guys that get reps that haven't played a lot, of course owe bow, we traded for him and he's been a good football player in the league. But Derek Rivers, I liked some of the pressure we were able to get with our defensive line.

Q. When you look at a guy like Tremon Smith, what he did on special teams, what are you seeing from him and his development so far?

LOVIE SMITH: Opportunities that he got last year in those



situations, I thought he kind of stepped up a little bit. But he will be our returner. That along with being able to do something else gives us flexibility. You still want to see guys make plays.

We know when he gets the ball, he knows what to do with it, so it's good to see him handle that.

Same thing with Desmond King. As you look at what he's able to do, punt returner, he can play the nickel position, play the corner position. You need a few guys on your roster that can do multiple things.

Q. Saturday that you don't get many times in practice to get like a game-time situation. Are there things that you'd like to see the first team do with Mills and pushing the ball downfield, and how did he do that in (indiscernible)?

LOVIE SMITH: Well, for some positions that's the case. But for some others, that's not the case.

The plan that we had for Mills last week, the plan that we wanted him to have, what we got from that, it's just not about -- as you're putting your roster together, if you knew that all the guys at the one position would play that way all year, that would be great. But that's not the case. So you're developing your entire roster, and you use these preseason games to do that.

I like exactly how that turned out. To get your third-team guys listed at third team, as your third-team quarterback all of those reps. We'll get Davis his reps, he'll be fine.

Q. Did you see what you wanted to from Jonathan Greenard his first football game back?

LOVIE SMITH: Yes, Jonathan finished the season injured, and he's healthy. So we wanted to get him a few reps. That's the case for our guys that we feel pretty comfortable with and we know what their role would be. I don't have to see them all throughout the preseason to feel comfortable. We don't have to see that to feel comfortable with that.

Jonathan may get a few more plays this week like a couple of our other players.

Q. How comfortable is that unit on the defensive line making it for you to cut down to who you want?

LOVIE SMITH: You want that to happen. In fact, too, like Derek Rivers, guys that haven't gotten a lot of reps, when the lights come on, they really perform that way. But on the defensive line, we need a lot of guys. We need about 10 that we feel comfortable with this time right now, 10 or

11.

The more the better. We know that Jonathan would be one of those players, Jerry Hughes -- I could give you a few of the guys, Jerry Hughes -- I could give you a few of the guys, but Maliek Collins and some of them, but again, we're still trying to develop that 53 -- no, we're trying to develop that 69 -- no, we've got an international player, right? How about that 70-man roster is what we're trying to develop.

Q. Does that help knowing that you can have him as a bonus?

LOVIE SMITH: It does. Talking about Dale, everybody in here know how to pronounce his name? I can answer it right now.

But think it No. 75, right? About 25 seconds left to go in the game, where was he? Who was watching the game? Where was Dale? He was on the kickoff team that run down, that forced the action to inside of the 20-yard line. And then of course we got a sack after that.

These are the things that you love that I'm looking for from training camp, players we -- most of us don't know their names, and they're making plays, and we're seeing improvement from them.

Q. With one less preseason game, do you all stress the importance to some of these guys who may in the back of their mind think that they're on the bubble, that the next two games will definitely be important to put something on tape?

LOVIE SMITH: I don't think we have to -- the guys aren't surprised about anything that we do. That's what I'm going to say. Thursday we gave them a print out of everything that we're going to do, how we're going to do it, so that's not a surprise. Players know that we have 91 players right now on our roster. They realize exactly what they need to do with all of their reps. There's no surprises on what they need to do daily as they come into the building, competing for a job throughout, and that's what we've seen from the guys.

Q. How likely is it that Derek Stingley will play in this preseason game coming up?

LOVIE SMITH: How likely? Like 35 or 36, 59 or 60? Help me out a little bit. I understand you. I'm just messing with you a little bit.

Derek needs to play this preseason, true enough. But a little bit later on, like after Tuesday's practice, we get a little closer to LA, we'll talk about who's going to play then.

Right now, I know that Derek is going to scrimmage tomorrow, and we're excited about seeing him continue to get better daily, which he's doing, getting more and more comfortable each day, but a little bit later on in the week, we'll let you know our ideas, our plans for how we're going to play our guys the second preseason game.

Q. You've mentioned Derek Rivers a couple of times. In what ways has he perhaps maybe changed your perspective or what's stood out most?

LOVIE SMITH: Well, I wouldn't say that he's changed that much. I'll go back to the Jacksonville game last year. We had a lot of injuries, and Derek stepped up, and we liked what -- he's got excellent speed. You look at him, he's our profile that we're looking for on the outside.

If you put defensive end behind your name, you need to be able to rush the passer here. He showed up throughout. That's what he's been doing in training camp.

Again, you cannot ever have too many pass rushers.

Q. With there being one less game, does your philosophy change on how many reps you give the starters or how many you're going to play in a quarter?

LOVIE SMITH: No, it doesn't change. As we went into preseason, we had a plan that we're going with on how we were going to play everybody and how many reps for the most part they were going to get.

Injuries are the only thing that kind of knocked us off track a little bit with that. That's not really knocking us off track because you get a chance to see somebody that maybe wasn't in those plans.

Again, keep in mind, practices, preseason games, it's all a part of the plan to get ready for the regular season. You look throughout the league, some players aren't going to play any. So maybe some of our -- we have a few players that may not play any throughout, so it's just not a given. I'm not saying everybody on our roster is going to play this preseason. That may not be the case. We'll keep you posted as it goes along. Fair enough?

Thank you.

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