

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

Lovie Smith

Postgame Press Conference



Tennessee - 17, Houston - 10

LOVIE SMITH: On both sides of the football, I'm talking about, up front, it's going to be a tough day. It was bad football today we played, and you end up with a game like that.

You look at the score and you say, hey, you had a chance to win. Never really were in it. Early on, of course, interception was big where we had a little momentum to be able to get something going then.

Good play on the punt return to get the ball out. Good play by Steve Nelson to intercept the ball.

But besides that, just not a whole lot to talk about. Defensively we haven't been able to really stop the run all year, and today that definitely showed up.

And on the other side of the football too. We say we want to run the football, and it's hard to get anything going when you can't run it. Take your questions?

Q. Lovie, you talk every week about trying to improve the run defense. Where do you go from here after what happened today?

LOVIE SMITH: Just like what we've been doing after other days where we didn't play as well. Short week, not like you can do an awful lot.

Going to heal up. Hopefully get a few guys back. Little shorthanded now and try to do a better job.

We knew who we were playing, one of the best backs in the game. That physical brand of football, we weren't ready to play that today.

Q. Lovie, beyond the run game issues on defense, some of the penalties -- having 12 men on the field, holding calls below the box, some interceptions after turnovers -- where did all those mistakes come from in this game?

LOVIE SMITH: It would be hard to say exactly. That's not something we've dealt with. It's not like we've been a team that's been penalized a lot. Today we had too many, I acknowledge that.

Q. Lovie, you kind of brought this up earlier when you were talking about you couldn't really get the run game going. When you're unable to have that, how does that affect the way you go about the play calling?

LOVIE SMITH: It's just tough all the way around. Once you get in favorable -- of course, part of the game plan was to get in favorable third down situations, but that kind of started up front. When you can't run the football, and you become -- you know, it's pretty obvious down and distance what we have to do. That's just tough.

We weren't set up today to be able to handle some of that.

Q. Lovie, another week of a lot of missed tackles. How do you get back to the fundamentals?

LOVIE SMITH: We've been getting back to the fundamentals. Sometimes it just doesn't happen, simple as that. We practice each week. Believe it or not, we go over the fundamentals.

Some days you miss tackles. Today was one of those days.

Q. Lovie, with some of the offense today, where do you feel like the issues came from, just being able to move the ball at all throughout the game?

LOVIE SMITH: It starts up front, you know, my initial statement. When you get dominated up front on both sides of the football, part of the game plan, I mean, it's hard to get any game plan going. Offensively for us, if they're in our backfield every time, you can't run. You can't pass the football.

So every question you can ask me, it's going to come back to that. We're dominated up front, can't run our pass in those situations. And defensively, when it's easy, we have



a starting quarterback out, when you can turn and hand the ball off and you can't tackle, it's going to be a game like that.

Q. Lovie, when you have a game such as this, you usually get a couple of days to reassess and regroup, but when it's a short week and there's a game on Thursday, how do you go about setting the tone at practice?

LOVIE SMITH: There's not going to be a practice, not much practice. Philly's not going to practice much either. We're going to have a walk through and we're going to have a game. That's what happens when you play a Thursday night football game.

We knew a Thursday night game was coming, so you prepare as best you can. They're going to be in the same situation as us except for they're traveling.

It's not like we can put a whole lot of new things in. What we need to do after a physical game like that is heal up as much as we can and get ready to play.

Q. Lovie, how tough is it now after an emotional loss to play an undefeated Eagles team?

LOVIE SMITH: It's tough. It would have been tough any team we play coming in right now. But a team that hasn't lost, they look pretty good. I had a chance to watch some of the game today. It's going to be tough.

Maybe arguably the best football team in our league right now, just that in itself if we were playing our best ball. But you also seem like, when you play the top team, that should bring out the best. This should have brought out the best, when we're playing the top team in our division. We put a big emphasis on it, and we've played them a lot better than we did today.

But we're a little shorthanded, and we didn't play our best ball.

Q. Lovie, last week Davis looked like he had took a step forward in the Raiders game, but today he looked like he regressed. How do you hope to talk to him again?

LOVIE SMITH: That's what I'm going to say. I'm going to say it's tough duty when you get dominated up front. It's tough duty for that.

Davis, I know we're going to pick Davis out, but it's everything. We didn't run the football the way we've been running it. So that was a part of it too.

We did not, the Houston Texans, our football team, under my leadership, did not play well today in all areas. That's the good thing about playing a Thursday game, as I see it, back to that Thursday question. When you play like that, you're anxious to get back out there. I know we're better than that.

Q. Lovie, trade deadline is coming up. Have you received any calls about --

LOVIE SMITH: You know what we've been trying to do right now? All of our effort -- didn't look like it today, but all our effort has been toward playing the best game against Tennessee.

As you probably know, we're not looking too much at that right there. There's enough to keep us busy based on what's happening on our football field with our football team right now.

Q. Was your primary target last year, Brandin Cooks, why do you think until this last round you were unable to kind of find him as well as others?

LOVIE SMITH: Today, let me go back again. When you have a hard time protecting, it's kind of hard to get the ball to many people today. When you have a hard time blocking, it's kind of hard to get a running game going today. When you have a hard time getting off of blocks and missed tackles, you have a hard time to getting their big running back down. That was the day.

Any question you ask kind of starts with that. As we transition from there, when you play that bad, you can't wait to get back and get that bad taste out of your mouth. That's the good thing about having a Thursday game. Thank you.

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