

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Kevin Stefanski

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Cleveland - 27, Houston - 14

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Injury front, David Bell injured his thumb early in that game. Anthony Schwartz getting evaluated for a concussion. Takitaki and the knee injury we'll take a look at tomorrow.

A great team win. It's December football. Any which way you can get these things. So for our defense to score 20, score on special teams, I thought was outstanding. Came down here to go 1-0, got that mission accomplished, and we'll get on the road next week.

Q. Pretty much every time your quarterback was taking a snap, your team was booed for most of this game. What message do you think the fans were sending?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I have no idea. Those are the type of things we don't control.

Q. What did you think of Watson?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: First game back, so you're going to work through it. Proud of the guys in getting a team win. Obviously when you come down here. But he's going to learn from every rep.

Q. Were you surprised by the rustiness, to the extent of it?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I don't know. Obviously you're missing a bunch of time. You've got to get back in it. You've got to get these game reps. You've got to get this first one out of the way and all those type of things, but I know what the kid is capable of.

Q. Did you hope to maybe do a little bit more with him offensively and in the passing game, and then just kind of dialed back when it was apparent he was going to be rusty?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I just think offensively we were on the

backs of our defense today, on the backs of our special teams, who were outstanding. The run game was going, so we kind of stuck with it there in the second half.

Q. Do you feel like the emotional part of it affected him at all, or just physically having not played for that amount of time?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I think with him getting his first win out of the way, the jitters that come with the first game back, all those things.

Q. Did you feel there were jitters? Aside from what you saw on the field.

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Listen, he's human. Coming back here where he's played, first game back in a while. His teammates have his back, and I know he'll do better next time.

Q. Did you all feel the need to protect him at all as a play caller, given that he hadn't played in 700 days?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: As a play caller, you're always trying to get your offense going, get in a rhythm. That's what we're always going to try to do.

Q. Does this give you a good sense of what you have to do going back to the drawing board with Deshaun, knowing you have to play a team like the Bengals and Joe Burrow coming up, in terms of his passing ability?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: It's whatever it takes each week. Today was a great indication of a team win. It was a great illustration of our defense playing lights out, scoring on defense, scoring on special teams, which was -- those are great team wins when you get into December to be able to do that.

Then we'll look at what we've got to do game plan wise versus Cincinnati and go down there and try to get a win.

Q. As Deshaun has gotten more and more involved with the team in recent weeks and the last couple months, speak to anything you've noticed different



about him. The way he's approached things, talked about things, things he's shared that he's learned or felt he's grown from the last few months?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: We talked about it all week really, those types of things. He had to come down here and do his job and help this team get a win.

Q. Can you share what any of those things were? The ways he felt he's grown.

KEVIN STEFANSKI: No, the focus is on coming down here, do your job, get a win, get back to practice this week.

Q. Could you tell what happened on the interception in the end zone?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I'd have to look at it. Probably rushed the throw, but looking at it, you're trying to throw the ball in the end zone there versus a specific look. The guy made a good play. We'll look at it.

Q. Do you have reason to believe that he knocked off the rust in his first game back and he will be that much better in his second game for having this one under his belt?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Again, it's time away, so you've got to get the first one out of the way, and I think he did. He's looked very sharp in practice. I know he's excited for the next one.

Again, I think he's understood that this one was going to be different. He came down here in a place that he's played before, but he'll jump back into the process this next week.

Q. On Peoples-Jones, the return, can you talk about how you saw that play? Also just how he's doing in that role.

KEVIN STEFANSKI: He's been outstanding, which shouldn't surprise you with Donovan. He was close on a few, but I feel he's getting north-south. The whole team did a great job on that return to give him a seam, and on this turf he was moving there.

He does a really nice job. He continues to help this team win on teams, help this team win on offense.

Q. It seemed early on Tony Fields got more playing time. Why was that?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: We were playing more based on what their personnel group is.

Q. Is it safe to assume, even though Deshaun struggled so much and you're heading into a huge game, you're committed to him as your starter?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Yes.

Q. How do you think Deshaun handled playing these familiar surroundings and being booed in these surroundings?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Again, the crowd is not something we can control. We can acknowledge it, but it's not something we control. We focus on doing our job.

Again, he was very, very locked in this entire week, into the game plan, made good decisions in our run game. So get this one out of the way and move on to the next one.

Q. In other words, you feel like he was unaffected by it?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: Not for me to say.

Q. Is there some relief, though, to get this exact moment out of the way, his first game, being here, and all the things that come with it?

KEVIN STEFANSKI: I think there's relief in getting a win. For us, you come down here, and you've got to get a win any which way you can.

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