

# Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, December 18, 2022

Houston, Texas, USA

## Head Coach Lovie Smith

### Postgame Press Conference



Kansas City Chiefs 30, Houston Texans 24

LOVIE SMITH: That team out there today has won one game, but they're not playing like that. They're showing up every day taking coaching trying to get better. They're coming to the games and giving ourselves a chance to win it at the end. We still haven't finished a game the way we need to to get a win, but we're building.

Offensively I thought whenever it comes down right up until the end, you know, and you have over 20 points on the board, there are some things that we've done well. You know, throwing the football, our two-quarterback system did some good things. I thought Davis did some good things throwing it.

Our playing when Dameon went down, of course, as you saw was to move Royce Freeman up. And he is a good football player on our practice squad and can do some things. I thought he ran the ball well throughout.

This week we knew who we were playing. Chris Jones I think is as good a defensive player as there is in the league. So we thought that moving Tytus to the guard position would kind of help us in a lot of different ways. So I thought that gave us a chance.

Defensively whenever you can take the ball away, it was going to be one of those kind of games. I mean, Patrick Mahomes, is as good as there is. Kelce, Hall of Fame tight end. They have outstanding skill throughout, so we knew it would be tough duty.

I thought the guys fought, hung in there. The take-aways always give you a chance and special teams too. We fought hard.

I understand it's still a loss. We're going to keep showing up is what we're going to do. Next it will be on to Tennessee on a short week.

Take your questions about today.

**Q. I know this league is certainly about wins and losses, but does the fact that you played really two good teams two weeks in a row give you encouragement as you try to finish off the season on a positive note?**

LOVIE SMITH: Yeah, we're looking for some positives. We're not going to the playoffs. We realize that. You know, the last couple of weeks the two teams we played I think both of them have a chance to win it all. So for us to see this year where we are, but to see what we can be.

We have some injuries. I really like the guys that stepped up. You know, two corners. Our receivers aren't playing. There are some positives to build on.

That's what I expect the guys to do. I expect them to show up and fight like that throughout. Eventually you have to get over the hump.

**Q. (Off microphone) -- the fumble, just costly. What did you see on the play and...**

LOVIE SMITH: I kind of saw what you all saw. Ball security, yeah, it's paramount. You have to have it. Especially in that situation. It's a tough back and forth game. Once you got to overtime, who could have the best ball security?

Or looking at the other side of the ball, who can take the ball away? That's unfortunate for our team.

**Q. The two-QB system, you're there in the red zone, and Jeff is in. What was the thinking about having him when Freeman is ...**

LOVIE SMITH: The thinking is get the ball in the end zone. It's as simple as that. Hindsight, you know, is always a lot better, but the thinking down in the red zone, of course, is Jeff gives us more options while we're down there on that play.

We had opportunities mixing both quarterbacks in. I can't say that I wish it was just as simple as that. Have Davis in then and we score, and everything is fine.



**Q. Lovie, today with Davis Mills, is that the quarterback that you had confidence with how he played? How do you define how he played and what that last play means to him and also to the team? Have you had a chance to...**

LOVIE SMITH: First off, we just can't look at one play. I understand that was a critical play. Critical mistake there at the end. You have to look at the body of work. I'm just talking about the body of work on this game.

If we have the ball, would our opinion be a little different now if we had driven down, not turned the ball over that last time? I know we didn't, so it's good and bad. That's how our play at the quarterback position has been most of the year.

**Q. The first half you guys had a 47-7 lead. What was the decision there? What was your thought there? Then, also, with eight seconds to go did you feel like you could get within range?**

LOVIE SMITH: No, no, no, and no. Right before you are talking about right before we punted the ball? We had a lead. I liked the position we were in. Backed them up a little bit. I would do the same thing again in that situation too.

**Q. How do you guys use Jeff 17, 18 plays. You average about 1.2 yards. When you are struggling, how do you keep trying to go --**

LOVIE SMITH: Because we thought we could get that average up a little bit. That's why we did, you know? I see the numbers right now. There's always a chance when you haven't had success that you can break one a little bit later on, so we stayed with our game plan.

Our game plan gave us an opportunity with the guys that we play when we played them. We don't turn the ball over there at the end, we have an opportunity to win the game, so can't fault the game plan much.

**Q. (Off microphone) -- there are opportunities to take those a little bit more of a less conservative approach?**

LOVIE SMITH: I wouldn't say that's a conservative approach. I thought that was the approach that we should use at the time to win the football game. The ball was where? Around the 50 or whatever. There were a lot of plays. I can't remember every one the way you all can, but in the moment I thought the way the game was going, I thought that's what we should do.

There's 8 seconds. That's what we thought we should do. We're all in agreement. I wish it was just as simple as go for it there and everything is fine. It's a lot more than that.

Did you see how the game ended? That's exactly the position we wanted to be in. There right at the end with an opportunity to make a play there at the end to win the football game. We can live with that.

**Q. Tytus has been playing really well front tackle this season. Was it just because Chris Jones was coming in that made the decision to put him inside at guard?**

LOVIE SMITH: No, that was a part of it. When I talk about how good a player I think Chris Jones is, but Kenyon Green didn't suit today either. So all of that went into it. Each week we look at who is available and, all right, what combination gives us the best chance? Today that combination gave us the best chance.

**Q. (Off microphone). If Kenyon can't go next week, do you potentially see Tytus staying inside --**

LOVIE SMITH: I think it's a little early for that. We're just kind of digesting what happened right now as much as anything.

**Q. Lovie, talk about Royce Freeman coming in and getting those kind of yards that you needed to come in and with Pierce out for him to come in and contribute like he did?**

LOVIE SMITH: Well, it's been that way with us throughout. We've had injuries. The next guy, that is the philosophy that we have. We're going to play the game, so it is about the next guy stepping up.

Royce has waited patiently. As I said, been on our practice squad, going against one defense each day. All of those things. I thought he took advantage of his opportunity.

I thought we ran the ball. There was a period of time there where I felt pretty good about how -- we were blocking up front and then also how he was running.

**Q. We were talking about that last play. To that point, what was the quarterback you saw on that? You all have been waiting for that offense. What did you see?**

LOVIE SMITH: You know, it was a tight game, so we knew who the quarterback was on the other side of the field. I mean, our quarterbacks allowed us to stay right in there with one of the best teams in football. So the quarterback play gave us an opportunity to do that.

We just need to finish. Again, if we had finished the way I hoped we would today, I think a lot of these questions wouldn't matter an awful lot. We didn't, so they come up.

We're not playing as well as we need to at any position. I know the quarterback has been a position that's been talked about a lot, but there's a lot of improvement we can make throughout.

Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

