

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

Sean Payton

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Texans 22, Broncos 17

SEAN PAYTON: Sloppy for most of the game. Obviously 3rd down we struggled. I don't think we converted a 3rd down offensively. We converted a 4th maybe. But all the things we discussed coming in -- we've been a team that has played well with the takeaways and the giveaways, but that script flipped today. We had three of them, didn't get any. Gave up explosives.

We'll look at this tape tomorrow. It starts with us coaches, starts with me. We've got to do a better job.

Credit DeMeco, Houston, those guys earned a hard-fought win. But we didn't play our best football, and we're going to have to down the stretch here.

Any questions?

Q. You especially seemed to get off to a slow start, then the Sutton drop, there's just a lot of things that weren't going your way early. The guy with the sports science, do you think this 11:00 a.m. kickoff, that's three games that you've kicked off at 11:00 and you've gotten off to slow starts in all three games, Bears, Dolphins and this one?

SEAN PAYTON: I don't know, we might have to look at that. I think that's an easy out.

Q. Your thoughts on the last pass that was intercepted, and might it have been better strategy to throw it away and still have a 4th down play there?

SEAN PAYTON: Well, look, obviously we want all four downs. I want to see the film. But certainly we felt like we were going to have -- where the ball was relative to time, we were going to have four plays into the end zone.

But there's not going to be a clean look, if that's what you're looking for. You're going to have to make a play in these tight windows. We'll see the film.

Q. Did you feel like coming in you leaned on the pass more --

SEAN PAYTON: A little bit, maybe to some degree. Look, I get back to this, we had a game not too long ago where we didn't have good rushing numbers but then we didn't have good 3rd down numbers, so you don't have good numbers, you don't have a lot of plays, and then people ask what happened to the running game. It's hard to run if you're not staying on the field. It kind of goes hand in hand.

Q. The defense in the second half I think forced four punts. What did you think about their effort?

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, that was significant. We kind of rebounded from the slow start at the beginning of the game, but again, tough loss.

Q. Your vantage point on the Singleton penalty that gave them a fresh set of downs --

SEAN PAYTON: What about it?

Q. Did you see it? Did you think they didn't blow the whistle soon enough? It was a false start, but --

SEAN PAYTON: But after that the foul was called. Obviously the same vantage point you had.

Q. Can you speak on the challenge of staying the course when you don't get a touchdown until late in the third quarter?

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, look, these games unfold sometimes differently. You'd like them -- we've been a real good opening drive team. Man, we went through those first 15 and were struggling just finding something to get us across the 50.

But you know we were forcing field goals, and that gave us a chance. It gave us a chance to come back in the game, and you kind of felt that momentum swing. I'll give it to our guys, we continued to battle.

We just put ourselves in a little bit too big of a hole today. Sometimes you're going to have to play well from behind. This is a close league. It's not like you get in games each week -- very few actually where you're comfortable in the fourth quarter. We weren't able to make enough plays today.

Q. You used one of your time-outs after the two-minute warning. Was that just the look --

SEAN PAYTON: Just to get the right -- yeah, we knew we had plenty of plays and time, so it wasn't a time-out issue, there wasn't a clock issue. I wanted the right play. I think it was 4th down.

Q. At 6-6, how do you frame it with your team moving forward?

SEAN PAYTON: I don't have to frame anything right now other than, man, certainly with the way the season started and then where we're at right now, the margin for error obviously is slim, and yet we're playing for a lot. We're playing for a lot.

I think they know that.

Q. How did you feel about opening up the offense a little bit more? Wilson threw more down the field, and then also your thoughts on his three interceptions overall?

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, well, look, we turned it over -- I'll look at the tape and kind of go through that, but again, you're just disappointed after a game like this.

Q. Beyond this game, how much are you just enjoying this season after a year after, being back again?

SEAN PAYTON: The thing you enjoy is everything matters. Every day, every minute, just preparing, 3rd down, red zone, next opponent, next opponent, get to Monday, first Monday in a while where we've lost. It's a long day. Everything matters. Clock is ticking, and you're on to the next opponent. You might find something that's so significant on a Friday, that means the difference between winning and losing.

Then when you're out of it for a year, just not as much feels that way or matters. Sometimes some things do, but you miss that sense of urgency, that man, it's ticking.

When you're back in it, it's ticking, and it goes by fast. We're in December now and playing for a lot. But is it addictive? I think the winning part is. I think the winning part is -- there's nothing like it. So at some point, it stops

for everyone.

Q. You had an 0-4 start, tough starts in New Orleans. That 70-point thing and just the rest of the start, is that one of the tougher things you've come back from?

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, this game challenges you in so many different ways that it does -- you do form a little grit and callus and become tougher, and you also learn a lot about everyone else in the building. It's a great laboratory for human behavior, and it's great when you have the right people.

Look, our job tomorrow, as difficult as it is, is to get up, put the tape on and look at it closely, look at it collectively as coaches, what could we have done better from a teaching perspective, and then communicate that clearly and then get ready to put a real good plan together versus Los Angeles. That's kind of what you have to do.

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