

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Matt Burke

Press Conference



Q. Sort of the combination of not getting the rush and some lapses in communication and things like the coverage, what did you see from (indiscernible)?

MATT BURKE: Obviously a disappointing performance, and probably all that at different levels, right? Like our rush, I would say especially early, wasn't really getting home, which exposes the back end some.

Then I think our rush got cooking a little bit later, and then we had some breakdowns. Again, I could talk ad nauseam in here about rush and coverage working together. Obviously just a complete breakdown on both levels. It wasn't good enough. We need to play better this week for sure.

Q. What does adding a guy like Kareem Jackson do for this defense?

MATT BURKE: Obviously a lot of experience, a lot of different systems, has played a lot of our coverages before in different variations. Just having that veteran presence. Obviously having Jimmie go down, which hurts, but to have someone that has a similar level of experience to sort of replace him and hopefully be a little bit steadying hand back there. So just trying to get him caught up to speed in what we're trying to do.

Everyone knows the physical aspect to his game, so excited to have him in the building for sure.

Q. (Off microphone)?

MATT BURKE: Again, it all goes hand-in-hand. Sometimes we have to have tighter coverage to buy that extra tick for some guys up front, or maybe we are in a pressure look where whether we're pressuring or not but maybe trying to buy a hitch. Those sort of things.

You're trying to manipulate timing. Like pass rush is all about time and space, how much time do you have in closing space? How we can manipulate those things to get guys close in space or buy extra time, that's a whole unit

thing, a whole defense thing that we'll have to work through.

Q. I know you weren't here last year.

MATT BURKE: I was not.

Q. What kind of change for Jalen Pitre from a responsibility standpoint from last year, if anything?

MATT BURKE: I can't really speak to what they were asking him to do here last year, so I know what we're asking him to do, and he's doing a good job at it. He's a good player.

We ask all our safeties -- and I know we've gone through a lot of guys. We ask those guys to do a lot. There's a lot of interchangeable pieces in how we're moving those guys around.

It would be hard to speak on that. I can't tell you what those guys were asking him to do last year. Jalen is a good player for us. He's going to start on Sunday. You guys want some breaking news.

Q. (Off microphone) obviously highly motivated playing in this game. You've got a lot of good backup linemen that have made a lot of big plays, and a lot of people are giving you credit for it. Why do you think (off microphone) not just in the offseason but during the season, and do you see him contributing to this game?

MATT BURKE: They should find somewhere else to place some credit. Yeah, I don't know. We have a lot of -- again, there's a lot of, I would say, moving pieces up front for this game in terms of who is healthy and who is going to be available. So we're prepping all those guys, and he's one of them.

Obviously he has been here a couple of weeks now. I would hope he is motivated to play every week. Obviously he's got a little chip on his shoulder this week.

Then I would just say in the general question, I think this



front lends itself to guys being able to play. We try to make it as simple and direct for the guys up front in terms of being able to come up and play. It's technique-driven. There's a learning curve from a technique standpoint.

But at the end of the day, we have a few alignments, we have guys we want you to put your hand down and get off the ball and be disruptive. We try to cater it to where guys that can come in, whether it's off the street or just in a short time and be able to have some success because it's -- the focus of the defense is D-line-driven. It's sort of catered to letting those guys be playmakers for us, if that makes sense.

I think that's sort of the nature of the front is it's not overly complex from a learning standpoint. It's once you get the techniques down, how we're asking you to get in your stance and get off the ball so guys can kind of plug in and play pretty quickly if they adapt to that part of it.

Q. Two weeks you've had a lot of success (off microphone). Is there any type of concern whether or not you guys will be able to replicate that same success?

MATT BURKE: I put this quote up the other day in the room: "The arrogance of success is to think that what we did yesterday is sufficient for tomorrow."

It's a new game. We have new players playing. Possibly they do. I don't know. In and out. We can't just -- my caution was more like, hey, we can't just show up and think that what happened in that game two weeks ago is just going to happen. We worked for that. All the guys, whoever was playing.

That's been the mindset. It doesn't really matter who is going to be in for us. Our approach is going to be the same. Our expectations are going to be the same of how we play this game. It hasn't changed from two weeks from we have to stop the run.

You saw last week they were in the game. They had 162 yards rushing or whatever they had. There's going to be a commitment from them to run the ball, and we have to have the same approach and mindset to stopping it regardless of who is on the field for us.

Q. To that point, I know every week is different, but when you have the success that you did have in Tennessee and following up last week, how frustrating is it as a coordinator to know your team played substandard (off microphone)?

MATT BURKE: It's unfortunate. We've been on that sort

of a little bit of a roller coaster from a performance standpoint. That's coaching. Every week you're trying again, whether it's motivational or just call-wise and scheme-wise, putting your guys in position to make plays. And that's all we're trying to do week-to-week and correcting why it didn't happen one week and trying to enhance why it did happen another week.

That's coaching. That's what makes it kind of fun. It's never fun when it is up and down and sort of inconsistent. You obviously would rather be sort of consistent week-to-week doing the same things. And we had some success in the run game last week as well, so there were some areas that hopefully we can continue to build on.

Yeah, looking at it's December football. We're almost January football. What day is it? This is where we have to be getting better. We have to be playing better football if we want to keep talking about, hey, we're still playing for something, we're still in this mix. At some point, if you put performances on last like week, you won't be having that conversation.

Our strive is to keep getting better every day and keep getting better at this time of year where now we're hopefully putting those consistent performances together.

Q. (Off microphone) adjustments from last week where you are watching (off microphone). Is there any consideration to put Derek Stingley (off microphone)?

MATT BURKE: Yeah, we did for a little bit. There was a lot of moving parts. Obviously we had a bunch of things happening from a personnel standpoint, from an injury standpoint, from a call standpoint. There were some moments where we were doing that.

Sometimes it's not that easy just to say let's do that. So, yeah, there's always that consideration, what's happening, how do we stop this, whether it's a matchup or a personnel or a call that we like. Obviously, we weren't trying to let people break records on us and those sort of things.

Yeah, there's always those conversations that are continual going on game day. There were moments that we were trying to do that and get us in better matchups. There were moments that we felt the coverage would kind of handle some of those things. It's sort of a back-and-forth between personnel and coverage and calls and how you're trying to just get back on track.

Q. (Off microphone)?

MATT BURKE: I don't.

