

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

DeMeco Ryans

Postgame Press Conference



Houston - 45, Cleveland - 14

DEMECO RYANS: Just thankful again for this. Just gracious, man. We're blessed. Our team is special. God has blessed us tremendously, and we give him all the glory, honor and praise, where we are, what this team has done.

For C.J. to have the game he had, unbelievable performance by a rookie. It's just outstanding by everybody. So proud of our guys in the locker room. I knew they were ready on Tuesday. They were focused. They were locked in, and they went out and put the work in.

Cleveland's a really good team. We had a tough matchup, and our guys fought, fought, fought, made plays we needed to make to win the game. Really just thankful, grateful for everybody in the locker room, and what an outstanding performance by our guys.

Q. Have you ever seen back-to-back picks like that?

DEMECO RYANS: Never seen back-to-back pick sixes like that. We needed our defense to step up. Joe had a big day against us a couple weeks ago, and we knew it was a challenge in the passing game.

For Nelly to make the pick that he made and also C. Harris, those are big time plays. So one of our focuses coming into the game was to attack the football. But to attack it and to go score, that changes the game for us.

Q. You guys were down 17-14 when Stroud connected with Brevin Jordan, but 76-yard touchdown. Can you talk about how that play set the tone for you guys? And what it has meant for Brevin Jordan to make that play?

DEMECO RYANS: It was special. Brevin Jordan has been special all year. He turned the wheels on, he turned them on and he took off. I think everyone was running right down the sideline with him. Brevin has done an

awesome job. No play bigger in his career than that play today.

Q. You guys were up ten at the half. What was kind of said in the locker room so the way that you guys could basically enter the third quarter and kind of blow the game out of reach?

DEMECO RYANS: The thing that was said in the locker room was we're here. We talk about our moment. We talk about opportunity. Now the biggest thing is what do you do with it? It was all about just going out and just finishing, continuing to execute, continuing to finish, and that's what we did.

We knew in the playoff game it can flip at halftime. If guys stay locked in and stay focused, and that's what we did. That's what I love about our team. Everybody was focused. Everybody was calm. We executed the proper way.

Q. Can you just talk about the play of Christian Harris today? Throughout the week he was saying that he was focused coming into this game and he wanted to make an impact, and I think that he did that today.

DEMECO RYANS: Christian has been locked in all week. Christian, it's a special moment for me because just seeing Christian and seeing his growth week after week after week and to see him make that play -- I talked about that this week actually. We talked about that play where he missed it a couple games ago. He just broke it up on fourth down. He had an opportunity to step in front and pick this time, and he did it.

It was another cool moment for a lot of guys, young players, Brevin, Christian, for them to have the type of games they're having in the playoffs now will be plays they'll remember for the rest of their life.

Q. What do you think of C.J., comes in with probably the most important game of the season and plays the way he played. What do you make of it?

DEMECO RYANS: C.J. is the reason why we're in this



position. He's special. Special young man, special player, continues to shine no matter how big the moment is. Our whole team is leaning on him, and he has the shoulders to carry that weight, and he shows up week after week. He continues to improve week after week. No moment is too big for him.

When you have a young player who can shoulder the load of your team and the way the team is behind him, the confidence that he gives our entire team, it's so cool to watch because he's such a special player. I know he has a special season, and we're looking forward to keep moving on.

Q. DeMeco, early unanswered points, but you often talked about how things start. Can you talk about the job that L.T. did today with Myles Garrett?

DEMECO RYANS: Can't say enough about L.T. and his performance versus arguably the top defensive player in the NFL right now, and he's done it. Time and time again, he's done it. He's had that matchup. He looked forward to that matchup, and he stands up time and time again. He pushed through there, struggling, fighting through injury, and still battles.

When you have a left tackle who can do that, that allows C.J. to shine, that allows us to get the ball off. Also as far as protection and with L.T. doing a tremendous job against Myles.

Q. Second half, your team goes pick six, pick six, turnover, turnover. What can you say about your defense? Also, Stingley, what can you say about him?

DEMECO RYANS: When we needed it most, our defense had their best performance of the year in the biggest game of the year. They stepped up, had an outstanding performance, and the reason why we won this game, why we were able to finish in the second half.

Stingley did an unbelievable job in Cooper. I think we limited him to four catches. It was an outstanding job by Sting. He was up for the challenge, up for the matchup.

That's what playoff football is about. It's about your playmakers stepping up and making plays. That's what Stingley did all day today.

Q. You had four sacks over the year. Will's job, in dealing with the ankle and working his way back, just his fight and grit to be able to make an impact this early in his tenure?

DEMECO RYANS: Will has been tremendous, all of our

young guys. Nobody has said this, but we should have the offensive and defensive rookie of the year. Both guys have stepped up big time for us, C.J. on offense and Will on defense. Play after play, we know he's battling an injury, but he's one of the toughest guys I've ever been around.

We have to drag him off the field. He's not coming off. He continues to fight. Was able to be productive and get sacks, which is what we needed. From our defensive line today, multiple guys showed up and were able to get pressure, and that allowed us to play better on the back end and force the ball to come out quicker.

Q. Congratulations on the win. To win the way you did, how much confidence can that instill into the team to not just be happy for this win, but ultimately you could reach the goals of the season?

DEMECO RYANS: One week at a time. Our team was confident. We were confident coming in. You have to be confident in these moments. We're not shying away from that. We're a confident team. We believe in each other. We know we have a special group in this locker room, and that's what it's all about.

It's one game at a time. Continue to go out, don't make the moment bigger than it is. Go out and execute, play relentless football, and we'll be exactly where we want to be.

Q. You guys had a number of big moments from your rotational players. What is it you do that allows those guys that don't necessarily get all the snaps or regular snaps sometimes to stay locked in and be ready for whatever moment they need to have?

DEMECO RYANS: We talk about it all the time. No matter who you are, when you step out on the field, who knows the opportunity that you'll get. Just maximize your opportunity and be ready for that moment.

And all of our guys, no matter who you are, rotational player, whoever that may be, everybody has an important role on this team. If you have to grind, we just ask guys to play as hard as you can, execute, play as fast as you can, and good things will happen.

That's what you continue to see, different guys step up and make plays because we play as a team. It's not about one person. It's about our team. That's what everybody understands that continues to drive us and be in games like this and win games like this because it's a first team mindset.

Thank you guys.



