

# Houston Texans Media Conference

Saturday, January 13, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

## C.J. Stroud

### Postgame Press Conference



Houston - 45, Cleveland - 14

**Q. Talk about you come in as a rookie to turn this thing around and even take this team to a playoff victory.**

C.J. STROUD: It's a blessing. More than ever, just thank God, thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's been a blessing. It's been a heck of a year. I thank God I can go another week with my teammates.

This a dream come true, as how close we are as a team. We're really, really close. Offense, defense, special teams, we're all in it together. Just to have another week to go out with my brothers is a blessing.

I'm super excited for this team and the city of Houston, and I'm blessed to be in the position I'm in.

**Q. You passed Michael Vick as the youngest quarterback to ever win an NFL playoff game. What does something like that mean to you?**

C.J. STROUD: It's cool. It's really cool. I put a lot of hard work in. My teammates do. It's cool to see the first year of labor come to be true.

I'm super blessed to be considered with a great name like Michael Vick, who was my favorite quarterback growing up. I'm super blessed, and hopefully I can make it two.

**Q. C.J., as you mentioned, you always talk about your faith, your Christian faith and Jesus Christ and God. DeMeco talked about his faith and how blessed he was today and how blessed this team was. You've got to feel like God has a ton to do with where this team is too.**

C.J. STROUD: For sure. We have a lot of God fearing brothers on the team and God fearing sisters on the staff. I definitely think God is at the forefront of our minds. We play for an audience of one. When everything is going crazy, you can lock in and have peace.

I'm blessed to have a leader like DeMeco, who is open with his faith. It's hard. People hold you to a standard, and that's what we want as Christians. We're holding our own crosses and trying to be like Christ as much as possible. We make mistakes. We're not perfect. But at the same time, we know that with God we can do all things.

Just really blessed to be part of a great group of God fearing men.

**Q. C.J., when you woke up this morning and went through your routine, what was that like? As you're preparing for this game.**

C.J. STROUD: Really just the same thing as always since week 1. I've got a pretty good routine what I like to do pregame. We got a little extra time to come into the stadium. I was really just relaxing, watching a movie, just chilling, going over my plays, going over some film.

Really just crossing every T, dotting every I, just like I always do. It was a really good wrap-up. The crowd was already -- this is the first time I've seen our stadium kind of full pregame. Of course we were rocking. It was loud. It was the loudest I've ever heard a stadium in my life.

Pregame, it's not a lot of people all the time regular season because we play so early. So now to finally in an afternoon game, to see the crowd, it helps us a lot to get the energy going. I appreciate everyone coming out. It was cool.

**Q. What did you think about the sync Bobby had today? He had it all year, but it seemed like he was really in tune with getting that ball out.**

C.J. STROUD: Bobby did a great job like he always does. His job is to call the plays. He call, we ball. He knew to mix it up a little bit. We wanted to throw the ball a little early just to set the tone that we were going to not shy away from anything.

L.T. did a great job against Myles and that front. Our O-line did a great job. When we have an OC that's going



to be aggressive and take care of the football, really that's a recipe for success. We're really an explosive team. We showed we can run the ball today too, which is great.

This is the best that we've played so far. We played four quarters of football this week, and that's what you want to do towards the back end.

So Bobby did a great job, our O-line, our tight ends, running backs, our receivers, our defense, scoring points. We talk about that all the time. It's really cool to see it come to fruition.

**Q. DeMeco and a lot of guys have said you didn't go this far to expire. You have a lot of football in front of you. How does it feel to stack this accomplishment and win a football game and win out over a team that has a top ranked defense?**

C.J. STROUD: It's cool. It shows you whatever you put your mind to, you can accomplish. DeMeco has led this team with great confidence, and that confidence rubbed off on everybody. We're all holding each other to a certain standard.

Like I said, I'm really excited to be with my brothers for another week. Who knows next year it's not going to be the same team. That's how the league goes. We have another week to prove ourselves right and win another game.

**Q. Congratulations on the win. Do you think you and this team are still improving?**

C.J. STROUD: You can always say there's things to work on. We're going to look back and look at plays that we want back of course, but that's kind of how football goes. We're playing our best ball as of right now these last two weeks, last three weeks really, and that's really what you want.

**Q. Throughout this season, you and your teammates mantra is why not us? Do you think you proved that today?**

C.J. STROUD: Yeah, for sure. I think everybody counted us out. I think, like I told you all before, people are going to talk. That's all they can do, just talk and watch. We're the ones out there making plays. It's cool just to see.

Like at Ohio State, it was called we versus the world. Here I think we should call it NRG versus the world or Houston versus the world.

It's cool just to be able to be playing at a high level right

now. It's not about what people say. In the playoffs it's 0-0. Everybody has a clean slate. They are the No. 1 defense. They're really good. They have a great pass rush, linebackers flying around. Their DBs are really good. I think that showed what we are too.

**Q. Those of us who can come here all year don't really think of you as a rookie anymore. New people that come in always ask the question what's he like as a rookie? Your teammates keep saying he's not like a rookie. He carries himself so differently. How does that make you feel? What is it that you do that makes them say you guys don't understand. He just kind of moves differently?**

C.J. STROUD: I don't know. That's how I am as a person. I've been this way since I've been a child. My family is back there. They know. I've always kind of -- I've always been the youngest in my family. I've always been the one like kind of like the one who kind of gets picked on or whatever, but that made me tough. I thank God for my family.

Honestly what I've been through in my life has prepared me for the locker room and being there for the men and being a man amongst men. I've been blessed to have that reaction from my teammates because I'm honestly be myself. It's not like I've come in and do anything new or try to be extra or hold people to a certain standard I'm not holding myself to.

I've been doing this since I was young. So it's cool to be working with guys who are part of your life. I feel like this is my purpose, not my passion. Also it's connected to my passion, which is football. I think my purpose is really to spread His word and be just a light in this world. So I'm blessed enough to do that every day.

**Q. Zero sacks today. Myles Garrett wasn't able to get pressure because of Laremy Tunsil up front. Can you talk about his impact in your career and what he's meant to your team?**

C.J. STROUD: Laremy is top player in this league. Top five, top three, top two. Laremy is a dog. He was the first person to contact me after I got drafted. I don't know what he seen, but he saw something special in me and always let me know.

I have confidence in him. He's a pro bowler every year. He goes against the top defensive ends and holding them down. I'm super appreciative of him. He's a brother. I can ask him for anything. He's always there for me, and I'm always there for him.



He did a great job tonight. Our O-line did a great job. Mike on point. Shaq, George, Juice, and of course L.T. and our tight ends doing a great job and our back. We knew that was the key to victory we needed to block well up front, and we did that.

**Q. What movie did you watch this morning?**

C.J. STROUD: What did I watch? I don't remember. I know I watched Fast Five last night. Just put it on background.

**Q. On the long touchdown pass to Dalton, it seemed like you were rolling to the right. Metchie was wide open right in front of you. What gave you the patience or the wherewithal to let that play develop and find Dalton for the big run?**

C.J. STROUD: Everybody knows I play quarterback now, so we got the best quarterback players on Twitter and Instagram. That really wasn't what the play was designed for. It wasn't supposed to do to Metch. It was supposed to go to Dalton. I had to be patient and let Dalton work.

Beck was really the reason why the play was executed because Beck had the hardest block, and he held it down to let me do my job. It was a cool play, man. I'm really happy for Dalton and really happy for Beck. And Metch showed up big time today and showed what he can do. He's going to be a great receiver for a long, long time.

I can't wait to keep working with my guys and the start is just beginning. So we're going to just keep going.

**Q. This is clearly probably the highest point of your season. What was the lowest point or the hardest point for you this rookie year?**

C.J. STROUD: I don't know. I don't really have that type of mindset to where I've got to think about the lows anymore. Of course losing isn't fun. I feel like every loss that I've taken this year in this league, like I could look back and know that I learned a lot from that.

I'm still really young. I know you guys don't want to consider me a rookie, but I'm still learning a lot and I learn on the fly. I'm blessed to be with a group of guys that hold me to a standard, and I hold myself to an even higher standard.

I think the way we come in and work, that we really honestly forget about all the bad things. Of course we want to get the problems fixed.

I couldn't point one out, man. I think all the losses and all the thing that I've learned is really just teaching moments.

I'm blessed to even have those teaching moments and still be able to be playing right now.

Thank you, God bless.

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