

Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, September 15, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

C.J. Stroud

Postgame Press Conference



Texans 19, Bears 13

Q. C.J., what did you think about your defense tonight?

C.J. STROUD: They played amazing. Shout-out to them. We lean on each other. Super proud of them boys.

Q. How would you describe the offense tonight?

C.J. STROUD: First half I felt like we played really good. Definitely knew that they were going to try to stop the run. Just did some different schemes for that. Tried to throw it. Thought we threw it pretty well in the first half.

Second half we were just flat. Just needed a big play or just needed a play, stack plays really. We just couldn't find our rhythm.

That's a good defense over there. A lot of respect to those guys. They had a good plan for us. Good to learn with a dub, but I definitely know we'll be better.

Q. Being flat in the second half, what do you feel is going to be the first point you bring up with the offense this week, what you can improve?

C.J. STROUD: I mean, it's a multitude of things. I feel like just shooting ourselves in the foot. It's never really them. We run a type of play style where we're always at the coverage, or whatever it is, it's up to the players to execute.

I definitely think, like, we got to stop getting penalties. That's one thing. Another is just stop shooting ourselves in the foot. Hat on a hat in the run and hat on a hat in the passing game. Really just stop getting in our own way.

Q. First couple weeks it looks like you've been feeling more comfortable with off-script plays, taking more risk. Would you say that's something that's opened up for you?

C.J. STROUD: I mean, yes and no. I don't choose to run.

I run when I have to. I feel like I am agile and I can get out. I definitely try to read the defense to get my guys the ball because they're usually open every time. It's just up to the pocket, navigating that, trying to make my O-line right, if I have to, extend the play.

Q. You started 0-2 last year. Now you're 2-0. How much different do things feel this year? What have you learned? Where have you grown?

C.J. STROUD: 0-2 is a lot worse than 2-0, so... I'm definitely grateful, definitely blessed to be playing this great game.

But there's definitely a lot of things we can clean up. Around the league, you can see that. A lot of sloppy ball. Some teams playing better than others.

I definitely know that Texans football is not what we put on the field today. At least in the second half we can be better, for sure.

Q. You and Nico, the scramble-style plays, is that something you focus on?

C.J. STROUD: No, it's just two guys out there making plays. We have a drill that we do at practice, it does help those things. Trying to be two guys, be dynamic players.

Q. Do you think you've grown your bond in that way?

C.J. STROUD: Yeah, for sure. Me and Nico, we've always had a good relationship. Always read each other well on the field. I think even now, we'll take the next steps. You can see Stef getting involved more, Tank, Dalton, Brev. We're trying to spread it around. We have so many dynamic players. It's a good problem to have.

Q. How do you balance you got the win but didn't put on Texans football?

C.J. STROUD: It's football. It's hard to win in the NFL. I'm happy. Of course, I'm not satisfied. I'll never be satisfied. There's always things that you can point out.



We're not going to let one half of football make us put our heads down. We're going to stay confident, taking shots. We're going to stay betting on us.

I definitely understand we need to be better. Like you say, winning is number one. So we won. Now it's time to move on and get better.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about what Ka'imi has meant to the team over these past two weeks. As an offense, does having a kicker that can hit from long range give you a little bit of extra confidence?

C.J. STROUD: Yeah, 'Imi got ice in his veins. Super happy and proud of him. He broke a record today or something like that. We definitely need him. All points are big points.

I definitely think, like, the preparation, just who he is at practice, you know that he's going to knock it down just because how hard he is on himself during practice.

It was a great job on special teams today, blocking it. Also punt, Tommy doing his job as well. It takes three phases if you want to win a football game.

Q. You mentioned not shooting yourselves in the foot, getting a hat on a hat in the run game. What was the difference between last week in the run game and this week?

C.J. STROUD: Just watch film. I can't sit here and tell you right now. It's always better than what you think it is, or if it's a good game, it's always worse than you think it was. So I can't sit here and tell you that it was this or another.

I just know that we talked, they had a specific plan on what they were trying to get done. They executed it. We just got to be better.

I can't sit here and tell you exactly what it was.

Q. Did you see the replay, the hit drop tackle, how the offense changed afterwards, the running game was off kilter? Was it a drop tackle in your mind?

C.J. STROUD: I really didn't notice it. I seen him kind of just fall down weird. I was like, Man, that didn't look good. So I definitely am praying for him. I know he's a tough guy. Just take care of himself right now. Hope he's back on the field soon. As you can see, we need Joe. Joe is an amazing back.

Yeah, definitely shocked us. Shifted momentum a little bit. But that's up to my job. That's for me to get the juices back

going, not let that happen, let us go downhill.

I hope he's okay. That's the main thing. I just hope Joe is all right. I didn't notice the tackle, yeah.

Q. After a remarkable rookie season, what's been the biggest challenge or adjustment for you? Are teams scheming against you differently?

C.J. STROUD: Not really. I'm still the same confident kid I will and always will be. Definitely do think they try different schemes. I try my best not to focus on that. Just focus on my job.

I don't really see a huge difference. I definitely know, like, what I learned from last year is it takes a couple weeks early on to get used to playing against other teams, seeing other coverages. You've been in training camp for so long, when you get in these games, it's a little shocking till week three, week four. I think around the league, you'll see offenses start to pick it up more.

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