

Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, September 29, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

DeMeco Ryans

Postgame Press Conference



Texans - 24, Jaguars - 20

DEMECO RYANS: Wow, what a game, what a battle. Very proud of our guys. We talked last night in our team meeting just about whatever it takes, whoever it takes, and however long it takes, let's just find a way to finish this first month of the season 3-1. So we're very proud of our guys for finishing the right way.

As we know, a lot of things to clean up for us with the penalties. It's like we're trying to break the record for most penalties in the league, which we've got to clean up. This is our third straight game of over 10 penalties. It's just not good enough. We have to find the guys who want to do it right all the time and play clean football there.

Very proud of the effort from all of our guys. C.J., he led us down when we needed to. Dare stepping up for us, and Nico, he's been lights out this entire year. To start the season being the NFL's leading receiver, he just shows up. Every single time we need a play, Nico is making a play. I'm just so thankful and happy for him that he's on our team.

Q. You were able to get the win. What does it say about the toughness and you guys overall?

DEMECO RYANS: The goal for us each week is to win. There's no such thing as an ugly win to me. As we know this week, wins are hard to come by. It doesn't matter who you play. I'm just proud to get a win. It doesn't matter to me how we win them, just finish with the win.

Q. Some of the penalties there are effort penalties, and then there's some things that are just mind penalties. When do you start making the differentiation? Some of these things is a continuation from the last three weeks. When do you start looking at the mental mistakes you continue to make?

DEMECO RYANS: The penalties that bug me the most that we have to get off of our tape and off of our team is the mental penalties. That's the ones I can't stand and I can't

go for.

We have to play smart. If you want to be a good football team, we have to play the game smart. We look at other teams around the league -- and we have meetings on these things, and guys just have to own up to it and be man enough to stand up and just play the game the right way.

A lot of them are just bonehead penalties that are -- it's uncalled for, right? You don't need those. They're not helping us at all. We still have positive things that happen to us, and we're going backwards. We're in field goal range, and we go backwards because of our own mistakes.

So, again, it seems like I'm a broken record every time I step up here, the Texans have to get out of the Texans' way for us to be a good team.

Q. You mentioned a little bit about Nico in your opening statement. Why do you think the connection between him and C.J. Stroud has been so strong as it has been?

DEMECO RYANS: I know you don't like this answer, but it's simple, Nico is open. That's why the connection is strong. Nico, he's open, but he's also so competitive at the catch point. He's strong. He's physical, fast, big receiver. That's an easy target for C.J. Nico has showed up every time we needed him.

Q. Can you walk us through any adjustments the defense made on the final three drives to force those two crucial punts to give you guys an opportunity to stay in the game?

DEMECO RYANS: The adjustment for the defense is mindset. Like we did not play with the right mindset on some of those drives, and they were able to drive down on us. It's about mindset, effort, and physicality.

I think when we needed to stand up and make a play, we made a play to give our team a chance to continue to be in the game. We've got to get a lot of things cleaned up on



defense where we have to get more stops. On third down, when we needed stops, guys showed up on third down and made some big-time plays. But a few explosives there we can't give up.

Q. You mentioned Dare when we started. Can you talk a little bit about what he did today and how he made a difference in the game?

DEMECO RYANS: Dare, he got the game ball, one of the game balls today because what a special play. When we needed a play the most, to see him catch that pass and take off and get us on the plus side of the field, that was huge. It was huge. Dare, again, everybody knows the touchdown he caught, but Dare's a guy who's doing it the right way, a guy that we can count on.

That's the guys who I want out there, guys that we can count on, we can trust, and they're dependable.

Q. DeMeco, I was wondering if you thought establishing a little better run game would help with some of those penalties they struggle with on offense?

DEMECO RYANS: With the penalties we're having, it doesn't really matter, run game or pass game. We're getting them all sorts of ways. It's just us playing clean football, playing smart football, and just getting out of our own way.

Q. You mentioned the mindset of the defense was the adjustment. Do you mind explaining what the mindset was and how you addressed it to shift it and change it.

DEMECO RYANS: Guys, we weren't playing our style of ball. We weren't stopping the ball. We were not setting the edge. The ball was getting outside a few times, and they were able to have explosive runs. We weren't tight, sticky in coverage. Like it was just uncharacteristic of how we play.

Q. Talk about Nico Collins and having good chemistry with C.J. Stroud and breaking out like he's breaking out. Can you talk about that and what he's been able to do from year to year to year to get to where he is?

DEMECO RYANS: Since I first got here, Nico has definitely improved, and he's put the work in. That's the thing that people don't see. I wish everybody could come to see how he works throughout the week. So it's no surprise to me with what Nico has done because you watch him work throughout the week, he's one of the hardest workers on our team, shows up every single day ready to work, and he's doing it in practice, and it shows up in the game.

Q. There was a sequence with the run downfield. Bigsby runs downfield and then Calen brings him down. Eventually you all get a stop on fourth down. What do you make of that play that Calen made?

DEMECO RYANS: One thing our defense stands on is effort. There's no better play that exhibits that effort than Calen giving us a blade of grass to stand on. Calen's effort to run him down and get a stop and for us to regroup after such a huge play for us to regroup and be able to get a stop there in the red zone, that was a big turning point in the game.

That shows what effort means, and if you play the game the right way with any type of effort, it can put you in position to be on the winning side. Proud of Calen for his effort.

Q. Coach, just the thought process and how you and Coach Slowik instructed C.J. Clearly he has a ton of confidence, off platform, off schedule throws. Are you cutting the field in half, simplifying the read, or just as simple as you say get the ball to Nico, and he'll get it somewhere?

DEMECO RYANS: C.J. did a really nice job today of going through his progressions. I thought our protection was better today. He had a lot of time to make those reads. He had a lot of time to escape the pocket and make the plays he needed to make. He did a good job of keeping his eye downfield and finding The Open receiver.

Credit to C.J., over 300 yards passing, two touchdowns. Big day for him. We're not here in this position without C.J. and what he was able to do today.

Q. Obviously Nico is on pace for over 2,000 yards. I know it's early, but what does that say about his overall talent that he's been able to turn himself into basically an all pro receiver?

DEMECO RYANS: Nico, he's deserving of all the praise and all the credit that he's getting. He's one of the top receivers in the league, and he's showing it. He doesn't have to talk it, he's showing it by what he does on a game-to-game basis. He's proving that he's one of the best.

He should be all pro, whatever, all pro, pro ball, all those accolades should come to Nico because he's showing it every single week.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports