

Houston Texans Media Conference

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

Nick Caserio

Press Conference



NICK CASERIO: Just a couple things. I think from a team standpoint, really good spot. So I think all you can ask for is to play meaningful games when December starts, and we're in that position. So excited about the opportunity in front of us.

We'll have a bye week this week, kind of rest up. DeMeco talked about that yesterday a little bit. It's really about the rest and recovery and kind of getting the players physically back up to speed. They've been going at it for however many weeks now.

Great opportunity in front of us. That's all you can ask for. Can't ask for anything more than that. We're in a decent position, so we'll see what the next four weeks brings.

As it pertains to Azeez, I'm sure I'll get a question, so just try to get ahead of that here a little bit. A couple things. DeMeco talked about it after the game yesterday, C.J. had some comments right after the game as well. I think the most important thing is the health and well-being of Trevor. Fortunately, he's going to be okay. It's an unfortunate playing situation.

I think one of the biggest issues that we sort of take umbrage with, I would say as a team and organizationally, is the picture that's been painted of Azeez. Quite frankly, it's unfair. I would say one of the biggest issues -- and I probably speak for a lot of teams, not only Houston Texans -- but I think that's all teams ask for is consistency in the league. I think in this situation -- I mean, quite frankly, there's no consistency at all relative to the level of discipline that's been handed down.

When you go back, let's look at this season. We had multiple situations, multiple examples. Two really good players, I would say, Branch is ejected against Green Bay, plays the next week against us. Derwin ejected, got suspended for one game. And Derwin's a great player, and Derwin's had some other situations that have come up. I'd say, even going back here, a player that we know well organizationally here, Kareem Jackson, Kareem's a good player, was ejected, fined, ejected, fined, ejected, and then

suspended after three games.

We're going to say Azeez Al-Shaair, who nobody embodies our program more than Azeez, what he's about, what he's been through. You all know his story. There's not a more selfless individual, more about the team, who's earned the respect, that represents everything that we want this program to be about. This morning he was at a United Way event.

We're talking about some of the commentary that has been made about his character, about the person that he is, about what his intentions are, from people that quite frankly don't know anything about Azeez Al-Shaair. For the league to make some of the commentary that they made about lack of sportsmanship, lack of coachability, lack of paying attention to the rules, quite frankly, it's embarrassing.

So I think the big thing from our perspective -- talk about a player who's never been suspended, never been ejected. So now we're saying that he's going to be suspended for three games.

Look, it is what it is. I think the big thing from our standpoint -- and all teams want this -- is just some level of consistency. We've talked to the league. Quite frankly, we don't have a good explanation. DeMeco talked to them yesterday. It is what it is. I'm sure Azeez will go through whatever process he's going to go through, and we'll deal with it accordingly.

I think where we take umbrage is the picture that's been painted about Azeez, his intentions, who he is as a person. I mean, quite frankly, it's bullshit, and it's unfair to the individual, it's unfair to the organization. We love everything about Azeez Al-Shaair, what he means to this team, what he brings to this team. He was elected a captain after being here for four months.

Again, like we have a lot of respect for our opponents. We have a lot of respect for other teams in this league. We want to do things the right way. I think DeMeco's explanation about the situation from a defensive perspective yesterday quite frankly was spot on. It's a



tough situation. Again, it's an unfortunate play.

Again, going back to the first thing I said, the most important thing is the health and safety of our players and I would say the health and well-being of Trevor. Hopefully Trevor is going to be okay. To speak on Azeez's intentionality about what he intended to do, some of the comments that have been made, quite frankly, it's embarrassing.

We're going to support Azeez. We love everything about him. We're glad he's a part of this team. I just wanted to just -- I'm sure I was going to get asked about it. I thought I'd address it ahead of time, and at some point we'll probably talk about football, which is what everybody's here to do. I'll leave it there.

Q. What was the biggest issue, the final paragraph in the league statement?

NICK CASERIO: It's a couple -- I would just say, again, when you put information and make a statement in a letter with, A, not having talked, ever talked to a player, not knowing the player, and then to basically paint a picture -- you guys read it. Your lack of sportsmanship and respect for the game of football and all those who play, coach, and enjoy watching is troubling and does not reflect the core values of the NFL.

So that essentially implies that Azeez doesn't give a crap about the fans, doesn't give a crap about playing the football the right way, is not coachable. It couldn't be further from the truth, but when you make these statements and accusations and then you paint a picture of a player, quite frankly, like nobody has a lot of respect for that. I think that's, I would say, part of the issue here.

Again, everybody is entitled to their opinion. Everybody's going to have an opinion. I totally understand and I get that. Again, going back to what I talked about, like the level of consistency relative to discipline that's mandated, it's got to match up in some capacity. We're trying to understand it.

Again, I speak for the Texans, but I speak for a lot of the other teams in the league as well. Everyone wants some level of consistency, some level playing field just so we have an understanding so we can apply the rules the right way.

Another thing that no one's really talked about, the way the suspension is designed specifically, essentially you're saying you can't have any contact with a player for however many weeks, three or four weeks, right?

So if the league says they care about the well-being of their players, I would say in a time like this Azeez is probably going through a lot of things, like we can't even provide support on a multitude of levels. So it's a little bit hypocritical to be able to say, yeah, we want to support the players, but you know what, organization can't have contact with him for four weeks.

So what do you want to do? Does he got to just go float by himself? So there's just a lot of layers of this, and we've got to take a step back and try to absorb it and try to understand it.

Again, I think the big thing from our perspective is just consistency. That was the main thing.

Q. Like the after the fact, because it's been well-discussed, defensive perspective and the quarterback and all that. What about after the fact? Because I know DeMeco talked about Jacksonville might have kind of intensified, overreacted. What was your perspective of what went down there? Could that have factored into the decision?

NICK CASERIO: I don't want to speak for the league. Football is an emotional game. I almost feel the guy was watching the Michigan-Ohio State game. In all seriousness, I think there's a way everybody needs to handle themselves. There's a certain professionalism that everybody needs to have, things are going to happen, but there's a right way to handle things.

Again, from Jacksonville's perspective, they're trying to defend their teammate. In the end, you're just worried about your team and well-being. Again, even look at Hines-Allen after the game, his comment was basically, you know what, I'm not even sure Azeez should be fined -- or suspended. We have a lot of respect for Hines-Allen, he's one of the best players in the league. You're talking about a defensive player making a comment about a situation that happened in a game about his own particular player.

Again, everybody has an opinion. They're all out there. I mean, I'm sure everybody was talking about this yesterday, which I don't want to say that factored into it, but honestly it probably factored into the overall decision-making process.

Look, it is what it is. We'll handle it like we handle everything else. Whatever the result is, we'll deal with it, and then we'll move forward.

Q. Two-part question. The commentary about him, a lot of the guys that have commented are former defensive players, many of the, you can go back and

watch the videos, same kind of hits in a different era. You're talking about hypocritical, they're talking about him, but they were doing the same thing when they were playing in the NFL.

NICK CASERIO: In the end, it's do they know the person, Azeez Al-Shaair? That's the most important thing. The game has evolved, we all understand that. We all grew up -- some of us grew up at a different time, and football was played a different way. The rules are what the rules are.

We try to play within the rules, try to play good, clean football. That's how we coach it. That's what we believe in. We never walk on the field with the intention of trying to harm someone. It's a physical sport. It's a physical nature. Things happen during the course of games. The league has to mandate the rules and regulations however they see fit.

I think the biggest issue is just the overall level of consistency and just trying to establish some level of precedent, which that's all we're trying to grapple with and understand.

Q. The follow-up is just that the linebacker depth, you did have him out for some time with a knee injury. The guys you have filling in, and if you'd give us an update on Christian Harris. DeMeco said maybe he's back soon.

NICK CASERIO: Yeah, we've had a number of players, to your point, that have played that position. Devin has come in and given us some snaps at different points. Henry has done a really good job from start to finish, even going back to last year as our leading tackler.

Again, I'd say Neville Hewitt, there's a guy nobody really talks about, but whenever the guy goes in the game, he's a tackling machine. He had eight tackles there the other day. He's one of our best players in the kicking game.

I'd say relative to Christian Harris definitely making some progress. I'd say he's getting closer. There's certainly a shot we're going to see him sooner rather than later.

Whoever we have available -- I think that's the one thing about this team, we felt going into this season, when we built the team or put the team together, that we had depth across positions not only on the roster, but some of our off the roster depth. We had a number of practice squad players who had participated in games, even going back to the game the other day, Jared Wayne, we had to elevate him with Hutch's situation, and then when Teagan got hurt late in the week, we elevated Irv Smith, who had been here.

So trying to have as much depth on the roster and off the roster as well. Wherever the players come from, we'll make the most of it. We'll go out there, and I think the focus right now is getting ready for a good Miami team when we come back next week.

Q. Nick, do you plan to appeal? Also, aside from that, do you all plan to voice your concerns to the league about this?

NICK CASERIO: We have. DeMeco had a conversation with the league yesterday. I'm not sure -- it looks like it fell on deaf ears, but it is what it is. Whatever the process is in place, the players have a process, the players, the PA, they have a process that they go through. So whatever the process is, if we're part of that, great. If we're not, we're not.

Q. First question, obviously you're trying to delineate Azeez's issue with what happened at the Chicago game. That's been highlighted all around with the hit on the sideline to the quarterback. Then to go back to his Tennessee days, they started putting a compilation of all his greatest hits. Following up with that question, is the National Football League still collecting revenues off the greatest hits on somebody that they put out, big hits and blowing up plays? Are they still collecting revenues on that? You're talking about player safety.

NICK CASERIO: Again, I can't speak to that. Again, there's been an emphasis on player safety, which there should be. The health and safety of the players is the most important thing. We all understand that, players understand that, coaches understand that, we understand that from our perspective. It's a physical game, and I think there's a lot of plays that are legal plays that are clean football, which is what the league wants to promote, which we're all in favor of.

I would say by the same token there's multiple hits in multiple games. Again, we go back to last year, Quinnen Williams bounced C.J.'s head off the ground last year -- no penalty, no late hit, no nothing. So we're saying like we're okay with that hit?

This just goes back to the level of consistency. You want to play a game the right way, try to take the head out of football and all that, the different tackling styles and all that, but it's a physical game. It's played at a high rate of speed. I think what you're seeing on defense especially, you're seeing high level athletes, faster, more explosive, and contact is pretty significant.

So we all want to deal within the rules. Even the play you alluded to going back to the Chicago game with Caleb, he was inbounds. He hit him inbounds. Again, there's a fine line, and I think defensive players, quite frankly, are -- and I think DeMeco articulated it very well yesterday. They're in a tough spot. You're trying to make a split second decision sometimes, and things happen.

Again, you're never trying to harm or injure a player, at least most players. I mean, some players might not give a crap. They're just -- you know, they say one thing but then do another thing.

As far as what the league does and all that, like all our focus is on the Houston Texans and just trying to coach our players the right way, getting them to play a certain way. Like we want to play fast, physical on defense. Everything starts with swarm. It's about running. It's about getting as many hats to the ball. It's about getting the ball carrier on the ground.

As long as DeMeco Ryans is the head coach, that philosophy is not going to change. So we have to find players that have that mindset, that fit that mentality, which I would say we got a boatload of them on defense or on the field, which is why we're pretty good on defense.

Q. On the subject that has been about the suspension, with C.J. in his second year, how would you evaluate how he's played and how he's developed as he continues in the league?

NICK CASERIO: I think he's had a really good year. His leadership, what he brings to the team, his communication, his ownership of the offense. I think he's fourth in the league in yards, or fourth in completions. I mean, he's ahead of Mahomes in some categories, and Patrick will go down as one of the best quarterbacks in the history of the sport.

So we're glad that C.J. is our quarterback. He's made a lot of progress. There's some plays, like all of our players, that we probably wish he could have back, but happy he's our quarterback, happy with what he brings to the table. Played a really good game the other day, really clean game, made a lot of good decisions, and he's a big reason we won the football game.

Glad he's our quarterback. Wouldn't want anyone else leading this team.

Q. How important has Joe Mixon been to your team's success this year? Has he even exceeded expectations that you may have had for him coming in after that great career in Cincinnati?

NICK CASERIO: Joe's been phenomenal. Can't say enough great things about Joe Mixon, what he brings to the table. Just his mindset, the way he plays, his physicality, his toughness, his leadership. He wasn't named the captain initially, but we kind of -- you know, Stef getting hurt and kind of losing a little bit of leadership there, and then DeMeco making Joe a captain for the rest of the year, that was something that was earned. That wasn't just we're giving out party favors. That was something like his teammates see that and they respect that.

Can't say enough great things about Joe Mixon. He's been a good football player. He's a great teammate. He's a good leader. He's a good mentor for younger players. He's always been a very productive player and very versatile. He's kind of been a three-down back, which there's not a lot of those in this league, and he sort of fits that profile.

Glad Joe's here. He certainly has helped us. Hopefully he can help us here the next four weeks ago, four games.

Q. Nick, it feels like last year you guys didn't have the opportunity to put the offensive line you claimed on the field. Feels like maybe you had that for most of this year, a good portion of it. What's kind of your evaluation been of the offensive line so far this season?

NICK CASERIO: Overall, it's been pretty solid. There's been some games, and others probably since the Jets game, I would say pass protection specifically has been a little bit better. The Jets game, we didn't play very well in that game. There's a lot of factors that went into it.

Overall, we're a better running team than we were last year. Part of that is Joe, but you can't gain 100 yards on the road and six games break some NFL record without having a good offensive line. The way we finished the game there the other day, that play was well blocked, and basically for the entire day against a good front, like C.J. had a pretty clean pocket to throw from.

So certainly made some progress. We've had to move some people around here a little bit with KG going out, Patterson going in at center. I would say Juice sort of -- Juice is a better center than he is a guard, but that was the best thing for the team was to move Juice over to guard, and he's handled that really well.

Overall, we're certainly making progress. So like most areas of the team, we've had some good plays, we had some plays that we'd certainly like to have back, but all we can do is try to figure out some areas I think tangibly we

can improve, which I think we're capable of doing, and see if we can put that together here the next four weeks because that's the opportunity that's in front of us.

Q. You all were making a lot of moves that were made this off-season. Did you believe you all were capable of potentially competing for a Super Bowl, and where do you stand on that right now 13 games in?

NICK CASERIO: Our philosophy has always been focus on the present, focus on the right now, and try to put together a good football team that can basically compete in any situation against any team. That's where the focus is.

Anything outside of that, I mean, I've never been caught up in any hypotheticals because it doesn't really matter. What matters is your work and your preparation that week and just how well you execute against that particular opponent. We felt we had a good football team, put together a good football team in the off-season. We feel like we had a good football team. We lost two games on two walk-offs.

We've had an opportunity, other than the Minnesota game where we didn't play very well, we've basically had an opportunity to win each game. That's all you can ask for. In the end, it's going to come down to how well we execute each week, and the next opportunity for that is going to be against Miami.

Q. When you think about the amalgamation of this team, I know you've probably got a board somewhere with some players. Are there skills in their quiver, if you get a chance to maybe improve this team down the stretch before going to the playoffs, that you would pull the trigger?

NICK CASERIO: Yeah, the trade deadline has passed, so really in terms of adding players to your team, there's probably limited options. I would say most teams are in a situation where either players coming back from injury or injured reserve or on the practice squad, I mean, the chances of a player on the street really coming in and making a significant impact on any particular team is probably going to be limited.

We feel comfortable with the players that are here, the 70 players, however many people we have in the building, and we think that we can win football games -- we have won football games with the people that are here. We have a lot of faith and confidence in those people.

Once the season is over, once we kind of turn the page on the '24 season and start to think about the '25 season, then we'll figure out what our options look like relative to sort of improving the team.

Got a good opportunity in front of us, got a good football team, a lot of good players. In the end it's going to come down to our execution, I would say two areas if we can improve them.

I would say limiting the turnovers. We're second in the league in takeaways, we turn the ball over a little bit more. So if we could just mitigate the turnovers. And then improve a little bit in the red area, both offense and defensively. Forget about anything else. You can talk about whatever you want. In those two areas, if we can make some small improvements, probably going to be in a pretty good position. So we'll see how it goes.

Q. How much has the team that you built helped develop C.J. to a quarterback where you're like we're so happy to have him? How much has the team that you've built around him helped him develop to this point?

NICK CASERIO: It's not about the team that I built, it's about all of us kind of put the team together. We feel like we have a lot of good players on this football team, at all levels offensively, got good skill players, a number of good receivers, good group of tight ends, good offensive line, good backs.

In the end, it's all about our performance and how we execute on the field. We've certainly had our moments. We've had a lot of good plays. There's a lot of good out there. Hopefully we have more good than bad here at the end.

Whatever we get, we're going to earn. Right now we've earned 8-5. We have four more games in front of us. Hopefully we'll go out there and play good, solid, clean football and see where we are at the end of the year.

Q. As GM, you always have high hopes for guys that you draft. When you look back on your first draft year and had the opportunity to bring in Nico in that third round, how cool has it been to see him blossom into the wide receiver we see right now?

NICK CASERIO: The credit goes to Nico and Ben McDaniels and the offensive staff. I'm sure, if you've talked to Nico, he was a little bit of a raw player, but he's 6'4", 225 pounds, who ran fast and got behind the defense in Michigan and didn't play his last year. Then you kind of had to make some projection there.

We felt Nico was a decent player, somebody we want to work with, but nobody's worked harder than Nico Collins to improve and make himself a good football player, and

really it's a good example of a young player who has to go through off-season, go through some adversity. I mean, he didn't have a lot of success, even going back to '22. He was injured and caught 30 passes, but he never lost faith.

Tremendous attitude, like great human being, great person, always upbeat, works his ass off and has improved and gotten better and has taken the coaching, and I would say specific to that room, there's been a lot of consistency because Ben's been here kind of from the beginning.

I mean, the credit goes to Nico. Credit goes to the offensive staff and Ben McDaniels for the work that they put in. Happy for Nico and just happy for him because he's a great person.

Q. The continued development of Derek Stingley Jr., coverage skills, tackling, all the things you see from him, is he even better than perhaps you thought he might be when you picked him?

NICK CASERIO: I mean, similar to the question about Nico, we felt Derek was a good player. He was a good player at LSU, I mean, a damn good player. That's why we drafted him.

It's similar to Nico in some respects. He's worked and made himself into the player that he is. This league isn't about talent. I mean, it's about talent, but it's really not. It's about work. It's about mental and physical toughness, and it's about doing it consistently day after day, week after week, month after month.

Derek's had multiple consecutive off-seasons. He had a really good off-season last year, played well. He had a really good off-season this year. Honestly he's improved in some areas, probably run force and tackling are some of the areas he's probably improved the most. So you'd be hard pressed to say there's too many corners playing better than Derek Stingley -- maybe other than Surtain. Surtain basically does everything well. I don't think he's given a completion all year.

Derek's a good player. We thought he was a good player when we drafted him. Nobody's a finished product when they're drafted. Forget about what anybody tells you, what anybody thinks, that's a fallacy. It's about what you do when you walk in the building. Derek has worked really hard to make himself into the player that he is. So credit to him, credit to Dino, because those are the people that deserve the credit.

Q. Based on what you just said in regards to talent, about where you are right now, 8-5, when you first began the season, is that about where you thought

you'd be, or did you think you'd be better, or what did you think?

NICK CASERIO: Honestly, I never have any idea how it's going to go. Nobody does. For them to tell you, oh, yeah, we're going to win this many games, they're in the wrong business. I'm never going to say that. We're never going to say that.

All we can do is try to put together a good football team, try to come in, have the right mindset, and in the end try to go out there and be 1-0 in each game. If you do the right things and make enough plays that are conducive to winning, then you will. If you don't, then you won't.

There were, going into week 12, 82 games that were decided by 6 points or less. We have the most competitive league in all of professional sports. I know the Rockets and Astros fans right now probably hate me, but that's the truth. So we get one opportunity each week, and then you look at this past weekend, 12 of 16 games were one score, and then if you add in the Denver game, which was 9 points, you're talking that 80 percent of the games are one-score games, which speaks to how small the margins are.

Everybody's talented. Every team in this league has talent. So it's what do you do with your opportunities? How good is your execution? What are you doing on the margins? That's where our focus is. As far as what the record is going to be, how many games we're going to win, honestly, I'm not that smart. I can't figure that out.

All we can do is do the right things consistently day after day, week after week, put ourselves in position to have a good opportunity, which as we sit here today, December whatever it is, we've got a great opportunity in front of us, doesn't guarantee squat. That's all it guarantees is an opportunity. So we're excited about what's in front of us.

Q. Nick, the last couple of weeks this team has had some second half scoring deficiencies. From your assessment and what you're seeing, how do you think coming out of the bye they can get themselves going again, and has there been any talk of maybe some shared play calling duty with Bobby?

NICK CASERIO: The answer to the last part is absolutely not. Bobby Slowik is a great coordinator. He's done a great job, and he's a great coach. We've done a lot of good things offensively.

And I would say as far as the second half goes, in the end it comes down to execution. If the other team makes more plays than you do, then they're going to win. Could we do



a better job? Yeah, sure, do better on first down, put ourselves in second and manageable, which is third and manageable, take care of the football.

In the end, this league is all about execution, it's about doing the little things, it's about controlling field position. We haven't talked about the kicking game because nobody cares about the kicking game, but we're pretty good in the kicking game. We can cover kicks. I think we're second in net punting or third in net punting. Tommy's done a good job here. So to be able to control field position, kickoff return is kind of a wash because basically the starting field position is about the 29 yard line. So it's about the same.

Ka'imi has broken the record for the most 50-yard field goals. He missed a couple of short ones. So we got pretty good in the kicking game, pretty good on defense, pretty good on offense, so we put ourselves in a good position.

In the end, how do we execute with our next opportunity, which Miami is in front of us, which is a damn good football team. We're going to have to contend with what Miami brings to the table. That's where the focus is.

In the end, good football is about good execution. Second half is no different than the first half. Like there are times we've executed a little bit better in the first half than we have in the second half. Played well in the second half the other day. DeMeco got asked about what happened in the first half, so that's football.

There's ebb and flow to every game. It's usually going to come down to a handful of plays, six or eight in each game. You don't really know when those plays are going to take place, so you make them or the other team makes them. Whoever makes the most, they're probably going to win.

Q. With that said, I know the expectations and all that, you obviously have one goal, like one major goal, win as many games as possible. From what you've seen from this team 13 weeks in, what are the improvements that need to be made for the final stretch of the season for you to be able to potentially get to that level of expectation?

NICK CASERIO: No, that's fair. I kind of alluded to that earlier. If we can minimize some of the turnovers offensively -- because when you just give the ball away. Again, the correlation between, if you took everything else out, zero turnovers correlation to winning is pretty high. It's like 85, 90 percent. That's one area.

And continue to take the ball away. Like I said, we're second in the league. That's one of the things we do really

well.

Then red area execution. So kind of offensively and defensively, we're like 27th or 28th in the red area defensively. So it's about getting stops, it about stopping points, and then offensively it's about converting those four-point play opportunities.

I would say those two areas, if we can make some maybe subtle improvements in those areas, then that could potentially help us because, again, the margins of victory and/or loss in our games, other than the Minnesota game, have been basically negligible. Three or four points here, six, seven points here. When you look at those two particular situations, you start to see a little bit of correlation.

I would say those are a couple things that we can improve, we might have a shot.

Q. After the bye you guys have three games in ten days against rather tough competition.

NICK CASERIO: Thanks for the reminder, yeah.

Q. How difficult do you think that stretch is going to be, and kind of what's the message to the team about getting through that to get to where you all want to go?

NICK CASERIO: It's really just take it one day, one game at a time. All we can control, kind of a normal week relative to the Miami preparation. We'll come back next week. Players are off here for a number of days, kind of an extra day on Monday, go through a normal week, and then play Miami. Then you kind of lose a day. We're playing Saturday night. Then after that game, then you basically don't practice. You walk through in preparation.

So I think the focus for the players and coaches, especially early, will be in Miami. We have other people and other resources allocated staff-wise kind of preparing, kind of looking ahead a little bit to provide the information to the coaches. So we'll kind of segment those responsibilities.

But the focus is on Miami. We can't -- the only thing we can worry about is Miami. Anything beyond that, like it's Christmas and all that, but we can't worry about that. All we can do is focus on Miami. Then when we get through the Miami game, then we kind of turn the page to the next.

Look, these are good football teams we're playing. The next four games, good football teams. We're either going to earn it or we're not. Not to oversimplify it, but that's the truth.



Q. Calen and Kamari have gotten significant playing time. What do you think about the way they've developed so far and how they performed in the first few games?

NICK CASERIO: We felt that they could make a contribution here at some point. I mean, Kamari has basically done it since the day he walked into the building, basically going back to spring, going back to OTAs. Just his mindset, the way he plays, he's as competitive as any player we probably have on the football game.

He's tough. He's physical. He tackles. There's a reason Georgia won a lot of games because they had a lot of players down here with that type of mindset. So happy that Kamari is here.

I think Calen continues to evolve. The one thing he's done consistently is take the ball away. He did it at USC. He's done it since the beginning of the season. They're both young players who have had some modicum of success, but what's happened in the past doesn't really have any ramifications to what happens moving forward, and they understand that.

Most young players specifically are rookies. They play a lot of football here. You talk about four preseason games, 13 regular season games. You're playing football for 17 games. This is two college seasons already. With all the playoffs and all the garbage they've got going on there.

They're good football players, good young kids, they've got the right mindset. We're glad that they're here and they're going to be good players here for a long time.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports