

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

Coach DeMeco Ryans

Postgame Press Conference



Texans 32, Chargers 12

DeMECO RYANS: Just to start, man, just first off, as always want to give glory, honor, and praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Man, what an awesome opportunity we had to to play a playoff game here at home. Just thankful for all our guys and the effort, the way they played today. That's the complementary football that we been looking for and we been needing as a team.

Just outstanding performance on all three phases. Really proud of all our guys. I can go through each position group, everybody stepped up and made a play when we needed to make plays. Our best players stepped up and made big plays for us to win this game.

And none other than CJ. Just want to make sure he gets the love that he deserves. Like the play that he made on the fumble snap and throw to Hutch, that's the play that sparked our entire -- not our offense, but our entire team. Seeing the way all our guys responded after he made the play.

Then to come back with another big scramble on the next drive, just outstanding performance by CJ.

Q. Coach your interior defensive line did a great job this everything. (Indiscernible.) Can you talk about how their ability to create pressure impacted Justin Herbert and the offensive rhythm, and overall effectiveness throughout the game?

DeMECO RYANS: Playoff football, first things first you have to stop the run. That's where our interior defensive lineman really played great today, is stopping the run. You stop the run, you force teams to have to throw the ball. That's where our entire D-line cut it loose and got a lot of pressure on the quarterback.

Every guy from Will, Denico, everybody, Mario with the sack. All across the board those guys were rushing

together, disciplined with their rush lanes. Everybody did a good job keeping Herbert in the pocket and we were able to get him down several times.

Q. What are you thinking during the sequence when CJ fumbled and picks it up and throws it to Xavier? And second, in what way did you feel it give you all a spark?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, offensively we started slow. Started slow, put out ball on the ground too many times, and needed a play.

That's what it looks like when your best players step up and make the plays. That's what playoff football is about. That's what being a big time player in the league is about.

Of course you see the fumble snap and I'm just thinking, please pickup the ball up. And then we were able to see CJ improvise and see Hutch keeping his eyes downfield. Having that confidence in himself and ability to avoid the rush and still keep his eyes downfield and find Hutch, that was an outstanding play.

To me that was the play of the game that really created momentum for our entire team.

Q. You guys intercepted Justin Herbert four times; sacked him a bunch of times. How would you describe how your defense played today?

DeMECO RYANS: Our defense, they dominated today. That's who we want to be. They played our brand of football. Like talk about stopping the run first. That's what I'm most proud of, is how we stopped the run. You make teams one dimensional and that's when our D-line causes havoc.

Very proud of our defensive line, and more so proud of our DBs. Stingley's been outstanding all year. Steps up again for us today, gets two picks when we needed them most. He made outstanding plays. E Murray with the touchdown. I mean, Kamari, for us to have -- off the turnover Kamari goes out, and you talk about a momentum shift. For him to pick the ball after, outstanding play for him.



The way our DBs are playing opens up a lot for us defensively. Really proud of our entire group.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about two things with the offense. The play that CJ scrambled seemed like to him that opened something up and we saw him seem more comfortable. Can you talk about the adjustments that Bobby made in the offense today?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, the scramble play, yeah, you see that confidence from CJ. You see he felt the need to make play and he did. That's what you call you put the team on your back. That's what he did. Put the team on his back and to see our sideline go decrees when he makes that scramble, I mean, you can feel it then.

You can feel just the game shifting at that moment when he makes that scramble for the big play. Just offensively for us to be able to buckle down when we needed it most, control the line of scrimmage and run the football, like we need to run the football, that's what I'm proud of.

Our offensive line stepped up. Got hats in the right place. They were grinding. That's a tough front, a tough defense. Defense did an outstanding job all year. Did a great job today. It was tough to run against them, but we were persistent and Joe did a really nice job making some plays.

Q. Before the game was underway, Tank Dell and Stephon Diggs were here. You had a special moment with them. What did it mean to have them back inside the building? Do you think that ignited the team?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, seeing Tank and Stef there, it's encouraging and uplifting for everybody on our team. We know how much both those guys meant to our team, the leaders they were in their own way, and how much energy they provide to our entire team.

So it's great seeing them. I think put smiles on everyone's faces; understand who we're doing it for. We're doing it for our brothers. It was great to see them today. Would've loved to have them on the field, but just to know they're here still supporting through all they've gone through, just continues to show our special our team is.

Q. Can you talk about the longest offensive drive the whole season happened in this game. (Indiscernible.) 13 plays and that was tremendous catalyst that started turning the momentum around. That's when you took the lead. Can you explain that? What it was like just to get that whole drive out of the way, out of your soul?

DeMECO RYANS: To start with, not only that drive, but just how we were sputtering along to start. I just loved the way our team just responded, our offense responded, how resilient they were. A lot of bad things happened. We fumbled the ball. No one panicked. Everybody just kept playing. Even though we put out ball on the ground several times nobody panicked on the entire team. When you need it most, our offense needs to step up and get something going, for us and to have a 99 yard drive, outstanding by everyone.

That's what we want to see from our offense throughout the entire year. We know it's been some inconsistencies. To see everybody put it together when we need it most here in our first game of the playoffs, couldn't be, again, more happy for everybody and just where we can continue to ascend if we do things the proper way.

Q. I remember hearing earlier in the week you describe your D-line versus their O-line as the matchup of the game. Did you specifically challenge them to that? Similarly on top of that, you mentioned your best players playing their best. Do you challenge them to rise to the occasion?

DeMECO RYANS: The unique thing about our team, our defense, is I don't have to challenge those guys at all. They understand the moment. They understand like why we're built the way we're built. It's for or D-line has to do to dominate. When our D-line plays this way, not only does it help our defense, but it just brings enthusiasm to our entire team.

So they understand that from the moment they sign up to play here for the Texans. Like we're heavily dependant on our D-line and they did an outstanding job today.

Q. When CJ made that play, was there a sense on the sideline when you saw him make that play that this could be something for us, this could get us ignited? What did you see from the whole team after that?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, no doubt. With CJ making that play, I mean, I feel like it sparked excitement in everyone. It sparked confidence in everyone. That's what you needed. Just because of what happened previously on a few drives, it wasn't going right.

To see him make that play I feel like every win knew, okay being like we're ready to go now. A little slow start but it's not about how you start it's as you about how you finish and we finished the right way offensively to gain over 400 yards offensively.

Like that's an outstanding day verse a really good defense.

Q. Can you just take us through the blocked field goal that you guys returned for two? Then obviously just take us through the sideline reaction. Seemed pretty wild.

DeMECO RYANS: The blocked field goal, oh, yeah, I was pretty upset before the blocked field goal, so I didn't -- I mean, I wasn't really looking until I heard the big thump and we got it.

I just see D Lo pick the ball up and he's coming towards me. I couldn't do anything but smile. It's just as bad as that play that was happened we did a good job covering all day. Ladd makes a play. He's an exceptional player. He makes a play on us and splits us and goes the distance.

So I'm pretty upset at the moment. The blocked field goal definitely put a smile on my face.

Q. Coach, in the off-season you guys signed a lot of players with some good playoff experience. Can you talk about Joe Mixon and what it's like having a closer like him in the fourth quarter on that last touchdown drive? What does that mean to the offense?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, Joe has meant a lot to our team all year, right? The leadership that he brings, he has playoff experience, he's been there, so he has good advice to give guys on what it takes to win in the playoffs.

You know, also things of what he would do different from being there and being able to go all the way. So value that experience that he has. More so value the person that Joe is. Great energy every day. He wants the football. You want to play well in the playoffs you have to be able to run the football. So Joe did a great job there today and he doesn't do that without the way our guys block, tight ends, receivers, also the offensive line.

Like collective effort there which allowed us to run the wall the way we did.

Thank you, guys.

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