

# Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

**Sean Payton**

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Denver Broncos 18, Houston Texans 15

SEAN PAYTON: ...type of game that we played a week ago, and, look, we did just enough things to come out of here with a win. They're very good on defense. We, despite being minus two in the turnovers, got the W and we'll go from there. Any questions?

**Q. Just defensively, I think there were three...**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, I thought we controlled the line of scrimmage, really. If you want to know one thing, we controlled the line of scrimmage. We felt like there was a big advantage for us in this game, our front versus their offensive line.

**Q. (Inaudible) 25 yard scramble because it's third down before that in the two previous series.**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, it was a nipple protection, which is kind of hard to describe but it was a movement throw and the coverage kind of, when that happens, if you're in zone, the zone moves with the move and then he found a lane and did it with his feet. It's one of the strengths of a quarterback that can move. And I think that was one of the things that changed with their starter going out. We still have an accurate passer, but the plays that he can make with his feet aren't the same as the starters. So that was an important play.

**Q. You mentioned being down two on turnovers. You had some stretches where things weren't going the way you wanted them. What do you say about the resilience overall?**

SEAN PAYTON: I think at halftime -- it's funny. As your team grows and evolves into something. I don't think there was a person in that locker room that felt like we were losing this game. Now, we all felt like we needed to do certain things better, all right? But I think there was a lot of confidence coming into the second half.

**Q. Why was there a lot of confidence?**

SEAN PAYTON: It's just what did I say before? It repeats itself. You can't wish for confidence, right? It's born out of what? Demonstrated ability, so you answered your own question.

**Q. How do you feel about the resilience for making up for some key injured players, Surtain.**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, that was big. This was the first time Smyth comes to me with that computer and we turn in injuries and this is the first time that you're like gah, up to today, we have been fairly fortunate and when you're turning in the defensive player of the year and you're turning, you know, it's hard to hit send. You know they're inactive but it's still hard to hit that button anyway.

**Q. You had the blocked field goal, obviously --**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, we'll look at that on film. All of that without watching it on tape. My concern was just the late subs. It was a little bit sloppy. The kicking game, we'll get that cleaned up or we'll find someone else that can do it.

**Q. You'll need to look at those --**

SEAN PAYTON: I will.

**Q. But the stops at the goal line. You had two goal line stands.**

SEAN PAYTON: That was pretty big, because, look. When you get down there, it doesn't happen often, but like one of the -- I've been involved in maybe three. Pittsburgh was a game. When you have a goal line stand, now, sometimes they go for it on fourth down and then you take over, but when you have that on the one-yard line, the emotional swing that that creates for your team and what it does to the team that, you know. They had the penalty then, but that was significant and that gets back to what I said at the start. Our front versus their front.

**Q. Now that you're (inaudible) you passed up some potential short gains. (Inaudible).**



SEAN PAYTON: Listen, we don't talk about that. In other words, his eyes are within the progression and then, but you got to be careful you don't tell that player too much when it comes to something like that, you know what I mean? Like do you inhale or exhale when you backswing in golf? I don't want anyone to ask me that question, but I think there are certainly designed runs that you saw. Again, we got to keep working with his clock because it gets quick, there's someone open and there's some throws he's going to want to correct. But that's a good problem to have. He doesn't take sacks.

**Q. (Inaudible).**

SEAN PAYTON: I don't think we changed defensively. Maybe some of your cage rush principles dissipate a little bit. We knew Mills had a lot of experience, but how you rush him might be a little different than Stroud.

**Q. Coach, RJ Harvey, five catches, 51 yards. Was it something going into the game that you saw?**

SEAN PAYTON: Look, last night we didn't do the school songs. We had every one of their family members call in on the video and each one said, hey, this is your play, go make it so he gets the video award. It's a pirate route. We got the right coverage. We set it up after halfback choice and all of a sudden takeoff. We're just starting to see right in front of our eyes is guy that we felt strongly about. He can go and he and Dobbins, that one-two combination is nice to have as a coach.

**Q. You have had so much success with running backs, especially in the passing game over the course of your career. As you see a young guy start to develop --**

SEAN PAYTON: When you get these quarters coverages and you get some of these defenses, I'm not saying they're doubling the outsides but, man, I remember two years ago here after that loss and they sat in that same coverage and I thought man, we used to gut this coverage with the right people. We felt like it would be a game where RJ would have opportunities and Evan and sometimes -- now, they played a little bit more single safety zone to support in the run game than we expected. It's fantastic when you can have one of those interior players be really, really good in the passing game.

**Q. Starting out with Barron playing outside the base and Kris in the nickel. What did you like about Jahdae to put him in that?**

SEAN PAYTON: It was a whole plan going in. You guys had a lot of great questions, obviously. We weren't going

to go into it and we'll get next week. We have base. We have dime. We have penny. We have nickel. All of them require decisions and I thought Vance and those guys did a good job with the plan on how much snaps Greenlaw was going to play. How we were going to use Barron. All the above. It's difficult when you lose someone like that and you lose a guy like Mims and you sit there Wednesday night and you're like holy cow. So it was great having Bandy up and made a play or two for us, but it's part of our league.

**Q. Sean, next week is in four days. What does that look like?**

SEAN PAYTON: Like it always does. Recovery tomorrow. Everything about tomorrow is recovery. Walk through. We've learned a little bit more over the years. I've told you this story, I think in Dallas you play everything Thanksgiving Thursday and our first year there with bill, like we were meeting. We went home and met tonight and anyway, whatever we did, it wasn't right. I think we've learned a little bit more about the time from this game and how we have to get these guys mentally and physically recovered from it and then fortunately we're playing at home.

**Q. Sean, we've reached the half way point in the season...**

SEAN PAYTON: It's impossible to have the halfway point because we're on odd number of games. We passed the halfway point. Yeah, all right. Go ahead. I'm kidding you.

**Q. How do you assess the progress of your team?**

SEAN PAYTON: It is what it is. What's our record? I lost track.

**Q. 7-2.**

SEAN PAYTON: There you go. That's how I see it. That's pretty good.

**Q. Talk about the comebacks. This is the fourth time in the last five games you've come back in the fourth quarter. Can you just elaborate?**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah, it was a game that went back and forth, but the Giants game was a crazy comeback. This was a low-scoring game where the thing that was troubling me a little bit was we went into it wanting to play as much of the game on their side of the field and I felt in the kicking game we didn't do enough to leverage the field position battle and defensively, fortunately, we held up so if you really, if you really paid attention to the game I felt like our



drives were starting to the far right or left and their drives were starting more towards midfield and fortunately our defense took care of that.

**Q. (Inaudible).**

SEAN PAYTON: If you recall how he played at the end of last year, he's probably got the best hands on the team, so there was never any, at least internally, we have been thrilled with his progress.

**Q. Were you as aggressive on defense?**

SEAN PAYTON: I think our plan today was a little bit more coverage. Now, the plan's set on QB1. The numbers tell you when you pressure or play man, one thing that happens for a quarterback when that happens is it speeds up your decision-making and you go right to here. When you mix the pressures with some sim pressures, that can become a little more problematic, so our plan was rushing coverage and then obviously that can unfold a little bit with another quarterback in there, but overall it worked pretty well.

**Q. Did you... (inaudible).**

SEAN PAYTON: I can't even remember what it was like. Yeah. I get it. I like to win.

**Q. Can you talk about the tone you set from the beginning of the game with the fact that (inaudible) two straight games without an opening touchdown and the goal line stand.**

SEAN PAYTON: There's a lot of these numbers that are important, sack differential, first in the league. Scoring differential, first in the league. There's like four or five of these things that fourth quarter point differential. It would be a league record right now. They're playing for each other. No one wants to let anyone down. That's a good thing. All right. Thank you.

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