

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

DeMeco Ryans

Postgame Press Conference



Texans 36 - Jaguars 29

DeMECO RYANS: What a game. First I have to give glory to God. It's not about us and praising us what we do. It's all glory to God, and I'm just thankful for finding a way to win this game, especially coming in with a heavy heart. I lost my best friend, Earl Cochran. I know he's smiling down on us right now. He would be very proud.

Q. Two questions. What did he mean to you? How was it to get that win for him? What was it that felt like -- how about I ask the second question after you answer that one.

DeMECO RYANS: First off, Earl is just a stand-up guy. Close friend, I mean, loving, caring, big heart, give the shirt off his back to anybody. Like he just treated people the right way. Loved people. Always had a big smile, big heart. Very wise. So I'm just thankful to have him as a friend.

Q. You all hadn't finished games this year, but you all were able to do it here. What do you think the key was to be able to do that?

DeMECO RYANS: The key for our entire game today is no one blinked. Like I talked to the guys last night about it's going to be a heavyweight fight, and we gotta keep throwing punches no matter how it looks. It may look rough. It doesn't matter. I didn't want anybody to blink. I wanted everybody to continue to press forward, to keep punching, and that's what they did.

Coming out in the second half, it's the best second half we've had, because we played complementary football. Everything that could go wrong went wrong, as soon as the game started. And so for us to battle and have that resilience, like, that's what good football looks like. That's what we've been missing. I told the guys we've been in this situation before in the fourth quarter where we've allowed the quarterback to scramble and make a play, so we knew the D line had to come up big and get stops for us. And they did that.

So when you have -- I can't say all of that without saying how Davis played. Davis did an outstanding job of leading the offense all week, and he did it again today. To come out and have a pick on the first drive, it's easy to go in the tank, but he bounced back, kept battling, kept making plays. And he goes for three touchdowns and the one rushing one that we needed the most at the end. So I'm proud of Davis the way he stepped up and led all week.

Q. You've been a part of two of the biggest comebacks in franchise history, obviously the one against the Chargers and obviously today. This was the biggest comeback this season among all NFL teams. What are you feeling having been able to be a part of that?

DeMECO RYANS: Oh, man. My heart is full. I'm so proud of our guys, man, because it's something we've been trying to find is that belief, that resilience that you need. And I'm just so proud of our guys for -- and not just the players. I'm proud of the coaches and players.

Like I was just asking them all week just to make sure we're all in this thing together. No matter how the game looks, everybody just stick together, continue to bring positive energy, right, and we finished with a knock-out punch there at the end that we needed.

Q. You mentioned about being proud of these guys. It's one game, but one game could be pivotal in the season. Do you have to get to the end and finally realize what this game might have meant to this team or just take it for what it's worth today?

DeMECO RYANS: I take this moment right now, and I'm going to relish in this moment and love this moment for how our team battled. Yes, I hope it's a springboard for us moving throughout this season that we continue to see that it doesn't matter, right, what the scoreboard looks like. It's about how you execute, how you finish, how you play together and how you have that belief in one another and in yourself, right, to go out and finish games like this.

Q. Coach, two-part question. First, throughout the week, watching film on Trevor Lawrence and the Jags



offensively, what did you and Coach Byrd gain from that film to be able to kind of take away Trevor Lawrence and the rushing impact that the Jags have been able to have on the season for them so far?

Also, being down CJ Stroud and a lot of the guys, some of the leaders, can you speak to how impactful and important Nico Collins was for today's victory?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, from the film study what we saw is main thing we needed to stop the run. We knew they were going to be committed to rushing the football, so we did have to do a good job of stopping it. We didn't do our best. We could have done much better, but we did enough. We wanted to be in the position to make them have to throw the football to allow our D-line to have to get after the quarterback. And that's what they did. They finished with five sacks. They did an outstanding job, and Danielle had one of his best games.

So I'm really proud of the effort up front and how those guys rushed. That was our plan, and we executed it the right way. And when we needed it most there at the end of the game, they came up big time for us.

Nico has always been a big part of what we do. And he shined today. Davis, Nico and Davis have had that connection for a while. So it was fun to see those guys just getting back to what they've done before, and Nico doesn't say anything, but he's one of our hardest workers. No matter how the game goes, he's always ready for an opportunity to make big plays for us.

Q. DeMeco, knowing you as a defensive lineman coach coming in seeing Sheldon Rankins be able to put this game away with a defensive touchdown, how exciting is it to be able to watch as this defense finally was able to get that crushing blow and put this thing away?

DeMECO RYANS: Oh, man. It was one of the most exciting plays I've been a part of, to end the game like that with Rankins going in to score, man. Wow, that was an awesome play, and I was trying to meet him down there in the end zone.

Q. Obviously you guys were down 19 in the second half. How much do you feel like a win like this could turn the tide for a season? Because you go from three and six to four and five? How much do you feel like a win like this could turn the tide in this season?

DeMECO RYANS: This game should do a lot when guys watch the film and they can see like the things we can even clean up in this game where we weren't clean or bad

things happen. And I just look at the game as I look at life. It's like bad things are going to happen. Like do you hang your head and go run and hide? Do you quit? Do you give up? No. Like you gotta keep punching. In life, in football, you gotta keep punching, and that's what this game showed today, man. You just have to keep playing with heart, playing with resilience, and hopefully the film shows our guys proof that we can battle and win in any type of game.

Q. I think you outscored them 26-0 in the fourth quarter. At what point did you feel the tide really changing for you all? Did you feel like you all were going to -- you always have a chance, but you all were going to make this comeback?

DeMECO RYANS: I felt like we were actually moving the ball really well, all day offensively. I felt like we moved it well. Third downs we were staying on the field in area of emphasis that we needed to improve, and also in the red zone. Like just seeing some of the plays, Davis made critical third down there backed up, nice throw and catch to Dalton there towards our sideline.

I think seeing the touchdown to Hig. It was play after play. The way we ran the football, I thought Woody did a really nice job running the ball. I thought we created some displacement up front with our offensive line. Just a collective effort by everybody doing what they're supposed to do. We talk about executing all the time. When it doesn't go right we don't execute, but that's what it looks like when we just execute the fundamentals.

Q. (Inaudible) Jalen and how well they were able to make plays in this game. How impressed were you with their maturity to understand what the moment this was?

DeMECO RYANS: Our young guys continue to impress, Woody, Jalen and Hig. I mean they've all -- J Noel makes big plays every game. It was fun to see Higgins and what he's capable of doing. Just a big target on the outside going up, making contested catches, doing an outstanding job. He's done that all year. We just gotta find a way to continue to get him the ball. We got play makers, a lot of guys to spread the ball around to, and I feel like our quarterback has done a good job of doing that.

Q. You mentioned the 2025 draft class. Players a lot of guys had some great individual performances today. Can you talk about the rookie tackle, Tae Erserly? Some of the things that you guys are seeing from him and how he continues to be an ascending player for the offensive line?



DeMECO RYANS: I can't say enough about Tae. He's playing the toughest position in football, left tackle. You're on that island a lot, and to be a rookie in that spot from the first week till now, like he's gotten better each week. He's getting better. He's doing a great job of not losing focus. He's just locked in, doing his job the right way, and he has that desire. It means a lot to him to protect the quarterback, and he's doing a great job of it.

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