

# Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Houston, Texas, USA

## Coach DeMeco Ryans

### Postgame Press Conference



Texans 40, Cardinals 20

DEMECO RYANS: First and foremost, all praise, honor, and glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thankful as always for what he's allowed us to do, what he allows our team to do, continue to believe, continue to fight through any battle and adversity we face and continue to come out on top.

Really proud of our guys, proud of our coaches, our team for coming out today, playing true complementary football and handling this game the proper way and finishing how we know how to finish.

#### **Q. What did you think about Jawhar's performance and how the running game helped elevate you all?**

DEMECO RYANS: Jawhar did an outstanding job for us. For the young man to come in and for sure his first game to have a debut like he had, I mean, of course he broke a record. Most yards as a Texan in a debut game. He run the ball very well. Efficient. Showed the explosiveness and the speed that he has and that we've seen in practice, what he's been on practice squad for us.

Just shows, again, like whenever your number is called are you ready for that opportunity? No one knows until you get that moment. It's about you taking advantage of that moment and not looking back and I thought Jawhar handled it very well.

#### **Q. How rare is it for a guy to be -- go from the practice squad, make that much of an impact the first time he's elevated and put on the field and asked to make some plays?**

DEMECO RYANS: There are a ton of guys on this league that have made it, right, being undrafted, practice squad, and when they get their opportunity, like they make the most of it and they don't look back.

I just look at Azeez. He was a guy who was undrafted, right, and he found a way to break into the league and

become a starter. When he was given the opportunity, just did an outstanding job of it.

Jawhar just taking advantage of what you been given, you never know how guys will respond. We've seen flashes of it in practice. For him to come out and do it today it was really cool to see and really proud of him for just staying the courses. It's easy to get discouraged. Like when you're not getting called up it's easy to etiquette good discouraged.

I think he's handled himself the right way every week and took advantage of today.

#### **Q. Could you just explain I thought from my perspective, maybe, and you had a closer you view, when they said Blake did not report as eligible, I thought I saw him walk up, do the motion, and then the whole play and they come back and said No. 57 did not report. I'm trying to understand when did he not report? I saw him go up to him. What did he tell you after the play?**

DEMECO RYANS: Thank you for seeing that. No, Blake has done a great job of reporting every time that he has gone into the game. He does it every day in practice. He's looking back at me reporting, and when we have practice officials in the practice, he looks back at those guys and makes sure he reports every single time.

So not quite sure what happened there. You know, something we'll just look at and make sure you're on it every single time to make sure we're looking the referee in the eye and making sure we have the proper eye contact and making sure he sees that we're reporting eligible.

#### **Q. Can you talk about what's working for the offensive line? Obviously you talk about Jordan, but it all starts up front. What are they doing right? Is this group just get more comfortable being together?**

DEMECO RYANS: I'll have to go back and look at the film. From my vantage point, looked like we were finishing blocks a little bit better today. Still always room to clean some things up, but for the most part thought we finished



better, therefore we were able to have a better average in the run game today.

**Q. Overall, we talked earlier in the week and previous weeks about the offensive operation getting cleaner and the sense of urgency. Curious from your vantage point how that went? You guys score 40 points. You guys obviously were productive. What did you see in terms of operation?**

DEMECO RYANS: Our operation was really great today, starting with CJ. I thought he did a great job managing the operation presnap, in and out of the huddle. He did outstanding job today. Starts with him --well, it starts with Caley getting the calls in, going to CJ; the communication was seamless.

Thought the guys did a great job communicating, breaking the huddle, and getting lined up. That's low-hanging fruit for us, right? We did a better job of improving that. We got to find a way to still finish. There are still some things we left out there not only on the offensive side but on the defensive side as well. We left a lot of the plays out there that we just have to keep playing up to our standard.

That's what we judge ourselves against, the standard. The standard is the standard. Doesn't change. So we'll continue to look at the tape intently and see where we can get better.

Do want to compliment or special teams. Thought for Jamal Hill, the way he came out on kickoff and really set the tone for our special teams unit, that's what we needed. We needed that big play. One of our keys was taking the ball on special teams. He comes and he does that.

So it was great to see him make an impact play there and also for our just blocking unit. All the guys did a great job blocking. Allowing J-Noel to hit some explosive returns, something we been missing a lot in our return game. We been one guy away.

I felt like we did a great job sustaining our blocks today, and when we do it the right way and we do it well, we have an explosive returner that can flip the field for us.

So really proud of our special teams.

Not only them, Tommy did an outstanding job punting the football, giving us a backed-up op; we were able to go three and out there late in the game and capitalize with points.

So just beautiful to see it done the right way. So really proud of everybody.

**Q. The play where Woody dove in for a touchdown, was that purposeful?**

DEMECO RYANS: Of course. It was a designed, perfectly-ran play. (Smiling.) We wanted to snap it right back it Woody. Nah. We got to put that one in. Nah, you know, sometimes the ball has to bounce your way a little bit there.

A little missed cue there with Jake and CJ, and Woody, very heads up play to be able to get on the ball, press forward and get in the end zone.

Not how you draw to up, but sometimes when things are going your way, you need some plays like that to happen. So happy we were able to get on the ball most importantly.

**Q. One other, didn't play in the second half. Was that more out of precaution or was there concern?**

DEMECO RYANS: Yeah, Woody could have came back in the game. For where he was -- you know, got his ankle tweaked a little bit there early in the game. For where he was, felt like Jawhar and Dare were doing a good job, so wanted to keep rolling with those guys and make sure Woody is good as we continue to go into the week.

**Q. Coach, you talked about the offense. It was collective effort. (Indiscernible) on the ground; CJ Stroud, no interceptions; offensive line, clean game from that unit; eight different receivers touched the ball today. Was that a part of the game plan to make sure everybody got to touch the ball or from your view what were some of the things that CJ Stroud did today to help the offense score points?**

DEMECO RYANS: CJ played a very clean, efficient game. I thought he did -- what I'm most proud of him is I think he did a great job of his decision making when it comes to the plays. It's not that he's just looking or staring at one person. He's going through his progression the right way and you'll see multiple guys catch the ball and make plays because he's not just eyeing in on one single target. He's going where the play dictates for him to go, what the coverage tells him.

He's making the right decisions, and that's where he's grown and he's improved a lot. I'm excited to see him -- like since he's come back each week he's gotten better. Each week. So probably the best game he's had this year, right? Our entire offense did a great job protecting the ball. We have to continue to do that, protect the ball, and on defense special teams, take the ball away. We'll get opportunities and that's how you go out and win games.



**Q. Just wanted to ask you about your interior defensive lineman. I know your edge guys... could you just talk about how they complement each other across the board, the interior guys?**

DEMECO RYANS: Yeah, our defense doesn't go without our interior guys playing big for us, starting with Rankins, Tommy; like they do an outstanding job. Rio steps in. We roll those guys a lot try to keep them as fresh as possible, and they do great job. We understand we have some difficult run schemes that we'll see, a lot of gap run schemes that people try to attack us with, and those guys do an outstanding job playing with awareness and also still playing physical, getting out there, condensing the pocket, allowing our edge rushers to do what they do, right, and really swarm on the edges.

We can't play great defense without those guys up front. You know, Coach Rod has done a great job working with that entire D-line. Really hats off to the interior guys where it's grimy, it's tough on the inside. They don't get a lot of love, but they are the most important piece for us.

**Q. This was one of the more balanced performances on offense, largely because the running game played really well. Do you feel like that maybe is the key to ya'll really unlocking the potential that you have?**

DEMECO RYANS: The run game is always the key for me. Like we were able to execute to better today, but that's always the key going in. Like you have to be able to run the football really well no matter who you're playing against, no matter where you're playing.

So to see it like show up today, hopefully the guys understand that's the formula. We just have to stick with it.

**Q. I know the balanced offense attack was good. Can you talk about Nico Collins making another milestone, third year in a row, 1000 yards, just what he means to this team and this offense.**

DEMECO RYANS: Big play maker, Nico. He's unstoppable. He does a great job. Any time the ball is in his vicinity I know some type of way he's coming down with the football. A guy who doesn't say much, but he's had an outstanding year again. We're not even done and he has eclipsed that 1000-yard mark again. Just proud of him for how he shows up, the consistency that he operates with every single week, the joy that he brings and shows up with, the smile and energy, like it's unmatched.

So you love to see a guy like that doing well. He is not able to do that without CJ and him finding that connection,

so they done a really great job. Got one called back on one of his biggest plays. I hate that for him. He shows up no matter what the coverage is, no matter who he's up against. He is always going to show up big for us in any game.

**Q. Six games in a row. Overall thoughts on how you guys have been able to win six games in a row.**

DEMECO RYANS: Yeah, for me, I know you guys don't want to hear this, I didn't know it was six in a row until you just told me. (Laughter.)

Truly it's that one-game-at-a-time mentality. I know nobody wants to hear it, but that's what I believe. That's all that we can control is one game at a time. Come out, handle business each week, right? That's what we have to keep doing down the stretch here. We got to go out and handle business. I told our guys, you go out and handle business each week, you're just putting yourself in a better spot.

So just keep going out and controlling what we can control and not focused on what everyone else in the AFC is doing. Focus on the Texans and focus on stepping your game up and playing better.

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