

Houston Texans Media Conference

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Houston, Texas, USA

Coach DeMeco Ryans

Postgame Press Conference



Texans 23, Raiders 21

DEMECO RYANS: First and foremost, always for me, outstanding game, and I give glory, honor and praise to our Lord and savior Jesus Christ for his continuing to bless us. Guys are doing a great job of just finishing games any type of way that we have to finish. Guys are doing an outstanding job of that.

I'm really proud of our team for the way they battled and won this game. It took a lot from everybody. Really proud.

Offense started slow there, but we finished the game in outstanding fashion right there in a four-minute mode to milk the clock down to get it to victory. That's how you want to see games end, so proud of the guys for doing that.

Q. How important is it to finish games when things may not be going right, and do you think that in the NFL is sustainable?

DEMECO RYANS: Everything is about winning. You win no matter how it looks and you finish the right way, it doesn't matter. You want to finish with the win. That's what we did today.

First, I've really got to give credit to the Raiders. This is a really good team, well-coached team. Their defense, they played outstanding. On offense, Jeanty made some huge plays on us.

They've got good players just like everybody does around the league, but this team, they were prepared just like they were on film all week. We knew this was going to be a tough one going into this game, and they showed up, they played really with great effort. They played a great game, and credit to those guys.

Q. Why do you think the offense was slow today?

DEMECO RYANS: The main thing is we couldn't run the football. We didn't control the line of scrimmage how we needed to control the line of scrimmage. They got a lot of

negative -- a lot of tackles for loss, knocked us back a few times, and we didn't run the ball well.

On the flipside of that, they were able to run the ball effectively, and that was the difference in the game. If we control the line of scrimmage better, we can sustain drives a little bit better to be in better control of the game.

Q. This is the third time in franchise history that Houston has won seven straight games. You experienced it in 2011. Have you had a moment to reflect on it personally and what this win streak means to yourself and your team and the coaching staff?

DEMECO RYANS: I'm really proud of our team for the adversity we've faced at the beginning of the year. A lot of teams could have folded, but our guys didn't. Our guys stayed the course. Our coaches stayed the course. We've adjusted some things, tweaked some things we needed to tweak. That's what you have to do.

Our team has always believed, no matter how it looked at the beginning of the season, they've always believed. Today went out and just showed if you play the right way, if you play with proper effort, you do the things necessary, it's just all about getting the win. Really it doesn't matter how it looks. It's beautiful to get the win, and I'm proud of our team for continuing to find ways to win. That's always our goal.

Q. Can you talk about the way Nico played today, how he just made big plays when you really needed them and what that says about him?

DEMECO RYANS: Yeah, Nico showed up big time for us, and that's who he is. That's the player he is. He's a big-time player, always seeking those big-time moments. They did a great job defensively of trying to take Nico away at times, doubling him, making sure they had an umbrella over the top of him, but he still fought. We still tried to put the ball up to him.

He had a couple calls, a couple pass interferences there, but the biggest play is there at the end to seal the game. The ball goes up to him, and for him to make the



adjustment, find the ball and stay inbounds, that's the player that Nico is. That's why we love Nico, for what he provides for our team. He provides the big play ability, even though we know every week teams are going to try to take him away, we can still find him. We can still make plays.

Q. With the win today, this is your third straight year winning at least 10 games. Your thoughts on that and how you've been able to get at least 10 wins every year?

DEMECO RYANS: For us to be at 10 wins now for the third season in a row, I'm thankful. I'm grateful for -- it's not about me, but I'm thankful for my staff, thankful for the players for allowing us to be in the position that we're in and just getting 10, that's okay, but that's not always the goal. The goal is to get into the playoffs and make a run at winning it all.

If our guys keep our eyes forward, we keep believing, we keep playing, finishing the right way, we have everything we want in front of us.

Q. Those two plays by Jeanty, how do you think your defense played, and can you talk about the way that Derek seemingly shows up every week?

DEMECO RYANS: We challenged our defense to get a turnover in the first quarter. That hadn't happened for us all year. For Sting to show up how he did and get not only a turnover but to go score, we needed points bad, and Stingley showed up and made a huge play for our team. We needed that play. Stingley did an outstanding awareness by him to be able to make that play, not just pick it off but to go score, really proud of him. You continue to try him, he continues to make plays. Great play by him.

But overall, the defensive performance, there was too many explosive plays. That's not what we're about. We've got to clean up the communication. The tackling is not good. That's not the defensive performance that we look for. So we have to play better.

Q. Among the explosive plays that you mentioned as well as the kind of inefficiency in the first three quarters, does that more so concern you, or do you feel like those are kind of one-off things?

DEMECO RYANS: I feel like the Raiders are a good defensive unit that don't -- they haven't gotten enough credit for how good this unit is. Coach Graham has done a great job of coaching this defense. They're really good players. We knew it would be a challenge all week, right,

and I tell our guys, there aren't any easy wins in this league just because you look at a team's record, that's not indicative of who that team is. Everybody is going to come out, they're going to play hard. We knew we would be up against a challenge, so it's no surprise. We knew we had to work for the yards. We've just got to do a better job of trying to control the line of scrimmage and sustain drives.

Q. I know the goal is to score touchdowns, but can you just talk about having a kicker like Ka'imi who you guys have had to lean on heavily when you know you can go to him at almost anytime?

DEMECO RYANS: I can't say enough about Imi and the comfort level that he provides for our entire team. Those are tough kicks to make. Two kicks over 50, one at 49, and we needed every single point today, and he's done this throughout the year to keep us in games when we haven't scored in the red zone like we wanted to score. To send Imi out, I don't have to second guess about sending him out because I'm confident in what he's able to do. It's just a huge honor for Imi today for him being able to eclipse 1,000 points in his career. He's done an outstanding job, and I'm happy he's on our side being able to get us the points whenever we can.

Q. You alluded to the big plays, but the Ravens was able to isolate (indiscernible) on the line. That's just one thing that sometimes that's the way the play is designed, but the tackling which you alluded to earlier, I can see that's the way they come at you. Those are just good players.

DEMECO RYANS: Yeah, Jeanty is a really good player, showed that today. They didn't run the football well throughout the years. The numbers would say that. But as I showed the guys all week, Jeanty, he was able to break a lot of tackles. That's what he's done. You think he's down, you think the play is over, and he's still pulling guys for more yards, so credit to the young man for how he runs the football. I like to see how guys run the football: Tough, physical, finishes the right way, and then you put him out in empty and he's able to make a huge play for them, explosive for a touchdown.

Hats off to Jeanty. Really good player. Has a really bright future in this league. He's everything that's advertised on film, it is the truth. He's a really good player in our league.

Q. I know offensively overall today it wasn't what you wanted, but what did you think about C.J. in the fourth quarter, that four-man drive, picking up the 3rd and medium, and then the plays to Nico --

DEMECO RYANS: I thought C.J. battled all day, although



it wasn't the best performance offensively. When it mattered most, he made the plays we needed to make to close the game out, and that's all you can ask for from your quarterback. Find a way for us to win the game.

I thought he did a really nice job, as well, on 3rd downs when they sent a lot of pressure at us. He did a great job of controlling the line of scrimmage, redirecting our protections and did an outstanding job there, so I'm proud of C.J. for how he battled all day.

Q. What did you think of the offensive line performance today, and also (indiscernible) but he had a great performance, as well. What did you think about their performance?

DEMECO RYANS: We'll look at the film and see overall how the offensive line did. I thought the protection was good. They sent a lot of pressure at us. I thought we picked the pressures up really well. It's just for me just watching it from the sideline, the run game, we've got to get more movement, we've got to get a hat on a hat better. Too many guys in the backfield.

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