

# Miami Dolphins Media Conference

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## Head Coach Joe Judge

Giants Postgame Presser



Miami Dolphins 20, New York Giants 9

JOE JUDGE: All right, guys. First off give credit to that team. Obviously, they went out there and did enough to win the game. There was a lot of things that I saw today in the way we played, a lot of things that are moving in the right direction, a lot of things I'm very pleased with in terms of how we competed. And we were able to make some stops at critical moments, able to make some good decisions.

A lot of guys stepped up in different situations. But, ultimately, we've got to make more plays, got to take advantage of the opportunities in front of us and got to make sure that we capitalize on opportunities when we have a chance to make big-time swings in the game.

I'm pleased with a lot of the things on the team. This is going to be a good week for us to get together as a team, go out to the west coast, work together, reset ourselves a little bit, keep moving forward.

That being said, open it up to any questions you got right now.

**Q. Joe, when you say that things are moving in the right direction offensively, what did you see tonight that makes you think things are moving in the right direction offensively?**

JOE JUDGE: I think right now there are some opportunities we have as far as getting the ball down the field, pushing it down the field making plays. I like some of the plays that Evan was able to come up with, some of the catches Kenny was able to come up with, you know, some of the things Booker is doing with some catch and runs on the screen. Kyle Rudolph is doing a good job with some of the balls getting vertical, producing first downs. There's a lot of things moving in the right direction as far as that.

I think our pass protection as a whole, although there are some plays obviously we've got to look at and keep on

improving on, but I'm encouraged by some of the things we're seeing out there in terms of how that group is progressing. We've got to keep doing a better overall as a team.

**Q. Talk about capitalizing on opportunities -- (no microphone) -- keep you up at night?**

JOE JUDGE: There were a number of plays out there today, Tom. And we've got to do a better job of taking advantage of all our opportunities.

You have to understand, the margin for error in this league is so small and so tight. You look at that team today and we talk about. You know, Brian's done a really good job. Right now, here's in year three. He's got a lot more things moving in terms of the flow of the organization.

And what he's doing a good job of is they really pushed through that seven game losing streak. In talking to them before the game, there is such a tight margin. We watch all those games they came with a tough loss and you say it's a play here, it's a play there.

And that's really the story in every game. You've got to make sure you take advantage of the opportunities when they come your way. When you have an opportunity to extend the drive, get points in the red area, whatever it may be, get a turnover on defense, capitalize on something in the kicking game, you've got to go ahead and you've got to make the play.

**Q. Joe, looked like they were kind of clogging up on Saquon a little bit and you didn't really get a chance to get him off today. What were you seeing?**

JOE JUDGE: Look, that's one of the top run defense in the league for a reason. That's kind of the way they play. They're going to load that box up and play a lot of man defense. They played a lot of cover three buzz against us or cover three dog. Went early downs with 12 personnel. That was how the plan declared.

I thought the offensive staff did a good job making adjustments on the second half. Getting some things off

the boot, getting the ball started out there on the flat, take advantage of these guys loading the box and packing it.

But, obviously, the priority as a defense was to stop the run, try to go ahead and make us force it, force the throws. They played a lot of tight man right there. We saw our share of that blitz zero coverage.

Large part of the game plan was how to handle blitz zero. You know when you play a team that's going to play that much of it, there's going to be opportunities in the game you take advantage of. You know there's going to be times they make plays as well. That's just the ebb and flow of playing a team like that.

I thought when we handled it the right way, got the ball out there and had some productive plays against that zero look and made some plays pushing forward, that was encouraging. I saw Mike doing a lot of good things at the line of scrimmage as far as identifying what the look was, facilitating the offense, getting the ball out. I thought Mike did a good job of pushing the ball down the field early being aggressive.

We had the interception down the near sideline early in the game. I thought our defense did a good job responding to that first off, ended up turning that into points for us. But offensively, message was stay aggressive. Keep pushing the ball down the field.

That's something we've got to do as an offense as a whole, whether it's Daniel, Mike, Jake, whoever it ends up being, we've got to do a good job of pushing the ball down the field and giving our guys a chance to make plays.

**Q. What happened in that sequence at the end of the third quarter where you guys called a timeout and then there was a delay of game a couple of plays later. What was the thought process behind that time out?**

JOE JUDGE: Well, it was second and long right there. I wanted to make we gave ourselves the best chance of staying out of third and long there. Obviously, they made a play. That was just happened right there.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

JOE JUDGE: We had -- I think it was three straight three and outs at that point. Defense was really playing well. That was a spot right there that I felt that points were really at a premium in that game. We didn't want to give them a short field. Wanted to make sure if they had to be on offense they had to take a long field.

As far as punting the ball down, using the position, trusting

our defense to get the ball back. If we play to it and we execute the plays, we were probably going to get the ball back somewhere around midfield. Maybe lose about 15 to 20 yards in the initial starting point. But if we can play to it, we've got to do that.

Obviously, we don't want to have the result we had on that play and give them the ball at the 20 yard line. But in terms of thinking of it, we're not afraid to play to our defense. When we get the opportunity there to say, hey, let's punt the ball down there and pin them, we've got to take advantage of those opportunities. We had some early in the game. Our coverage units are playing really well right now. Very encouraged by the coverage getting from the interior guys on punt. Some of the plays we're making from the outside with Keyon and those guys on the punts as well as the gunner position. Kickoffs playing really well. I don't think they got to the 20 yard line. That was the focus for us all week of covering kicks, being aggressive and physical. Making them have longer fields. So every opportunity we had to pin them back, that was part of the game plan. That was the focus.

**Q. Joe, you mentioned a couple of things you were encouraged by on offense. Ultimately, though, 9 points and 250 yards. Some people are going to look at that and say how can you be encouraged when the results weren't there?**

JOE JUDGE: I saw a lot of players make a lot of big plays. That's what we've got to do. We've got to get the ball in our players' hands, let them make plays, let them extend plays and be explosive players.

And that's our focus as a team. So that's what we're looking to do. We're going to play to the players, play to their strengths. Saw a lot of things today that really got the players involved. There were a lot of third and longs that we converted. We had a lot of players making big plays.

I thought Freddy did a good job calling things aggressively and pushing it down the field. I thought Mike really had the right mindset in how he wanted to play that thing.

There were opportunities for catch and runs. We got the thing out and did that. But then also pushing down the field. Saw Kenny make some big catches, Evan make some big catches. These are some things that turn around. You've got to make these plays and be able to make these plays in critical situations and in tough games.

We knew it was going to be it was a lot of tight contested catches today. It's a very well coached defense. They play very aggressive, very tight on you. So through the week we talked a lot to our players about you've got to

defend your leverage coming out of the breaks and you've got to make those tight catches. And I was pleased to see our guys come out with a number of those today.

**Q. Next week, is Mike definitely your starter?**

JOE JUDGE: Yes. Yeah. I would say at this point, yes.

**Q. The injury to Kenny, did it happen on the play that was near out of bounds when the defender was trying to punch the ball away from him?**

JOE JUDGE: I believe it was on the catch he had going across the middle where he caught that high ball right there. It was near or after that when he came off, from what I understand. And then he came in at halftime, was able to return. And then towards the end of the game, he couldn't.

Kenny plays with a lot of toughness and competitiveness. And when he's out there, he obviously makes plays for us. Kenny is a guy we talk about all the time of like, look, it may look covered at some points to other receivers, but when that's 19, don't be afraid to feed it to him?

**Q. Mike seemed to have a pretty good rhythm with him in the first half. Did the rib injury affect Kenny do you think in the second half? Obviously, you didn't have anything going in the second half.**

JOE JUDGE: I don't want to comment on that just at this moment right now.

**Q. Some of those coverage breakdowns on -- like the two touchdowns, what happened there? Seemed like guys weren't on the same page?**

JOE JUDGE: Let me look at the tape before I go ahead and break down everything. Obviously there are some things that didn't go exactly as planned right there, so we'll talk through schematically and make sure they're in the right position.

**Q. You alluded to at the end of last week I think there was a little bit of uncertainty about what would be next for Daniel in terms of his next checkup. What's going to -- what's tomorrow going to hold for him?**

JOE JUDGE: All of our players will have that day after game checkups with all the doctors. Daniel will be no different than that. He'll check with the doctors tomorrow and continue through the progression. They'll continue to evaluate him. And when they deem that he's ready to return for contact to play full, then we'll have him out there playing.

**Q. Anything new to report from you about his status?**

JOE JUDGE: No. There's really no change from when we talked on Friday. He's going to continue being evaluated with the doctors and see where it goes. Again, we've got to trust what they say. We're not going to put any of our players in a position where they go out there and they're at risk.

There's a difference -- I tell you guys all the time. I'm going to ask a question of is it pain management or injury risk? When it's injury risk, that's not on my plate.

When it's pain management, the player has to know to what level can they perform. We've got a lot of guys that are tough guys. I don't have to question our guys' toughness. All right. But can they perform at the level through that pain management. You know, Daniel is a guy that's been chomping at the bit to get back out there. We want to make sure the doctors give us the clearest picture of what his health and status is and what he's safe to do on the field. When he's ready to go, we'll put him out there?

**Q. Are you comfortable with the reps Mike got in at practice this week?**

JOE JUDGE: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. I thought the way we worked this week in terms of getting Mike prepared and having Jake prepared and keeping Daniel moving, I thought that was the right way to do.

**Q. You pointed out some of the things you saw that you liked. When the production isn't there, what is the balance for you as a head coach where, you know, it's not tolerable because you're scoring so few amount of points and so few touchdowns? What is that balance in terms of trying to be positive about some of the things you saw, the plays that weren't completed, so to speak?**

JOE JUDGE: Look, like any other week, I'm going to go through this tape. We get on this plane and start flying over to Arizona, I'm going to dissect everything about this game. First thing I watch is the kicking game, then I go to the offense, then I go to the defense, just the nature how I work on through the day.

All right. And I'm going to go through everything, I'm going to look at everything. First schematically. And I'm going to breakdown everything, what did we do in each situation? Were we sound? Where were the breakdowns? What are the things we've got to correct from a schematic standpoint.

Then I'm going to go back and watch it again personnel based. I know what the breakdowns schematically are. Are we asking someone to do something they can't do? Is someone not performing to the level we're asking them to? Is there something we need to do something different with a certain person or put another player in that role. And I'll break it on down.

But I saw a lot of players go out there today and compete. I goes our defense and kicking game really made a lot of big plays. Our offense came up with some critical plays at tough times. We knew it was going to be a 60-minute type game. We knew it was going to be a very challenging defense to go against. You play against this team, you understand just the elements of pressure and what that does to an offense. And you've got to be able to play through it.

I thought for a large part we did a really good job certain points in the game of playing through the pressure, neutralizing it, and making some plays and giving us a chance down the field. That being said, we've got to continue looking and saying, okay, with our players, we had some opportunities to make some plays. We have to keep dealing with those personnel moves and schematically what do we have to build on within those deals and then where to pull back and maybe change course on some other things right there.

But there were a lot of players I saw make a lot of plays. I'm continuing to be encouraged by seeing the opportunities for players to go out there and make plays.

Look, that's what it is. I tell you guys before, I see the game from the standpoint of letting your players go out there and play the game. That's our job. Facilitate the players, put them in position.

I'm very encouraged by a lot of things our players in all three phases are doing. I'm very critical of our players, I'm very hard on them. But that's because I have a lot of confidence in them and I trust that they have the ability to do what we're asking them to go out there and execute.

So I've just got to make sure to put them in the right positions and that when the opportunity comes their way, they can make the plays and that they are making the plays.

**Q. Joe, you went Bredeson at left guard for Skura in that situation. Was that just a decision you made? Was there an injury with Skura?**

JOE JUDGE: No. We just wanted to roll him on through. That was something we talked about through the week,

make sure we get Ben involved at some point. And the offense communicated with me at some point we're going to roll some different guys on through. I tell them all the time, look, I expect everybody to play, so let's just keep on moving and rolling them on through.

All right, guys. Appreciate it. Travel safe.

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