

Miami Dolphins Media

Conference

Saturday, August 20, 2022

Miami, Florida, USA

Head Coach Mike McDaniel

Postgame Presser



MIKE McDANIEL: I'm really happy with Tua, because he has been having such a good camp, just in his development and ownership of the offense. I was very hopeful that he would be the same guy on game day.

It was my first opportunity with him, and he executed really everything that we asked him to do. His ownership of the offense, his command of the players was real good. He distributed the ball well.

There were a couple of times that he got to three in his progression, and he adjusted with the defense. They kind of came out and weren't matching personnel, and that wasn't something that in the preseason necessarily you expect nor prepare for.

Didn't bother him in the slightest, so I was happy with his performance, and it was something to build upon moving forward that the team really was pumped to see.

Q. While Tua did play, some of the key offensive starters -- Jaylen and, obviously, Terron were kind of sidelined. I guess at this point of the preseason, do you expect them to play at all? I guess, just what is your level of concern with not having all those guys kind of in the preseason setting?

MIKE McDANIEL: It's the same thing. It's the imperfect situation that is the preseason for the game of football. You're trying to balance getting guys prepared and not putting them at risk in an exhibition.

With each player, it's kind of case-by-case. I hadn't planned on -- I didn't really know what I was going to do with Tua, and I hadn't planned on making a decision until the last second, and he kind of helped me with that, but you have to assess each and every player for where they're at in the offense and really in the defense.

You really have to just assess everyone where they're at and how much they need that preseason so that they can feel 100% full go against the Patriots, and I think I'll

continue to do that through the Philly week and for the Philly game.

Q. What are you seeing from Skylar now compared to when he first got here?

MIKE McDANIEL: He just gets better every day. This game the operation was better. There was one time that he kind of lost the play clock a little bit, and we had to burn a timeout, but more than anything, he really had command over everything.

And he is starting to make plays that when one or two aren't there, feeling the concept. And like that touchdown they threw to Z. White on the left-hand side, that's something that Skylar doesn't make at the beginning of preseason.

So, I've seen continued improvement, but he is very diligent about the process. He has the makeup of what it takes to be an NFL quarterback, so I think all of his teammates can feel that too.

Q. There was cool video that they showed on CBS where Tua was on the field by himself at 2:30 in the afternoon kind of visualizing things and plays. He was going through what he was going to do before the snap. What do you think that says about where he is relative to his knowledge of the offense and his desire to --

MIKE McDANIEL: Man, that says everything. That's why his teammates are confident in him. That's why I'm confident in him, and that's why his coaching staff is because that is something that he has done on his own with guidance from his quarterback coach, Coach Bevell.

You can feel that every day that he is -- Coach Bevell has explained to him all sorts of stories of the players he has worked with. Coming in here this year that wasn't something that I had heard Tua -- that wasn't really his MO, just to go ahead and go outside the framework of whatever the schedule is and really invest all-in on your craft.

He is doing that every single day, and it really shows in his



play. That doesn't surprise me. I hadn't heard that, but he has really been doing that every single day at the beginning of the day before he gets the script, and that's why he is owning the offense and leading us well so that we'll be in a good position to be what his teammates really need him to be week one.

Q. What do you think of the four yards rushing, if anything?

MIKE McDANIEL: That's not very much. Yeah, it's a fine line. I'm not overreacting to it. I'm not really one that is just black and white. All right, so you have a bunch of yards, and you can run the ball, and you don't have any you can't. Really rushing yards, if you have one explosive, it can be super misleading.

What I do know is that the last two opponents, this one a little bit more so than the other one, our players were caught off guard with something they hadn't seen on tape really. In the NFL you have to be able to do that.

So, I'm happy that there's no false sense of comfort level really. It does raise the urgency for the offensive line, tight ends, and receivers blocking, but at the same time I'm not panicked because I would be more panicked if they were entering into something that we had totally prepared them for and we still weren't able to displace people on the line of scrimmage and do things of that nature.

So, it's cause for your attention, but at the same time there's no panic button. It's really, okay, can we learn from this? The same thing happens next week, that will be more concerning for me, but I think the guys have a lot of pride, and we emphasize the run game a lot. Obviously, we want more production, and that's when what we expect from ourselves moving forward.

Q. As far as injuries, what happened in the first half with Nik, Kion, and I think McKenzie left from the medical tent at some point.

MIKE McDANIEL: There were some dings. We had some hand injuries. There was nothing fatal in terms of long-term issues.

There was one occasion we had someone go back into the game. We had someone leave and stay out. I'll have more information tomorrow with all that, but they're in constant communication. There's nothing that we're overly concerned for in the long haul, which is a go ahead thing for the Miami Dolphins.

Q. What does Gesicki need to do to make sure that he can have as positive of an impact on the team, the

offense, going the entire season?

MIKE McDANIEL: He was in a position to have a pretty good game. You can ask him. He was frustrated because he had a couple of options. We rely on him, and we went to him, and he had a couple pretty good ops that he wasn't able to come up with the play. So, he needs to continue what he is doing, which is completely committing in the run and pass game to the offense.

He is a couple plays on the ball away from having a really good game that he feels really good about. He knows that. I know that. That's one of the reasons why he stayed in the game was because he was frustrated. As a competitor, he knew he could make the plays that he didn't.

It's nothing out of the ordinary or nothing far from exactly what he has been doing. He just needs to continue to be diligent and not get frustrated when the ball doesn't bounce his way or they get paid to, they hit him, he doesn't make a play on the ball. We all appreciate the fact that he is a competitor, and he is not satisfied with touching the ball and not coming down with it.

As long as he approaches it like the player that he is where he is very accountable, we'll be fine, he will be fine, and we'll all be better for it. ^CK Audio^.

Q. How do you evaluate the offensive line? What did you like or not like about it?

MIKE McDANIEL: I thought that it was pretty solid in terms of they went out and they were trying to attack the defense as best they could. Again, there was just some stuff that really we didn't adjust to as well as I would have liked.

At the same time, it's not all on them really. There were some things that I did expect them to get, some things that I'm not surprised that they didn't get. I'm not terribly -- the game was kind of taken out of their hands a little bit at the beginning with some of the stuff they were doing.

We kind of had to transfer and do some drop-back stuff, and I thought they protected the quarterback well enough where it was never a situation where they had to get rid of the ball too early.

The tight ends got beat on horrendous play call with Teddy in, but outside of that, I think it was a pretty safe, well-protected game from them. We just need to go look at the tape and understand, okay, well, when teams are pressuring us in the run game and their feet are like this, we need to adjust like this.

That's why it's just a process really for all the run game



stuff and protection that I was pretty happy with. We'll just keep working next week and see how good we can get for game one.

Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

