

Miami Dolphins Media Conference

Sunday, October 29, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

Coach Mike McDaniel

Postgame Presser



Dolphins 31, Patriots 17

MIKE McDANIEL: Who's got questions for me to answer?

Q. This week is the same exact score as last week. What was different that you all did from last week to prepare for this victory today?

MIKE McDANIEL: We changed it up from last week, and it appears we scored more points than the opponent, so that was good. Overall, I couldn't -- this is a really, really cool win just for the team. It's the first time since I've been here that we've been able to beat a division opponent twice. You get a great litmus test of where you're at as a football team when you have a division game, and then on top of that, you're going overseas the next week, and on top of that, you have Hard Knocks the week after. That is leading the league in potential distractions.

I knew we were going to find out a lot about our team today, and I could care less about what the record is. That is a tough team to go against.

They made their plays. They made it very difficult. But 100 percent our guys weren't looking at anything but today, which is why we were able to be victorious because if we would have been half-hearted in anything we did, we would have lost that game for sure. So I'm very proud, and the reason why the scores were different was because we diligently went back to work, didn't waste any time talking about all sorts of things like why we lost or try to point fingers, call out a ref or something. None of that was occurring in our building.

We went to work and worried about the details and fundamentals of our individual jobs, and collectively we're satisfied -- we're less satisfied with the outcome, so very happy.

Q. How did Jalen Ramsey do?

MIKE McDANIEL: Well, he totally disappointed me. He

called that he was going to come back and have a pick six, not a pick field goal.

He's phenomenal. You want to talk about something that goes above and beyond, like you can't manufacture what he brought to our team in any other way.

His play, but the commitment it took to play in that game, everybody witnessed firsthand. You want to talk about not wanting to let someone down as a teammate, that was a special thing to be a part of, to watch his journey, unwavering conviction from I think it was July 27th or 28th, the moment he got hurt with that mindset, telling his teammates, hey, just hold it down, I'm going to come back, and I'm going to beat whatever timetable by a month. That's immediately what his mindset was.

We never gave him a timetable, and then he ended up telling me last time we played the Patriots, during the game, on the field, that he was coming back for this game. I shared that with the team this last week. It's just a really -- it was awesome to be a part of, and I think it speaks to the locker room.

You don't do all that if you're not yearning to play with these people that you just started to become a teammate with.

Big part of the reason why we won is that collective nature that he epitomized.

Q. That last scoring drive they cut it to one score. You have a couple big 3rd downs, I think the pass to Tyreek at the 50-yard line was a 3rd down and then obviously the touchdown wide open. Not just for this game, but how big is that as far as a growth thing?

MIKE McDANIEL: You want to talk -- between Tua and Tyreek, that 3rd down in particular was unbelievable. We were hot. He had a -- his timing of that route is -- he sped it up. He went faster than you should because they ran zero, and for them to make that play, those are what big-time players do in big-time games. This was big for us, a home game against a division opponent, and it's awesome to be a part of.



Both those guys wanted to win the game. If there was any sort of time-out, I think in the second half, a stoppage of play I should say, Tyreek was looking at me trying to get eye contact, which I know exactly what that means.

Tua was locked in, didn't have ebbs and flows up and down. He was able to make plays after being frustrated, which has been one of the reasons he has had success -- or that much more success this season is he's learned in such a short period of time how to be critical of yourself but not handcuff yourself, as well, because if you're self-lashing for a series or a quarter, you're not going to like the results of your play.

I'm very, very proud of where he's at. He was laser focused.

The last touchdown drive was phenomenal. The last touchdown -- Tyreek was in jet motion and they tried to go in and out on the fly. Long story short, it was zero, and Tua hung on to the ball longer than he usually does because he saw it all. You have to be of clear mind in those points of the game to make those type of plays, and it was a very, very -- I mean, it was one of the better defensive game plans that I've really ever gone against.

The Patriots had an unbelievable plan to really kind of try to bottle us in and guys were able to make plays in key situations, which was always fun to be around.

Q. You mentioned that jet motion on the touchdown. It seems like this season we've talked about the short motion, but it seems like you may have brought back that jet motion --

MIKE McDANIEL: It wasn't getting enough headlines, so we had to run it more to get headlines.

No, I think that there's reasons for everything. Specifically we knew in the game we were going to have a couple more of those for this game. We typically have them every week, but it's part of our DNA. We pre-snap motion to gain advantages for ourselves, but you have to be super detailed to be able to do that at a high rate, with snap counts, motion landmarks, and it takes 100 percent commitment from all those guys to be able to get that done, and it can be more difficult for the defense to stop if you're executing and taking advantage of things like that and you have players that can do stuff like that.

Q. There's a lot going on on the offensive line today --

MIKE McDANIEL: Oh, man. Dude, he's at home right now just firing questions off at me in the mirror. He's like, so

what about... I can't wait to see him, man. I'm excited about it.

Q. The injuries you had with Rob and Kendall, didn't go to Connor, were you concerned at that point that -- you were down four linemen on the season. Why didn't Connor see the field?

MIKE McDANIEL: It was a protective measure. He was able to play. We were worried about the ramifications if he did play over the course of a four-quarter game.

We had him there in case a catastrophe happened and we were close to that, or if we had to shuffle, there was a couple variables where we might have to shuffle Liam out of the center position if certain people got hurt, so we had a plan of that.

Hat goes off to Butch Barry and Frank Smith and the whole group because nobody panicked. We were prepared for the moment. That's what I've been saying from preseason on is we were very fortunate to have really good players and some depth at the position. I have a lot of faith in those guys. They'll only get better with more reps. It's very hard to come into a game in the National Football League off the bench, particularly it's like a quarterback where you go 0 to 60, but we have the right people to do it, and I'll look forward to seeing whatever offensive linemen we have this next week and coming up with a game plan and watching them execute it.

Q. You guys are obviously flying to Germany tomorrow. What was the thought process behind getting there early versus practicing at home and getting there later in the week?

MIKE McDANIEL: There's so many people that haven't been to Germany, and I kind of wanted to get settled and have a post Tuesday, so Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, that was more routine as well as I didn't want people -- you have a player day off, why don't you use that to see the sights as opposed to getting there late. I was kind of nervous about people trying to cram in sightseeing.

I think it provides an opportunity to go as a team, spend time together, spend the player day off together, and further cement some memories for us to hold on to as we progress on this journey with this team.

That was kind of my thought process behind it.

There's some science stuff that I won't bother you. Don't call me on that because I can't -- it was like back from May or April when we made this decision, so I can't really remember the science.



Q. I wanted to ask you about Terron. I know he's eligible to come back this week. You always had a high opinion of him and trust in his body of where he is. Is he going to be practicing to play or practicing to get back into football shape?

MIKE McDANIEL: Well, I know he's going to be practicing talking my ear off because I can already feel it looming, but that's a decision that with the information that Kyle and his staff provide, Chris and I will make a decision on. It involves other players on the roster. But I will tell you this: Just turn a camera on me. He'll be right here being like, really selling that -- that's a cool thing about the locker room we have. Guys want to play with each other and for each other.

We'll be handling that as an organization next week. Today we got a huge important division win, so we'll ride that out until sunset today and worry about Germany tomorrow.

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