

# Miami Dolphins Media Conference

Saturday, August 23, 2025

Miami, Florida, USA

## Coach Mike McDaniel

### Postgame Presser



Dolphins - 14, Jaguars - 6

#### **Q. What went wrong the first two drives that didn't go correctly in the third drive?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: There was, you know, we had some self-inflicted stuff. We were -- I think the players, in particular were kind of -- I hadn't really planned for the exact presentation of what kind of the defense was doing.

And both putting yourself behind the 8-ball, we were a little loose in a route or two. So you end up not converting and having to give the ball back.

So that happens in some of your best games, or it can make the game go one way. You need people to start executing and make some plays together, and I thought the group did. So I was pumped about the resolve.

But we'll get back to tape and there's some stuff to get out of it. But overall, the main thing is that you want to see guys find a rhythm and finish a drive in the end zone, and they did so. I was happy with that piece for sure.

#### **Q. Is there an update on Jaylen Wright? And has Ollie Gordon II done enough to secure the number two job?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: Jaylen, we're kind of evaluating a couple options, procedurally. It appears to be the week-to-week category. I think Ollie did a very good job today mastering the non-on-ball assignments. I thought he did a better job with that. I thought he competed. And for the most part I think his tracks were good, his assignments were 100 percent.

It was a good day for a rookie back in terms of getting his feet wet. It didn't look too big for him, but we'll keep pressing forward with the group. And I look forward to those guys' continued improvement.

#### **Q. Anything you can tell us about Jason Sanders?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: It was something that he doesn't appear concerned for week one. He was telling me that he was going to kick extra points. And I was like, yeah, we need the two-point conversion work. So we'll see how when he comes in, but he wasn't overly concerned with week one.

#### **Q. What about Jordyn Brooks, we saw him dressed but he didn't get any snaps?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: He was mad at me. But all the guys that were kind of working through anything minor from an injury standpoint, he had something minor that I didn't think was worth him playing.

If it was a regular season game, there's no way he would have allowed me to pull that off. But I was proud of him to see the big picture. And he's an important part of the team.

So we had to take care of him, gave some guys some much needed ops.

#### **Q. Now that the preseason is over, how ready do you feel Bradley Chubb and Jaelan Phillips are as they come back from injuries?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: I think the week and a half or two weeks of work will be good for everybody and where they're at, but for where they're at and what I was looking to accomplish with them, very pleased. I think they're ready to go.

That was kind of the point for doing this a couple times and having guys play is the whole game process, you don't want to feel out of sorts or uncomfortable. And every year it's time off that you need to take your practice development to the game and you need at that game process. So I was very happy that they got that in that we were able to stay relatively healthy and gain that experience. That was very, very intentional and deliberate by those guys. So happy where their game is at and look forward to watching them rush the passer.

#### **Q. How significant is it that you get late-game interceptions against Detroit and tonight Ethan Robinson and John Saunders Jr.?**



MIKE MCDANIEL: Very significant. I think the turnover ratio or the turnover ratio 1-0 one-score game this week and I thought we did a good job. I think we saw, if it's not as much or if it's not equal to, it's probably the most blitzes we've seen in a preseason game, particularly preseason three, and for us not to turn the ball over or having minimal procedural penalties, which typically with 2s and 3s, I don't motion as much as I was motioning this game. And that was intentional. I was trying to make it difficult and see how guys could handle varsity-type pre-snap stuff.

So very happy with that. Very important. I think you can see that we haven't missed a day talking about finishing. Whether it's each meeting or each practice, it's very important part of things we've been doing. And that in conjunction with I think guys have really taken the opportunity to be leaders on the team.

And really that leadership, you see the team is not only invested in each other, but they're very focused down the stretch.

And having some young guys make some plays is gigantic. I think it speaks to both those young guys, but as the collective as well because guys are not missing an opportunity to try to finish something. Because that's basically what our jobs come down to, is how he finishes the game and try to get a victory.

So, I like the competitive spirit and the attention to detail and the leaders staying involved even when they're not playing and making their presence felt, which I think was on display tonight.

#### **Q. What do you like about Malik Washington?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: His personality and his play. He's a competitor that really is super fearless, and the moment is not too big for him. As a rookie in the middle of the season last year, in a game that, I think we're 2-6 at the time, on national television, he made the third down, big -- was it a third down, or he made the big corner-route completion.

And I think that everybody saw that on top of how he started the game with the touchdown that he was a gamer. So his competitive greatness, as kind of defined by John Wooden as being your best when your best is required, and that's Malik Washington to a T.

#### **Q. What stood out to you about Ollie Gordon's preparation this week and gave you the confidence to give him that starting role this evening?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: I think you can tell that he's doing a

very intentional job at bridging the gap from the college position of running back to NFL running back. There's a lot more responsibilities, both protection and routes, specifically with what we like to do here. And it takes an adjustment that you can tell if it's too big for a guy or not, and it's definitely not too big for him.

However, there's the biggest thing with rookies -- and you hear it every year about rookie walls at some point in time -- it's a journey that has to be relentless. So that's the next stage for him in terms of the next couple of weeks before we play a game.

You can't take your foot off the gas, or you're quickly humbled. So it will be important for him to continue his diligence and get comfortable with being uncomfortable with his studies and his assignments, because he has to keep pressing forward to continue have growth in his game he's having.

#### **Q. As a leader not to play was that a game just to go through a pregame routine than even though he's not had significant practice work?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: Yeah, that was very intentional -- him, there's a couple of other guys that I planned on going through warmups, but planned on not playing but no setbacks. He had a good pregame workout. And so he looked good and excited to see him next week.

#### **Q. I believe I saw Marshall take some first-team nickel corner reps. How do you think he fared and where is he on the depth chart at that position considering Mike Hilton?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: I think I'll have to see the tape for the nuanced things. I know for each play and how he graded out. But definitely didn't look too big for him. And it's impressive because it's a more challenging position that you get really exposed if you're off your leverage or out of your run fits.

You're essential a DB/linebacker when you're playing that position. And that was something that I think probably having Mike here has helped him in that process. I have been very impressed with how he's kind of felt or looked comfortable, and he's kind of showed off some of his physicality in that position. I'm excited to look at the tape. And, yeah, he's been progressing nicely in a way we needed him to.

#### **Q. You talked about De'Von's ownership of the playbook. How is he coming along? And also has he helped Ollie since he's been out here a little bit?**



MIKE MCDANIEL: De'Von, there's been no setbacks with him. I look forward to getting him out there in a helmet and shoulder pads again. And he's been instrumental because he's not too far removed from being in the shoes of a rookie and learning the offense.

But he's super prideful with his ownership, and over the last couple of years we've moved him around everywhere. And he understands, I think, the offense very clearly. So that's always beneficial, especially when he's looking to help. He's kind of expanded it in his own leadership role, which has been really cool to watch him mature in that way and take ownership and pride in leading that room.

**Q. At the risk of sounding like Barry Jackson here, what do the next 72 hours look like for you? Do you all keep essentially a running list of your 53, initial 53-man roster, the evaluation process ongoing over the next couple of days? How does that work?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: You try to keep a clear mind. Even though you have your certain inferences, you try to keep a clear mind when you watch the tape to let the tape tell the story.

And then what I do know is this team and the collection of 90 have made our jobs very difficult. So the way that looks is you go in tomorrow morning, you watch the tape with the coaches. And I'll get together with all of them and then get together with coordinators and with Chris and we'll start chopping away at some of these difficult decisions.

But it's not easy by any stretch. I really keep myself from making any rush to judgment and allow guys to really play it out and try to settle things on the field.

So that involves both game tape and practice tape, a lot of tape of what -- their resumé, essentially. And then fitting that puzzle piece together, which is your 53 plus 16, and we're hours away from that.

**Q. Can you we get an update on Liam Eichenberg? Is it possible that he might begin the season remaining on the PUP, or is he going to be healthy enough to be on the 53?**

MIKE MCDANIEL: Yeah, no, those things we're kind of ironing out in the next 48 hours. I don't foresee him being immediate return. I don't foresee it being season-long. But these are all the things that we have to take very due diligence when you're talking about the amount of players that you can list in one way, shape or form or the other, and when their availability will be, or when their availability will allow for their return.

So that's an exact topic that will be substantially addressed in the next coming few hours.

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