

Miami Dolphins Media Conference

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Miami, Florida, USA

Mike McDaniel

Postgame Presser



Dolphins-30, Bills-13

Q. What do you think the factors were for this team to put together such a complete performance?

MIKE McDANIEL: It always starts, you know, with the leadership of the captains and the leadership council setting the tone, but realistically, it was a full week of preparation that was diligent and, quite honestly, a little salty.

So I think it was the attention to detail. It was the focus on the style of football we were going to play, not the results that were going to come. There was some complementary football at its finest where you get a stop, you get a special teams play, and you get points, and that's football 101.

Even with a couple throws that I was actually really pumped. I told Tua on some third down calls to let it rip down the field and kind of operated as an opportunity to act as a punt. Still with all that, we ended up in the plus. By and large, we just executed on the things we set out to execute, so I think that was the biggest difference.

Q. The penalty before the game really started and the interception from Tua, how were you able to overcome those early mistakes?

MIKE McDANIEL: I think it's the unintended consequence of adversity. I think we've had our fair share of reps, of having things not play out the way you kind of set out for them to play out, and the young team that -- we have a lot of young players that have been learning on the fly. I think it was a good game of maturation in that way.

So it was good to have a complete effort. When you get complete efforts like that and you don't allow things to play a factor in your style of play, regardless if it's whatever a call you don't believe is right or a play that the opposing team makes, I was very proud of our resolve and our focus to get the job done.

Q. That timeout, was that intended, the very first one, or was there some miscommunication with an official?

MIKE McDANIEL: I mean, I'm not trying to get fined, so I called a time-out to have an information-gathering session. You know, we had a nice direct conversation. Then we moved on with our lives.

Q. The Dolphins declined to trade De'Von Achane or Jaylen Waddle, despite multiple reports that there were multiple offers. How do you feel about the team's decision to not trade either of those players?

MIKE McDANIEL: Yeah, I think our team's decision -- fortunately, I'm part of the team, so I'm happy with our collective decision. But again, I think it's frustrating every trade deadline to me, because I think 30% of the information is reported, realistically. That is very, very normal to have people check in if you have a losing record. That's pretty much the autopilot of the entire National Football League is you try to see if there's anybody willing to jump into -- let go of their best players.

I think with our record at 2-7 at the time, ten times out of ten you're going to get calls on every player that you have that other teams want. I think the main thing is that I've never once thought about those dudes not as a Dolphin, and it's only healthy business not to turn your phone off, but I think it's pretty status quo.

I wish they reported every person that was inquired about across the league, and it would dilute that as a headline.

Q. There's so much swirling around Tua, outside noise. I know how you guys handle outside noise, but he seems to be able -- and this has happened before just how he is -- all week, was he just that single focus? Do you ever see that stuff? Doesn't appear to ever bother him.

MIKE McDANIEL: No, I think that's one of his calling cards that makes him uniquely prepared for the position that he is as a franchise quarterback. I don't think people really give it its due on how difficult it is when you have all the layers of scrutiny.



I do think that that is what you sign up for, so it's more like I know the mental toughness of him because of his ability to flourish in those types of situations. He was the captain and the leader this game, and I thought he showed the way to the team by -- you know, I asked him to be aggressive on a couple of plays and not worry about the result, if it was a deep play and give our guys a shot down the field. To me, that's how you win football games is when you have people that put aside stat sheets, put aside -- no one wants to throw a pick, but to be aggressive and to challenge the defense and have the rest of your offense work, if you are going to take risks, you can't be afraid of the end result.

I think he made one of his -- the second touchdown was a gigantic play in the game that was super aggressive. They had probably, like, a three-yard window to complete that before it was the back of the end zone, so he played really well. But I think as a captain of this team, he knew what time it was. I thought he led, and corresponding, really all the captains were fixtures in this game. Very proud of their effort. So we will be excited to take that onto another game and try to replicate this type of execution.

Q. Considering the adversity you all have faced this season and, of course, the history against Buffalo, what does a win like this over a team like that mean to that locker room?

MIKE McDANIEL: I think they've chose to believe throughout the whole thing, throughout it the whole offseason. They've made that decision to continue to believe and to continue to invest in each other. My belief just in football and in life is that that is paid back to you if you have the steadfast nature and mental fortitude and toughness.

Ironically, a lot of times in football some of your best feelings are piggybacked off of some of your worst feelings. I think it's important because they've believed that could be the outcome realistically against every opponent. We know exactly how we've hurt ourselves in other games, so for them to go out and have dividends for all their investments, it's very important and deserved for them.

I think we've been looking for a three-phase game against a division opponent like that for some time, and I think that it gives us no excuse and the black-and-white formula for success moving forward. I think it's pretty obvious from the play, they didn't believe that their season was over.

That's difficult to do when everyone is talking to you about the season being over, unless it's not difficult because you

choose to focus on the right stuff, and then you can have efforts like that. The National Football League is all about, all right, so then you have that window of celebration, but then no one cares, and you are back to work facing another opponent.

We'll have an enjoyable evening, I'm sure... or they will. I will be making up for some lost daddy/daughter time, which I'll enjoy. Don't get confused, but I won't be partying.

Then tomorrow morning we'll be back at it getting ready for the Commanders.

Q. What does it say about this team, though, kind of building off that that you've been able to respond to probably your two worst games of the season in Cleveland and Baltimore with your two best games in Atlanta and now today?

MIKE McDANIEL: I'm very happy that everyone gets to see the side that I see. I see guys win, lose, or draw focus and lean in and buy in. I think eventually you have games where it comes together in situations like that. I think it's awesome because they deserve it. Not a surprise to me.

Based upon our workweeks, that was something that we knew that if we wanted to gain some respect from the division, of that team we had to earn it, so I think they were steadfast on putting together a good game and showing people that we are better than our record and then you have to continue to do that when you start in a hole.

But realistically, it's about our football evolving, not taking a step back. I think that has been the case for the most part of the season, with the exception to games that we over-the-top shot ourselves in the foot. I think our guys learned from that and applied literally how do they fix their game every rep for every day with a concrete focus and a resolve.

That's the fun part about the National Football League is the parity is real, so you better come prepared and with your best. We knew we had to today to get a win here at home. It's been too long since we've been able to say that, but happy that we got it done today against Buffalo.

Q. That flight to Spain, a little more enjoyable tomorrow considering this result?

MIKE McDANIEL: Yeah.

Q. Just the taxi of going international.

MIKE McDANIEL: My hope and where I feel our team is at is the focus will only increase. Very hard workers in that



locker room haven't gotten the results necessarily that they wanted, and so then you push yourself even more, and then you do get the results. That becomes addicting. That focus, that feeling in control over your football existence, that's what you feel when you have complementary football that not one person or one phase has to carry the load.

That's achieved through one way. I'm very confident in the locker room that we're going to Spain for a football game, and they will be champing at the bit to have another game where they get the opportunity to try to put something together and win as a team. It was a good day at the office, for sure.

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