

University of Pittsburgh Football Media Conference

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Pat Narduzzi

Press Conference

Pitt 28, Duke 26

PAT NARDUZZI: Well, a win is a win is a win. A win is pretty -- helped us get the win today. Appreciate it.

First of all just happy for our seniors what they did out there today, a lot of our seniors played maybe the best game they played, you know, from John Morgan across the board. So I'm happy for our seniors. Senior Day, our guys found a way to win. We did it the hard way.

There was a lot of positive plays out there today. You know, two field goals over 47 yards, a 51, a 47-yarder. I thought the two-minute drive before the half was a big drive, big tie drive, big time throw into the end zone. The sudden change stop by -- after two interceptions, two sudden change defenses, defensive stops were big time. I mean, they were big time. You're talking about -- let me see what I've got here, I don't have the yardage here, plus 42 one time. Great job. One of them was fourth down stop.

The scoop-and-score by Brandon was big time, getting a another with 3:32 to go in the fourth quarter. Another fourth down stop by our defense which was big time. And then obviously came down to the two-point play and did a great play by our defense there.

The third -- the touchdown pass on fourth down we were probably in perfect coverage, and tailback slipped out of the backfield, linebacker didn't get it. Didn't see it. We obviously didn't practice that enough with him slipping out. He had himself in, and we turned the guy loose. We and shouldn't have even got to the two-point play.

We did some uncharacteristic things -- things on defense as far as just we had a bust-and-coverage one time on a big pass in the third quarter, I think it was, or beginning of the fourth, and just some communication things that just can't happen.

So we gave them some stuff, but with as much as we gave them, we were able to come out with a W.



Kind of open up for questions.

Q. Was he in reverse pass to go forward?

PAT NARDUZZI: You know, they like trick plays down there. I can't tell you we saw the exact one but it's a great play by our defense. They like their reverses and slicker (ph). We didn't call it out before the snap, I can tell you that but great play by our defense.

Q. Was Vander Haar available on the last drive?

PAT NARDUZZI: He was not but he would have been in there if he was, I can promise you that.

Q. Talking about all the big plays the defense made, two interceptions by Keenan in the third quarter, and Duke gets no points off of either of them. Can you talk about how important that was as far as momentum goes?

PAT NARDUZZI: Big. Big. You know, they can -- our defense is playing at a high level. We made some stupid mistakes out there which drives me nuts.

But you know, overall, with what we were dealing with out there, I think we were on the field for 35 minutes or 34 minutes, something like that. The defense did a good job today. They won time of possession today which hasn't happened much this year. But our defense stepped up. Made some good plays. We stopped the run. Quarterback didn't run the ball like the -- like the leading rusher did go. We were able to stifle him as well.

Q. Second straight year where you had five defensive touchdowns. What allows for that how do you account for those?

PAT NARDUZZI: I just say my prayers night not before the game, during the game, whatever it may be, thank the guy up there. The defense goes out and makes some plays and that was a big play by Brandon. Excited for him. Good to see another touchdown on defense.

Q. The penalties, the dropped snap, just continue to be a problem.



PAT NARDUZZI: Yeah, you tell me. I'm going to ask you guys on Monday. Maybe you can help me out because I've tried and tried. We've rotated through three punters, and Chung (ph) really felt like he was the guy. Sam had two good scout punts in there, and it just can't happen.

Again, our defense stepped up and finished the game. You know, we tried to give it to him today that's for sure.

Q. You've won three straight games. Does it feel like you're carrying momentum heading into the season finale?

PAT NARDUZZI: You know what you can say that. I'll go home and watch this videotape and make myself sick, one of those, you know, gave them too much today. But we got momentum I guess, right. And we've got a chance to go down to Miami and play some ball Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

Q. Is it a testament to growth, as many mistakes as you had and still win the game?

PAT NARDUZZI: No doubt about it. We have a good football team as we said and just can't the mistakes we made today, special teams, especially. They made a couple big plays, the two interceptions. The second one was probably better than the first one. The corner kick came off the vertical route, and it's hard to see that one but the one he threw back across. Didn't see that one coming in. Just have to be smart with the football.

Q. You've talked about the importance of winning in November, and it looks like you guys are finding a way to win these games, whereas in situations in October, if things didn't pan out, is that just a sign of growth of this team or is it a sign of things falling your way or a little bit of both?

PAT NARDUZZI: They fell our way. Didn't fall our way earlier. You know, an inch here, an inch there. We were close to winning those other SEC games. It's a shame we didn't. You know, you can call it growth. You can call it whatever you want to. We've still got a ways to go. We still want to get better.

Q. Was Hall (ph) available today?

PAT NARDUZZI: He was not available. I'm hoping for next week. You saw him get banged up a week ago. So we'll just keep an eye and we'll keep him healthy. He was not available unfortunately.

Q. 60 wins, being tied for No. 2 -- what does that mean to you?

PAT NARDUZZI: I haven't really thought about it. It's an honor. Again, it's not me. It's our football team. It's our coaching staff. It's everybody. There's been some great coaches come through this university, and it's a great win and it's great team win, and we do it all together.

Q. Have you mentioned in your opening, the significance of the field goals -- how he's performed --

PAT NARDUZZI: He's done an outstanding job. Those are two long ones and that 51 is into the wind, he drove that thing, started getting nervous but he drove that thing through the uprights. We have got a lot of confidence in him right now and he's got a lot of confidence in himself.

Q. What did you see struggling with Derek today on those deep passes --

PAT NARDUZZI: Senior Day, I don't know. Who knows? I mean, sometimes that happens, and you know, they have got him on kind of a -- you know, a stutter-go on the one and could have had a couple picks really but maybe he didn't play his best game.

But I tell you what, that -- was a big play and he snatched up on it at the end of the game.

Q. Brandon Hill had a deep pass and return a touchdown. What can you say about his day?

PAT NARDUZZI: Brandon has not had a lot of opportunity at times and they started some formation at the boundary and tried to attack him, and he did a nice job. Brandon had a great game.

Q. You talk with the clutch field goals, what are your thoughts -- inaudible -- finding a way for the touchdown before the half?

PAT NARDUZZI: That was a big-time drive. That was a great two-minute at the half, and again that ball came out quick and he was decisive with it and aggressive with the throw. You know, he had a nice -- that was a great drive.

Q. I notice your team when you were on the field, you had a Virginia flag. Whose decision was that?

PAT NARDUZZI: We got the shirts, remembering those three young men that doesn't deserve what they got last Sunday, and it's say shame but we stick with our brothers in Charlottesville. I couldn't tell you whose idea was the flag. I don't think -- it was Heather's idea. The rest of the story, but you know, Marquez (ph) took it out and again, I cannot imagine what they are going through down there. Prayers continue to go out because it's not easy and it's

not over.

**Q. Did Keenan look comfortable in the second half?
Two throws, two interceptions, but do you think he
was all together there?**

PAT NARDUZZI: I think so. It's hard to tell. When you throw two interceptions to starts to get to you a little bit and you start to question yourself. But he had a nice scramble for a first down which you don't see him do that very often and he was composed and smooth on the sideline and good after the game. So I think he was fine. You know, he just didn't make a couple throws that he needs to make.

Again, we have to make some catches as well. We dropped some balls as well that we can't do. There was some -- he there you one over the middle, I think middle of fourth quarter that I think -- he has to get his eyes over the ball and should have been another completion. His completion percentage is not all on him. He's got to make some more plays.

**Q. How much did not having Calijah in the second half
-- affect what you gives were able to do?**

PAT NARDUZZI: You know what, it always affects you. That guy, he's special. You know, it's always going to affect you when he's not out there and obviously didn't affect us as much as it did down at North Carolina. But our guys stepped up, David Green and Johnson (ph) those guys played a good game. John Morgan was really, really good out there. Again, a senior playing really good football.

Q. How is Calijah?

PAT NARDUZZI: He's okay. He's happy in the locker room after the game. We'll see -- keep you posted.

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