

University of Pittsburgh Football Media Conference

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Coach Pat Narduzzi

Press Conference

PAT NARDUZZI: All right. Another tough Saturday afternoon. Like I said after the game, I feel for our kids. It's a team loss. We did it all together as coaches and as players.

The one thing I'll say about our kids' effort out there, when you put the tape on, they're playing their tails off. Nobody should look and say they didn't play hard or -- they didn't give in.

We were down the entire game until we kicked that field goal and go up at the end of the game. And our kids kept fighting. That's what I love about this football team; they're fighters; they're going to give you everything they've got. We've got to be a lot better in a lot of different situations, as we know.

We expect perfection, and we're never going to get it, but we've got to be better than what we were. It's a shame when you play as physical as we did, play as hard as we did not to come out with a victory. That's the disappointing thing. That's where I feel bad for our guys because, as coaches, we've got to do a better job of getting them into position to make better plays and do a better job coaching them where they need to be and take care of maybe some of the things that are weaknesses and make sure there are strengths.

Obviously Clemson did a nice job offensively with what they did and some of the different things.

But I'll make a special note that Nate Yarnell played his tail off. Threw for 350, the most passing yards thrown on Clemson this year, maybe in two years, who knows?

But very athletic, probably the best defense we faced this year. We thought maybe SMU was going into the game. We didn't know. But after you watch the tape, that was by far the best front that we played.

T.J. Parker is a beast, No. 3, he'll be first-round defensive end some day. That's what Jackson Brown had to go against most of the day. I think they matched him up with



a young guy, which is a good move by them. Probably should have helped him a little earlier. We helped him a little late but not enough. He took over the game.

Just some quick stats-wise that I think are important. This is why stats really don't matter because you could look at the stats all you want. It comes down to winning and losing. We have 87 plays. They had 70. One of the first times we've had more plays and our offense was on the field more than defensive.

Time of possession, 34 minutes to 26. We got 27 first downs, they got 21. Rushing yards, we got 88. They got 58. They had eight going into that last quarterback draw. We had 350 passing. They had 288. Total yards, we had 438. They had 346, the fewest since they played Georgia.

That tells you what kind of effort our guys played with out there. Obviously I'll give you one, 13 penalties to six penalties. I can't explain the six. Sometimes I can't explain 13. But you guys got the videotape. You guys can watch it. We know there's all kinds of stuff there.

Again, we talked to our guys about it's a 60-minute game. You can play great for 58 and a half minutes, it doesn't matter. You better play great for 60 minutes and that's why there's a clock on the scoreboard to track that.

It's a game of inches. We didn't get the inches when we needed them. That's what it comes down to. That's why they got the victory and we didn't.

Defensively we had two three-play, 75-yard drives. First one was two big passes. And the last one, which was in a two-minute situation -- like I said, I've got a lot of confidence in what we do on third down and what we do in two-minute drills. And we've seen our guys get off the field many times throughout our career here. That was a poor performance by coaches and players, as far as not getting off the field.

There's a lot of faith in our players and in what we do to get off the field. We didn't get it done. That's on us as a team.

Then offensively I thought we started slow. I think things were moving fast for the offense and some of the moving parts we had up front.



And, like I said, Nate did a nice job of playing his game. And I thought he really came on in the second half after -- he hadn't played for a while. He played a fast defense, one of the best defenses we faced all year, and your first really game experience. I think it took him a while for him to get going.

I thought in the second half he was outstanding, took hits. It's hard to stay in that pocket and trust that you're going to be okay and throw those balls. I mean, he took some hits and did it like a pro. So I love Nate for that. That's kind of who Nate is. He's a tough son of a gun.

But then down to the goal line, we did a poor job communicating. Got loud down there for some reason. I don't know what it was. Got loud. We had some communication issues through the thing. And I told Nate, like, yesterday, why don't you do this. He said, we've already got those things covered. I said we can see this, that you're having troubles hearing it. Then they're looking to the sideline but we're in a little huddle.

That was chaos. So we'll fix that this week. We haven't had it before. And, again, that's on us as coaches. It starts with us, period.

And then we just had some issues, the ball being smacked in the middle of the field. You guys don't need to hear all those issues, but ball happened to be smack in the middle, just getting lined up. We just did a poor job and that's on coaches as well.

Louisville, obviously Jeff Brohm, coming off a loss at Stanford. Great football coach. Known him a long time. He's an offensive guru with his brother Brian as well. He's the offensive coordinator, but obviously Jeff, he's the OC and calling the plays. I think he does an outstanding job.

We got Tyler Shough as their quarterback. Tyler is a gunslinger, came from Texas Tech, transfer. He can throw it. He's very, very talented and somebody that we're going to have to play really well against.

ACC, the conference of quarterbacks, right, when you look at the young man we played last week. They've got talent in the backfield, they've got talent all over the field. A lot of transfers on the football team.

The tailback, Brown, has had a tremendous freshman year. Has a great chance of being the rookie of the year in the conference.

Ja'Corey Brooks, wide receiver, number 1 and number 0, keep an eye on those two guys. Chris Bell is the other guy, big, 6'2", 6'3", 220-pound targets.

Ja'Corey is a thousand yard receiver already. They've got talent back there.

Jeff Brohm does as good -- they're going to take their shots and go deep on us and they like to run the ball. The tailback is really good.

Defensively Mark Hagen is one of the co-defensive coordinators along with Ron English. I've known Mark for a long time. He was at Northern Illinois when I got there back in the day. He's a D line guy as well. But they do a great job.

They're four down and get after it. Ashton Gillotte a guy who caused havoc off the edge. I think he leads the country with maybe 53 pressures on the quarterback. We'll have to know where he is at all times and try to help all of our linemen out when he's a pass rusher.

Talented. We've got to go on the road and get a win and that's our intentions.

Q. (Indiscernible) about the speed (indiscernible) between snaps, (indiscernible) guys get their hand --

PAT NARDUZZI: No, not intentionally.

Q. Plan on doing that?

PAT NARDUZZI: It's a great question because I'm going to find out what our snaps -- are we going to do that, you said? Not really.

I want our offense to do what they do. I think once you start doing that or say, hey, let's huddle up and take time, then we get into delay of games. We haven't seen those delay of games all year.

Those penalties have got to go. The nine on forced, nine of the 13 penalties were unforced. That means they did nothing to make us do that besides maybe shift around a little bit at the center spot.

But that's on us. I don't care what they say. They yell at our cadence but if they yell at our cadence we have to be more disciplined. There's things obviously you can't see. Why did it happen? But there's some stuff that shouldn't be going on in a football game going in a football game. We've got to control it and do a better job.

Q. You guys have the (indiscernible) guys say they're looking over to the sideline. Can you talk to (indiscernible) about why he likes to do that?

PAT NARDUZZI: We don't always do that. It's what we call a bounce huddle. We do it every once in a while. It all depends. We've done that all year but everybody else will see that maybe on the goal line and first-and-two at the 2 when I think that's a touchdown anyway, guys.

Whatever, maybe we shouldn't have been down there, maybe we should have brought Ben out for the extra point. That's why I coach.

Q. (Indiscernible) of Nate, the way he played on Saturday, did that play in the consideration for the starting job?

PAT NARDUZZI: We'll find out when Eli is cleared. He hasn't been cleared yet. So there's no question, as we talked all August, we've got two really good quarterbacks and both of them have an opportunity -- Nate did a heck of a job out there, like I thought and knew he would.

He prepares like a pro. And, again, maybe he didn't quite prepare like a pro for that second half of Virginia, didn't think he was going to be put in that position.

And every guy on our football team has got to be prepared for that position, whether it's at center, at quarterback or at corner, for you're the next man and you better be ready to go. If you don't, you let the team down.

But Nate certainly with a week of practice and getting all the reps -- just talking to him after the game, it was like, Coach, I knew every blitz that was coming except for two. Like he knew -- it wasn't like he didn't prepare for it, but he knew it was coming, he knew where it was coming. He was able to get protection where he needed to. But you still gotta block one-on-one. If they're bringing six you have to be good for it. His intelligence goes a long way.

Q. On the matter of the offensive procedure penalties, I think you had 17 all season. Nine are in the last two games. How much of that do you put on some of the changes in personnel that you've had at offensive line and quarterback?

PAT NARDUZZI: You've said it, not me. Anytime there's changes in there and you've got a new center that goes in during the game -- I mean, yeah, they don't get to work together. That's why you like to keep your continuity in your offensive line. There's no question. And you've got a different quarterback in there calling cadences and different rhythm and whatever.

We've got, shoot, the last play of the game on offense, I don't know if you guys watched it, go back and watch it, take a chance and go watch it, the left tackle, the left tackle

is offside. Bear jumps offside. But it's really not Bear jumping offside; it's because we don't snap the football. Officials don't even see it. So there's not a call on it. And we've got guys wide open down the field.

Like, we should have won on the last play of the game. But you can go back to two-minute. You can go back to the goal line, but we should have had an opportunity to win on the last play of the game. Got the ball on the plus-26 yard line. You couldn't ask for a better situation on offense. Went all the way down the field and put ourselves in that position.

But anytime you make a change, whether it's at center, whether it's at tackles, moving guys around, I mean, we've had that for a few weeks. And it's not easy, but we've got to get it done. That's our job as coaches to get it done, so that's not an excuse.

Q. (Indiscernible) was open on that. Nate didn't see it?

PAT NARDUZZI: He didn't really have time to see him. We were kind of offside, and you have Gavin on the right side sees, he looks over to the left, knows it's an illegal procedure, no whistle or flag, turns around, it's too late; the dude's around the corner already.

If Kenny just turns around, Kenny thought he had to go to the end zone first. But there's like four guys deep, we have guys open, two guys, we have a chance, go back, watch at the last play, from (indiscernible) 22, it's, like, whoa. Unfortunate.

Q. I've heard it said about good coordinators that when you watch them, it's impressive, they seem to already have the adjustment built in, they're going to do one thing, but they're already intuiting what you're going to do adjust. Is Jeff Brohm one of those guys, you watch him --

PAT NARDUZZI: Every coordinator is like that. They'll have enough stuff in, if you do this, we've got that. That's what we all do, offensively or defensively.

I don't know if that becomes a great coordinator, it's calling it at the right times. You've got to guess right and sometimes you guess right and sometimes you guess wrong. That's the name of the business.

You base your calls based on stats and what you think and everything else going into the game and all the studies you've done through the week. But he does a good job. He's going to try to dictate what coverage you're in.

He just does a good job. He's an offensive genius, like everybody we get to face in this league. This is big boy football. They're all really good.

It's a, can you be better on that day? And there's times yesterday or Saturday that you felt like you were better. And then again, it's the same thing this week. You've got to go out and execute and try to put them in the best possible position that we can in every snap and every minute of that game.

Q. How important is it for (indiscernible) considerations, the guys on the offensive line shuffled in, rotated out, couple games or practiced together to capture continuity?

PAT NARDUZZI: I'm trying to cut practice back this time of year. It's like you want to add practice. We can't add practice.

It's week 13 -- is that what it is? -- week 13 of the season and you're banged up to begin with. We talk about Daniel Carter, who had surgery yesterday. C.J. Lee in surgery today. And Jordan Bass is out for the year as well. He'll have surgery today as well.

The last two weeks we've gotten banged up. You want to increase your time to get the continuity out there on the field, but we can't do that. And that's going to be the next year's biggest question, too, is when they knock our roster from 117 to 105 of how, if you have one of these years where you're getting banged up, that it's an issue.

But numbers-wise, there's a certain point where you get during the season you struggle to have enough guys on scout team to even run a practice. You want to cut the time back but we usually cut it back already. We've not cut the practice back yet because we needed to work the last two weeks. I'm, like, cutting it back, we need work, we need more practice time but you can't do it. It would be nice to get more, but it's got to be quality, not quantity.

Q. Continuity personnel-wise on the O line this week?

PAT NARDUZZI: I don't know. I have no idea. We'll see what happens this week in practice.

Q. Some idea?

PAT NARDUZZI: I've got some idea. But you don't know until you get to Friday who is going to line up and who is going to stay.

No one expected to lose Jacoby like you did in the game again, took the week off, and we gave him a week off just

to get his body healthy because he wasn't playing good. Then he's playing good, and all of a sudden he's out. It's like here we go again.

So you can go into it on Friday. I can feel good now, but how am I going to get a feel after the game on Saturday? Because you don't know. I mean, you get wiped out real quick.

Q. If you needed to go to backup quarterback on Saturday against Clemson, who would you have been behind Nate?

PAT NARDUZZI: Really don't want to get to that. We had both guys we feel good with Ty and David Lynch, who is a walk-on, operates the offense really well. Ty is athletic. They both have great tools, but we had options depending on how the game was going and what we needed.

Q. Wildcat?

PAT NARDUZZI: We thought about it. We thought about putting a wildcat guy back there. We were hoping not to get to that point.

Like I said, Nate is one of the toughest dudes I've been around because he took some shots and he kept going. He's got my respect, I guarantee you that.

Q. Any big differences between Louisville, what you saw last year to this year or more of the same?

PAT NARDUZZI: Too early. But what they do offensively and defensively, haven't had any coaching changes. It's about what they do. Different players playing different positions and a new quarterback different than last year, Plummer, all that. Obviously similarities all over the place. But personnels are different, what they're doing, and it's about it.

Q. Don't have stats on this, but curious about your delta defense. It's obviously been a mainstay of your defense for the last 10 years. Has it been, from what you've seen, as effective this year as it's been in previous years?

PAT NARDUZZI: It has been. It has been. It's like we just discussed, like two-minute, look at Kyle Lewis interceptions he's had in this year in the package in the plays we've made.

If you go back to two-minute whether it's West Virginia, Cincinnati, the production we've had out there, everybody has one of their days and it's good until it's not good. But I don't think it's the package. I think it's the calls, when you

make the calls and what those calls were and it's also the execution. Comes down to player and coach and doing it together.

But I think a lot of people make mistakes. We've been running -- I've been running the same defense at the Division I level since 2003. There's tweaks and different stuff.

They rushed for eight yards going into the last series of the drive and you don't really expect anybody with no timeouts to run the ball and then get tackled. So you're not sitting there really worried about a run game at that point. We were worried about a run game on the first play at the half because that's what they usually do. And it's not two minutes at the end of the game. Two minutes at the end of the game, no timeouts, you run the ball, if your receiver just ran 30 yards down the field, 40 yards down the field and the quarterback gains five yards, gets tackled, and they no way to stop the clock and they've got a clock and all the receivers have to come back to clock it, they lose -- but they won. It paid off for them. But if he gets tackled, they've got issues with clock management.

Q. Is there a back like Isaac Brown you can compare him to, that reminds you of him?

PAT NARDUZZI: He's a baby from Homestead. I don't know. He's explosive. He's fast. He's quick. I'd say he's like Desmond Reid. The kid can take it to the house at any point. He's a different back. He's going to be a dude. In a few years he'll be drafted and play high. I don't know how big he is here. Let me look and see how big he is. 5'9", 190, but he's explosive.

And again, I knew before I even watched the tape yesterday on him, I've seen it through the year just watching their offense against -- you see them on tape, it's like, whoa, this dude's explosive.

Q. You guys spent time in that area. Do you remember recruiting him at all?

PAT NARDUZZI: I don't. I don't. Let me go look at our recruiting thing, but I don't remember, no. Should have.

Q. (Indiscernible) banged up?

PAT NARDUZZI: He's been banged up all year, really. He's just a tough son of a gun. Him diving for the touchdown -- it wasn't a touchdown -- but him diving for that thing, he's just a football player. He's persevered. He's tough as well.

I mean, like I said, our kids play their hearts out. You don't

ever want to see it come out like that. But he just keeps going, but that's a weekly thing for him.

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