

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

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Coach Mike Vrabel Postgame Press Conference



Titans, 33 - Jaguars, 30

Q. I guess second straight week that you pull one out there at the end. Can you talk about just I guess the stick-to-itivness this team has losing the lead and then showing the poise to come back and hang on?

MIKE VRABEL: Well, man, unfortunately you don't know when they're going to be blowouts or when you'll have close games. Obviously the way this league is designed, I think we prepare for all kinds of situations, close games, and building a mindset that if it's not going your way, that we don't need any front runners.

A lot of credit to Jacksonville and Doug and his staff and that football team for battling back and coming back in answer. We have to play better. We have to coach better. I'm confident that we will, but excited to be 2-0 for the first time here in Tennessee.

Q. Mike, you were watching Gostkowski in warmups. He clanks one off the left upright, but was what your confidence in him to see him again do a second straight game winning field goal?

MIKE VRABEL: The confidence is the same for every player that's here. They're expected to do their job, so we have a lot of confidence in their ability to do their job. That's what we had to do. It came down to a field goal kick and you could see it was a really good kick, plenty of distance, accuracy, protection was good.

So that's what we needed today.

Q. If you could talk about the play of Ryan Tannehill, throws four touchdown down passes on a day when the running game, five yards, tough to come by. How impressed were you?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, I've always had a lot of respect for this defense and their coaches and players. They play hard. That's a young group over there. They're talented.

But I would say the guys went up and made plays and helped Ryan out like it is all the time. Hump of or Corey, Jonnu. Those guys went up and caught the football, attacked the football, and that was really good to see.

It's not all one guy. We understand that. So that was where we were today.

Q. Mike, look, for most of the game obviously it was tough to stop Jacksonville. What do you do especially well in the last two drives that enabled you to stop them?

MIKE VRABEL: Able to get off the field on third down and able to create a turnover again. The turnovers were huge, our ability to take care of the ball on offense and get two turnovers on defense. Thought the play at the end of the half is kind of where we want to be as a football team.

Hold them to a field goal, execute the squib defense, use our timeouts, execute a play, and then kick a field goal. That's positive, good to see, and it ended up being a huge play in the game for us.

Q. Congratulations. Just wanted to ask, second half in particular, was the bigger issue for your defense Minshew getting rid of it too quickly or you just couldn't get there fast enough?

MIKE VRABEL: I think a little bit of both. I think they busted a couple runs, which I would say is not ideal, to change some field position. We knew coming in if we didn't disrupt the timing he was accurate. Got a lot of respect for him as a quarterback.

We have to rush better. We have to cover better. We have coach better. We have to coach all those things better. But we were able to disrupt the football and there late in the game and got the turnover that was the difference.

Q. Mike, Kalu's play there on the squib kick, pretty remarkable. Have you seen something like that before, and how much of that is luck and how much is him being heads up?

MIKE VRABEL: It's coached and it's executed in practice. Again, it's going to be great to teach off of just to explain to



the guys why we do this stuff here at the end of the half or the game.

It's a huge play. And so all the credit to Craig Aukerman, Ryan Crow, being able to teach that and get these guys ready to execute it when it comes up. It doesn't come up very often, but it did.

And then also to the offensive staff to be able to put the players out there to gain 15 yards that we needed and then call the timeout.

Q. Mike, Jonnu Smith again, the big start to this game. Couple touchdowns early in the season. What's he doing maybe a little bit better than you've seen him last couple years right now?

MIKE VRABEL: I think he's just focused on being able to go and attack the football, use his speed. He drew a huge penalty, so he continues to improve. He's a great teammate. He's an unbelievable player to coach and be around every day.

You know, I've always admired his upbringing. I know that his mom has done a fantastic job raising him and he's just a great teammate. Works hard. You're always happy to see good things happen to those type of people.

Q. Mike, last week (Indiscernible.) Did you think that that was the case based on the production you saw?

MIKE VRABEL: Luke, I apologize. You're going to have to repeat that. I didn't hear the beginning.

Q. Some of the offensive players talked last week about wanting to look a little crisper and be more efficient this week. Do you think they got that today?

MIKE VRABEL: I think at times, but then obviously not. There are too many plays that aren't positive, runs that are at or behind the line of scrimmage, penalties.

I thought we protected well for the most part. Gave Ryan some time to work through his progression. But, again, we just have to continue to improve. We're happy to be 2-0. We have to play better. We have to continue to improve. That's what the best teams in this league will do, they'll continue to improve.

Q. We've talked a lot this off-season about what it would be like playing with no fans. Today you could hear some of the individual fans trying to make noise on third downs and whatnot. What was it like out there in that atmosphere?

MIKE VRABEL: Same as it was last week, except -- I mean, it's quiet. We're excited to be able to get fans back here as soon as we can. Hopefully we can play well enough that they'll want to cheer as many of them that are here.

It's different, but I think we're kind of used to it now being the second game. Our play and our own personal attitude has to bring the energy. We have to make positive plays to continue to transfer that energy from group to group and unit to unit.

Q. I had trouble getting in early. Could you address the one you talked about last, Tannehill's excellent effort or Jacksonville's ability to move the ball so well up until the end?

MIKE VRABEL: You know, just the ability for us to get off the field on third down, that's what it came down to. There were so many third and shorts. We've got to create more negative plays early in the drive so that they're not sitting there on the third and two.

Had the whole playbook open. Gained two and a half yards, it's still first down. To me, there was a few X plays, which was a key to the game. They've got big receivers. They want to move the ball down filled. They hit a couple runs that we can't have. Changed field position, changed momentum.

And then I'm not sure what you asked me about on offense other than Ryan with his four touchdowns. I thought there were some great catches and great efforts to be able to protect. Gave him a lot of time to progress on as well as those guys going up and catching the football.

I know Corey went up and got it, Jonnu. I thought that Humph play was outstanding there in the end zone.

Q. Kristian Fulton gets his first pick and seemed to be playing more in the second half there, I guess the slot guy. What did you see about his play today and how did he end up getting more reps as his game improved I guess?

MIKE VRABEL: Well, I'll more reserve the evaluation for after having a chance to watch the film. I thought it was good he got his hand on the ball, and then just being ready to go. Some guys went down, and these are tough games early in the year. They're tough games.

So we got to get healthy and get guys ready to go back on the road and go up to Minnesota.

Q. Coach, just wanted to ask you about the push you



got from Jack Crawford. He had the big sack and came up with the tip on this interception.

MIKE VRABEL: Have always since he's gotten here enjoyed coaching Jack, being around him. He's a perfect fit for us as far as just versatility, doing whatever is asked of him for the team and his effort.

So was happy to see that he had -- was able to get the sack and then also help there at the end of the game. Really appreciate his effort as well as everybody else.

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