

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

Sunday, November 8, 2020
Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Mike Vrabel

Postgame Press Conference

Titans - 24, Bears - 17

Q. Not the best day for your offense, but you like what you saw from your defense and how important was it to get back on the winning side of things?

MIKE VRABEL: The reason why we come to work is to win. That's the only reason we do this is to win and we put a lot into it and it's credit to the players for being able to pull it out today.

Q. You guys were able to get after the quarterback pretty well. What was hitting for you guys, especially being able to do that without Clowney out there?

MIKE VRABEL: We'll take a look at the tape and see how it went. I know they were missing a lot of guys.

Q. Kind of going along those lines, what adjustments did you see your group make today on third down that led to the success?

MIKE VRABEL: Again we'll take a look at the tape. It felt like they were locked in during the week and when we played man they were all up there tight. Zone we gave them some different look out of the zone and guys executed it. And again to be able to try to affect them a little bit inside and pressure them. I think the fourth down stops, those were huge, those third and ones that we got, those are hard to get but I think that that was a huge momentum there in the beginning of the game.

Q. You guys got production today from a handful of guys that were making their debuts. What is it that let someone who hasn't played yet sort of slide right in and be able to contribute, is it practice, is that what that is?

MIKE VRABEL: Everybody that comes to work, players or whatever roster they're on, active roster, practice squad, they're expected to be ready to play in the game. They never know when their opportunity is going to come. And I



think the guys started to realize that. And practice is critical, so was the preparation, the meetings, watching film, but then performance is always the key. So I think the guys understand that anybody can play, whether it's Cam Batson or Tear Tart, all those guys, Ray, Borders had an opportunity, and then just Desmond, appreciate his professionalism, working through Zoom the whole week, pretty unique situation, not seeing him until Saturday, and then playing extensively in the game.

Q. Desmond, for him not to be able to play with you and ended up getting a touchdown and play as many snaps as he did, what does that say about a guy like that going to your team?

MIKE VRABEL: The touchdown is what it is. The ball's on the ground and give him credit for scooping and somebody obviously helped him out by causing the fumble. But again, the professionalism that he showed. He was excited to be a part of our team. I think he was excited for a fresh start. Looks like his teammates have certainly embraced him. Probably was, earned a lot of respect of theirs by understanding what we were doing, by going through those Zoom meetings, and when he came in and met with them and they talked and they were in the film room on Saturday, they probably respected him for the way that he prepared to get to that point.

Q. I know you guys ended up putting up a fair amount of points. But with the offense, what was the, what was Chicago showing you that kind of slowed you guys down at the start?

MIKE VRABEL: Same thing they had shown throughout the year. It was excellent defense, good inside, good in the secondary, tight coverage. So we knew that it was probably going to be tough sledding. Hit a play down there. We were, there were some really good third down conversions. I thought Firk going inside there. We had some drops that we'll have to clean up and try to eliminate. But they're an excellent defense. They're well coached and they got really good players.

Q. In terms of the pressure, the sacks you guys were able to get today, how much did it help do you think being up in the game which you hadn't necessarily been the last couple of weeks?

MIKE VRABEL: I don't know. Every week's different. We'll try to see where, what it looked like on film and who was winning and how the games worked and coach everything up from there and then get on to Indianapolis in a real short week.

Q. Early on it seemed like that Ryan was, and the receivers were a little bit off. How much of that do you attribute to the Bears getting pressure on him? And how much do you think it's just the timing a little bit not right?

MIKE VRABEL: I think I'll watch the tape and we'll figure it out. But usually those are the things that somewhat contribute to that. Like, I think there were some drops. I think there were some balls that I would expect our guys to catch.

Q. Just wondering about the, all the new guys with the new opportunity, how much juice can that bring, particularly on defense with them being so eager to make a contribution?

MIKE VRABEL: I mean I hope whoever is out there is eager to play. But it's always great when guys take advantage of their opportunities because then they earn more opportunities.

Q. I know you'll see more when you look at the tape, but just from your vantage point today, how impactful was Harold out there? How important was it for him to play like that?

MIKE VRABEL: Well again we have high expectations for Harold. It means a lot to him. He's conscientious, he plays hard. We move him around different places. And I really would want to watch the film to see how it looked. But again, it did look like he had an impact and was helping us, but it takes all 11 coordinated guys and executing the game plan and playing together, communicating.

Q. It looked like DaQuan Jones had one of his better efforts. How dominant was he for you? Was that among his best?

MIKE VRABEL: We'll look at the film and see how it was, but we, again, we have high expectations for him. I'm sure there's some things that he did well. I noticed them. But he's improved. He's shedding the blocker and making plays at or around the line of scrimmage. He's one of our captains, and he has, he provides a great leadership and so I think that any time that we can come on out with him being healthy moving on to next week is positive.

Q. It seems like one of the hardest things, the leaps to

make is from good to great. It feels like you also might have a couple guys who are in the process of doing that. AJ Brown and Jeffrey Simmons. Do you see that, them making that leap and if so, how are they getting there, how are they elevating?

MIKE VRABEL: We're not going to crown anybody in their second, halfway through their second season. Those players are very important to us. Love coaching them. Love seeing them every single day. They work hard. They work hard in the off-season in the weight room. They have got a very unique skill set with the size that each player possesses. So I'm thankful that I get to coach them. They continue to want to improve and get better. I don't think they are satisfied, which I think all players and coaches should try to adhere to is that we're always trying to continually improve.

Q. Pretty rough couple of weeks for the defense. Just from a confidence standpoint, how encouraging do you think it is to win a game like this and kind of show that it didn't take your offense winning a shoot-out to get it done today?

MIKE VRABEL: Every week's different. Some days you rely on your offense. I think we got to improve the special teams. We had some moving parts. We had some guys out. And not making excuses, it has to be better. We have to be able to protect our punter better. We got to kick better. Certainly giving up the fake punt isn't what we're looking for. So every week is a new week, but I think that guys were excited to be able to play well on third down. At least early. Two minute at the end there is somewhat frustrating.

Q. I know you talk a lot about just not wanting any frontrunners. How do you like the way your group responded to some adversity losing a couple of games? And just what's the challenge now in turn around playing on Thursday?

MIKE VRABEL: I think that we were at a crossroads here of where we were going with our season. Looking at coming off the two losses, kind of coming back home, proud of the way the guys played. Proud of the way they prepared. And then now the challenge is to come back in there tomorrow and forget about this one and take care of our bodies. The team that gets healthy the quickest and obviously prepares in a short amount of time that we have, is going to have an advantage in the football game.

Q. Roger, I don't think he returned in the second half. Any update on him yet?

MIKE VRABEL: No.



Q. It seemed like you patched a lot of things together both on defense and special teams with all the changes that were made. How did the special teams unit hold up, especially with the kicking and the punting, in your opinion?

MIKE VRABEL: I just mentioned that it had to be better. But getting in there with a new snapper, a new punter and a holder, I would say that operation was okay. We have to protect the punter better. There were some moving parts in there on the punt team. Our guys covered hard. We had some really nice gunner coverage, I noticed. Unfortunately the one got called back with the penalty. But Chris Milton and Nick and all those guys flying down there to try to disrupt the returner.

Q. Were you trying to manage Derek's snap load today with the quick turnaround to Thursday?

MIKE VRABEL: I think we're always conscious of that and what it's going to take to win the game. We got a little bit of a lead there and were able to, I think, kind of come off of him a little bit. We just have to finish games better. We're up, dominating the football game, and then make it too close.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....