

# Tennessee Titans Media Conference

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## Coach Darrell Bevell

Lions Postgame Press Conference



Titans 46, Lions 25

DARRELL BEVELL: Just got to start off with just talking about Matthew and the toughness that that guy shows and the gritty performance that he was able to have today to even get himself right to go out there and play. I thought that was just gutty and gritty by him.

Doesn't really surprise me like I talked about during the week. And then as far as the game goes, offensively there was some good things going on, but cannot turn the ball over. You turn the ball over on the 1 yard line and I think the second one was in the red area, as well. Can't do it, and you really take the game out of your hands when you're giving the opponent the ball back.

And then defensively I think the game, as we talked about during the week, was going to come down to 1st and 2nd down more than anything because the 3rd downs if you make them short, it's much easier to convert. We were unable to do that, couldn't really ever get that under control on 1st and 2nd down, so it made it a long day for the defense on that side of the ball.

Any questions?

**Q. What is it like being on the sideline when your defense can't get a stop in a game like this? I think they had seven scoring drives on nine possessions and six of those were touchdowns. When you can't make adjustments, what does that feel like?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Well, I'm not sure it has anything to do with the adjustments. The one thing I'll tell you is the guys are playing hard, and we knew the challenge was going to be tough today against that opponent, and the way that offense is able to run, it was a long day for our guys. I will say that there was -- obviously the guys are frustrated. They want to do better. But just -- you've got to give credit to Tennessee and how well they played on offense.

**Q. I know injuries can't be an excuse, but your cornerback today, I think his first game ever, shorthanded at seemingly every spot. How difficult is this to continue to adjust to the situation even though injuries are part of it?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yep, they're part of it for sure. We're not going to use that as an excuse. These guys love playing football all the way down to Alex Myers. He loves to play football, wants to be in there, wants to put a good effort on tape for himself. So I can't say anything about the effort or anything that those guys are doing. They're working and trying to put themselves in the best situations to win. The coaches are working, and obviously you've got -- you're bringing in guys that you just kind of keep getting further and further down the line so you've got to get guys caught up to speed, so sometimes that limits some of the things you can do, as well. But these guys are continuing to play.

**Q. Darrell, just going back to Stafford real quick, it just seemed during warmups and the first part of the game that he doesn't miss a step. How impressive is it, you kind of talked about Brett Favre did it for some time, but just to see him know what he needs to be doing out there, I know he missed a couple of throws, but for the most part you can't really knock what he did today.**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yeah, the amazing thing is I wish you guys could just see him day-to-day. You don't get to see him -- obviously with the COVID and some of the things now as much as you might have before. But just day-to-day and some of the state that he was in earlier in the week and the performance that he had was -- I mean, it's remarkable. Just gritty, tough. I mean, the way that he leads his teammates. I mean, his guys want to go out there and fight for a guy like that. He's laying it all on the line, giving it everything he has, and I just applaud him for it.

**Q. The offensive line looked like they made a point to not let him get hassled and hit too much early on in this game.**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yeah, they really cared. I think it shows what they think of Matthew and the fight and the things that they're willing to do for him. We tried to do some things offensively to help with that, as well. I mean,



to get a quarterback out of a game without getting hit was going to be a tall task, but those guys went out there and they really fought and worked for him.

**Q. At what point did you decide that Matthew was going to actually play?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Well, I mean, basically like I told you, it was going to come all the way down to the end of the week. Guys could look at the Friday deal -- I told you he's not going to practice, next thing you know he goes out there and flings a couple balls and he's like, hey, I want to take this rep, and he's just a competitor.

I think getting a rep or two, was able to show him, like, okay, maybe I can do this, and really it went all the way down to this morning, and he just woke up and is like, yep, I'm going.

**Q. He comes out late; was there a reaggravation at all or was that just protecting him at this point because he's playing hurt?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yeah, I really felt like he had given us all he could give, and where the game was at that point, I just didn't want to put him in any more situations where he could reinjure the thing. He gave us all he had at that moment, and I thought Chase came in and did a good job at that moment, led us right down on that drive. It was just making a good decision for Matthew.

**Q. A couple weeks ago when you got the interim gig you said you felt like this was a five-game audition for yourself. You're now more than halfway through that five-game audition. Where do you kind of stack up the job that you've been able to do so far?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Well, I don't think that's for me to say really. I think that's going to be for others to say and for Sheila and Steve and Rod and the group that's looking at that. I'm just doing the best I can to prepare these guys each and every week and let the play on the field speak for it.

**Q. Back to the defense, you said it doesn't have anything to do with adjustments. Is it talent? Is it depth? What is it? Because a lot of people just sort of see the defense right now and think it's hopeless, that there's no way to stop an offense like this.**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yeah, I mean, it was a struggle. I'm not going to make any excuses one way or the other. The guys that we have are the guys that we have, and those guys are out there giving us everything they've got. They're fighting hard. The coaches are trying to put him in

the best situations they can to be successful, and today we weren't able to do it. We knew it was going to be a huge challenge. Great running back that they have, hard to stop, physical, but they've also got speed, but we knew that was going to be a challenge, and it turned out that way.

**Q. What do you tell Swift about leaking at the goal line?**

DARRELL BEVELL: He's giving the best effort he can to score, but he needs to finish with the ball. He's going to tell you that. I'm going to say that. However it turns out, he's got to come down with the ball. You know, it's hard in those moments to tell guys what to do and what not to do. Their instincts are taking over for them. There is certain things that we coach, but the guy is trying to make a play.

**Q. From your point of view how much pain is Stafford in now? He took those two shots before he came out and it definitely looked like he was grimacing. How is he feeling?**

DARRELL BEVELL: I mean, I'll let him speak to that so he can answer for himself. But like I said, I think it's a valiant effort for him really to even get out there. It was amazing watching him during the week, and I just want to say that about him, just how tough and gritty he is.

**Q. I was curious about the fake punt. I'm curious about the logic that went into faking the punt as opposed to going for it on 4th and 4 and did you consider challenging the spot after the play?**

DARRELL BEVELL: Yeah, we did consider the challenge. Obviously up in the booth are really my eyes and the guys up stairs, I think we have a good line of communication and do a good job with that. The views that we had really were inclusive or basically said there was -- say it this way: There was three shots that we ended up having. Two of the shots clearly looked short and the other one looked close, and normally those yard -- the line to game plays are hard challenges to win, and from the views that we had it didn't look like we were going to win it, so we decided it was more important to keep the time-out at that moment.

As far as the decision, the punt, we liked some of the fakes that we had. We feel like our PP is a guy that's got some good speed, have an opportunity to have the edge blocked and get him on the edge, so we ended up going with that. We could have definitely left the offense out there, as well, but with the clock and where the time was, it seemed like a good opportunity for that.

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