

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

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Matthew Stafford

Postgame Press Conference

Tennessee Titans - 46, Detroit Lions - 25

Q. Can you start us off with the ribs. People are pretty curious how you were feeling. Just walk us through the process of getting ready for this game this morning and how you were feeling.

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, it was a long process all week. Our trainers did a great job. And yeah, to be honest with you, early on in the week I didn't think I was going to be able to play. And came in, was feeling okay, and then guys started jogging around in practice and I decided to see how it was feeling and it felt okay. And moved around a little bit, threw some balls there, and hopped in a drill or two and felt okay, and then it just continued to get a little bit better yesterday and today. And then just decided to give it a go and felt good enough to go there for a little bit and was able to make it.

Q. At what point did you decide you were going to give it a go? Was it during warmups on the field or was it before then? At what point did you realize you were good to go?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I mentally kind of told myself something bad was going to happen -- was going to have to happen between Friday night and Sunday. So as I continued to feel a little bit better each day, I was going to go. So I just kind of told myself Friday night that I was going to give it a go.

Q. Bevell and Swift both said they were impressed with your ability to play because of pain today. We can see the stat line. I'm curious how much pain you were in and what were you going through to be able to put up the performance that you did?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I don't want to make too much of it. We're all out there battling through stuff. I'm like all the other guys on our team. They have stuff going on. So I felt good enough to go play. I felt like I could be effective and when I was in there I felt like I was doing a decent job,



just got to get us in the end zone a couple more times.

Q. Last question: It looked like you were hurting after the sack that you took on the botched snap there from Joe. How were you feeling after that hit? It looked like you were pretty shaken up.

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, just kind of anytime I was going to the ground, that was when I felt probably the most discomfort. So that was just another time of that. And the guy was trying to get on ball which I understand, and he jumped and just landed on me, and just the pressure of another player's weight on me was some of the worse stuff.

Q. We have seen you play through a lot of stuff throughout your career. How close, was this maybe the closest you came to not playing where you ended up playing throughout a week?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Yeah, I mean, I think it's up there. This one and Kansas City last year probably were the two of the closest ones. I can't remember all the way back, though. A lot of games in there somewhere along the way.

But yeah, I mean, I didn't, I did not feel good enough at all on Wednesday or Thursday or Tuesday or any of those days. So just glad it kind of turned the corner for me and I just want to go out there and try and help us win.

Q. You came out, obviously, toward the end, Bevell said that he felt like you gave basically everything you could. How do you feel like you came out of this game compared to when you went in?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I'll let you know tomorrow. Tough to say right now, to be honest.

Q. Do you feel worse now than you did a week ago?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: No, I think when that thing was fresh, it was probably, it was worse.

Q. I know you said you didn't want to make too much of the pain, but since none of us have gone through what you've gone through, can you just, I mean, is it just a nagging pain, a dull pain, a sharp pain? What exactly was the issue and how much pain are you in or

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have you been in?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I don't know. Hard to explain it. Just it's, anybody that's had rib stuff before knows. It's one of those deals, like, it kind of just affects a lot of stuff you do, moving around, breathing, and stuff like that. I felt good enough to play and that's why I did it.

Q. So why was it important for you to play? Can you just explain that too?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Because I'm the quarterback of the Detroit Lions and it was Sunday and I got a bunch of teammates out there that worked their ass off and they fight to be available and fight to get out there and play and try and help us win and if there's any way I can play, I'm never going to not, you know?

It's just I feel like I owe it to those guys. I owe it to the game. I owe it to this organization, everybody. If I'm good enough to play, healthy enough to play, my ass is going to be out there. So I feel like I was good enough to play and that's why I wanted to be out there.

Q. It looked like watching your defense, I know your defense is trying to do everything it can out there, but there was just no answers today for Derek Henry, for Tannehill for anything they were doing. I don't know, is there frustration on sideline? What sort of goes through your head as you're watching that offense do what it did today?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: No, I think our guys are fighting tooth and nail. We're down some guys and we know that. But we knew it was going to be -- that's a really talented offense. They have got one of the best backs in the league, a quarterback playing at a really high level. And some really talented guys on outside. We knew we were going to have to score points and we just got close too many times and turned it over and that hurt us.

Those guys were trying, Swift was trying to score. Hock's trying to get that first down and we understand that. It's just unfortunate we turned the ball over in those situations, because you give us 10, 14 there, I don't know, the end of that game probably looks a whole lot different.

So we were preparing to have to go and score a bunch of points and just fell a little bit short on offense.

Q. We talked about your own personal mindset and whether you ever feel like you have to do too much in a game. Can that apply to the entire offense when you're trailing from the get and kind of chasing a two-score game? You talk about contending the ball

or trying to go over the pile, were you guys trying to maybe do too much offensively to keep pace in this one?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: I don't think so. I think we stayed in the lanes pretty good. I felt like we operated well all day and kind of moved the ball pretty well. Turnovers are a part of the game, we can't have them, but I know Swift has gone over the top for touchdowns before and I know Hock's reached the ball out to get a first down before. We can't do it, we can't have them end up with the ball after those two plays and no points out of that, we understand that, those guys will be the first guys to tell you that.

But as a whole, as a unit, I feel like we did a good job of just playing our game. I thought Swift did great job bouncing back, he's got that bad fumble there but played the rest of the game, played really well. So there's a lot of football to be played, you can't just shut it down if you're, if you make a mistake and those guys did not, which I was happy for.

Q. And then just one more on the injury front. As we were watching kind of early it felt like a lot of your throws were short, safe, quick. But you started uncorking them down field. Was there anything you felt like you didn't have in your tool set today that you normally have because of the injury?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Maybe just running somebody over. But, no, as far as throwing the ball -- I was just trying to take what they gave me and they were playing a bunch of Tampa 2 today from a bunch of different alignments tricky Tampa stuff and some of the best disguises all year, but I felt like I saw them all and felt good about them, and they got a little bit more aggressive as the game went on and played a little bit more downhill and gave us some chances to throw it over the top and I felt like I could. So as far as throwing the ball, no I didn't feel like there were too many limitations.

Q. Curious, to get you back on the field, if there were people behind the scenes like trainers, like non-stop electric stim or ice or what all went into this?

MATTHEW STAFFORD: Definitely trainers, our guys doing a fantastic job, always have with me, I'm like a project every year I'm sure to try and put back together in some spots. The one, a little bit frustrating thing with ribs is there's not too much you can do. You just try to keep it moving and let it heal on its own and there was definitely trying a bunch of stuff to get it to feel better, but, yeah, I spent a lot of time with those guys this week and I really appreciate them.

