

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Mike Vrabel

Postgame Press Conference

Tennessee 34, Buffalo 31

MIKE VRABEL: You want to go ahead and start.

Q. In the final drive, were you leaning on the defense to try make a play?

MIKE VRABEL: Well, I mean, I thought we could hold them to a field goal. I thought we'd be able to stop them. Unfortunately they made a couple plays. See how the drive was going, then kind of got down underneath there, said we'll play it out. I don't think our guys were panicking. We kind of knew what was going on.

Unfortunately we just gave up a play early in the drive.

Q. The play with Fitzsimmons. Did you see the play?

MIKE VRABEL: You guys probably had a much better view than I did. Give our guys credit, give our staff credit. They tried to walk into one. Our guys adjusted quickly without hesitation. Very, very well-prepared for that. They were able to execute. Obviously the players were the ones that were able to get the push and the penetration.

We got down in there as he walked under center.

Q. What do you think about the resiliency of this team?

MIKE VRABEL: I'm honored. I'm grateful, thankful to be able to coach this football team and say that I'm the head coach of a group of guys that care a lot about each other, that are continuing to build trust, communicate with each other. It's unfortunate when guys go down. But that's why we practice, that's why we have a team, a roster. Guys step up and come in there and play.

It's unfortunate when you lose players. Just a credit to the players that went in there and the coaching staff to have them ready to go.



Q. You're down 6-0, Tannehill had thrown an interception. How much life did that breathe in?

MIKE VRABEL: It was huge. We continue to jump on Derrick's back. He's willing and able to carry us. It's something that you know that you have in your back pocket, front pocket. We pull it out and we use it. It just gave us a big shot of life there.

Our defense, give them credit for holding some field goals there early. There's a lot of mistakes, a lot of things we can do better because we're close. There's glimpses of good football in there.

Q. What can you say about some of the contributions of those guys that stepped up, Chris Jackson?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, went in there and competed against an excellent football team. Everybody's mid-season, number one power ranking team. We're proud of that.

Q. A.J. did a lot to kind of balance Derrick out in the second half. How was his performance?

MIKE VRABEL: Huge. I thought our efficiency throwing the football was much better. Came up with some big passes. I thought the line played well. I thought there was some good pockets, especially on third down.

That's an excellent football team. Sean, him and Brandon have an excellent football team. They've got some really good players. It was a huge challenge. Obviously came down to just a few critical plays.

Q. (No microphone.)

MIKE VRABEL: We probably tackled better. I thought we did affect the quarterback at times. Again, on third-and-long, we let him get out to the left. I mean, Denico didn't do anything other than have a good rush. Allen went deeper and further out to the right, completed a pass. Coverage, there was a mistake in coverage unfortunately.

Our guys understood the game plan. They battled. They kept it in front of them for the most part. They made them earn it. We had turnover opportunities. We tipped the ball, it was intercepted. Tipped another ball that we had a



chance to intercept.

They really understood the game plan and what we were trying to get done.

Q. (No microphone.)

MIKE VRABEL: He cares so much. He's so fun to coach. He wants to do right all the time. He wants to contribute. I saw him factor in on some rushes, affecting the quarterback, being close. I thought it was a good play, had a great rush that forced a throw that somebody tipped. Didn't rough the quarterback.

I saw him in there. I saw a lot of guys in there playing with great effort, doing everything to help us win.

Q. A.J. and Julio started off playing a lot together. Did you feel if you had one of them out there at least...

MIKE VRABEL: We're counting on everybody on this team. Nick Westbrook made some huge catches. Whatever we have to do to make sure we got 11 guys in there that know what to do, that's what we're going to do. That's not a slight to Julio or A.J. That's a reminder that we have to play with 11 and they have to know what to do. They have to be willing to go out there and make some plays for us.

Those guys did make some plays for us. The guys that also played helped us as well.

Q. Talk about Randy engaging the blocker and drawing the holding penalty that voided the touchdown.

MIKE VRABEL: (Indiscernible). Hopefully they would call that one, too. Randy has been good for us. We don't need him to make tackles. We need him to make kicks, so...

Q. You talked about the resiliency of this team. Where does that come from?

MIKE VRABEL: I mean, we try to build a culture based on winning, competitiveness, not being entitled, trying to get everything that you earn, make everybody earn what they get, hold them accountable no matter who it is. I think they appreciate that. We try to be honest with them. We try to be direct. We ask them not to be frontrunners. I think they've embraced that.

Q. On the play-action, middle of the field, something you guys attacked a lot. Coming into this game, was that something you felt was going to be open or...

MIKE VRABEL: When Derrick is running the football, you know what I mean, we're able to run the football, able to continue and extend drives, that opens up the middle of the football field. That's something we have to be very proficient at. We have to continue to use that as a weapon.

Q. (No microphone.)

MIKE VRABEL: We feel like we can beat anybody in the league. Whether you do or not, that's the mentality we take. These games, you put a lot into them. They take a lot out of you, as you guys can see with some of the players that were injured.

We'll regroup and we'll find out where we're at and get ready to take on another excellent opponent next week. That's just what it is.

Q. (Question about injuries.)

MIKE VRABEL: I think there's a lot of emotions involved. Obviously we understand what the risks are playing this sport. Taylor plays very hard, a lot of effort and finish. I hope he'll be okay. I was able to see him at halftime.

Q. What does a win like this do for springing you forward?

MIKE VRABEL: We'll see. Tonight we're as high as we can be. Whatever that spring is, we're going to have to come back down to earth real quick, get ready for the Kansas City Chiefs, what they offer, find a way to prepare to win, get healthy and find out who's available.

We're going to enjoy this, like we do. In 24 hours or less than that, we'll have to be moving on real quickly.

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