

Tennessee Titans Media Conference

Sunday, December 12, 2021
Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Coach Mike Vrabel Postgame Press Conference



Titans 20, Jaguars 0

Q. What did you think about Julio today?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, I thought okay. There's a lot of things that we have to improve on, but I thought that he got through. There were some things that obviously we would have liked to get him the football more, but give their defense credit. I think that they played extremely hard, made it difficult for us.

I thought there were some things there than just through Ryan not having some time, whatever it may be, that allowed us, forced us to not be able to get the ball downfield.

Q. With the interceptions just what you were looking for in response to the turnovers?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, I mean, that's a little better way to do it. Really proud of our defensive coaches, our defensive staff. This team moved the ball on us the last time we played. They have some talent. We understand that they're a talented team offensively.

Shenault has always played well against us, Robinson has, the quarterback is talented. Really proud of the way that they played, obviously, and then coached.

Q. How much pride does the defense take in recording a shutout?

MIKE VRABEL: They do. It's the first one we've had at home since 2000. I think that that was certainly something that they all wanted, and it was some guys that really -- finishing off that game that hadn't maybe had as much chance to play this season. It was good to see those guys out there contributing and being excited.

Q. You guys had a touchdown in your first drive offensively, two sacks defensively. How critical was it coming off the bye to have a start like that?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, you know, teams have had a fast start against them previously. We thought that that would be important. We missed a kick, but, again, that's where we've got to fight through the fringe.

We kind of stalled there a few times in that area, and that'll be something that, again, we'll continue to try to talk about. Take the ball from inside the 10 and get all the way down there and then just kind of stall.

That's unfortunate. You do all the hard work to get there and then we're not able to continue that drive.

A lot of good things today, a lot of things that we'll have to get corrected, but I thought we -- just from my view over there especially defensively, they looked like there was some speed.

Q. What's it like for the guys to get to come out early, they're waving towels --

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, they're excited. They're excited for these guys. They're in meetings with them all day. They're in practice with them, in the locker room with them all day.

For other guys to go in there and get an opportunity to go in there and make plays to help their team, I know that means a lot. They support those guys, and they're just as excited as everybody else is.

Q. Not turning it over on offense obviously is a big deal whether you're scoring off the turnovers or not. How big a part of your success was based off that?

MIKE VRABEL: Well, it always is. There's no better indicator of success in this league than turnover margin. You say what you want. Look it up over 20 years. It's real critical that we realize that that's how we have to play.

We have to be efficient when we throw the football. We have to be able to run it and we have to be able to stop it and affect their quarterback, and we did all three of those things today.

Now, I think we'd all say that the run game needs to be better, but there were some cuts that we missed and then there were some blocks that we missed, but I thought guys



were -- especially we got down there, I think the best run that we had was down there in the red zone, being able to run it in.

Looked like there was a really, really nice surge there, good push off the line of scrimmage. D'Onta put his foot in the ground, got downhill, and that's hard to do, especially down in the red zone.

Q. (Indiscernible) how big can that big for your confidence of the offense?

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, it's huge. It's hard. There's not a lot of space when you throw it, so any time that you can run it in down there in tight quarters is a huge boost, and I think you saw the excitement that obviously we all had.

Nate's finish and somehow they throw his helmet off or it comes off or whatever, and I thought that that was a huge, just huge start to the game for us.

Q. What led to the influx of turnovers on defense? Is it a myriad of causes? Was it a lot of things going wrong?

MIKE VRABEL: You put the guys under pressure and he makes mistakes, and you can only throw it out of bounds so many times. I thought Buster had a fantastic play there in zone coverage being able to squeeze back and trying to hit one in there behind him.

But it's about the ability to be able to affect the quarterback and make them make bad decisions. I thought the empty execution with the pressure was something that we had practiced all week, and I think that that's a great example of something maybe not looking great on Wednesday or even Thursday and then continuing to work on it, coach it, explain it, rep it, and Jayon executed that perfectly.

Q. (Indiscernible).

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, I think first glance, Corey probably. I didn't see guys diving around, jumping off the diving board, falling on the ground. So, yeah. I thought Elijah did, and those guys -- Harold, for example.

You see some of those open-field tackles where that could be a lot of yards where we gave up a lot the last time we played these guys, and so I think those were just some instances that I can remember. Jayon broke on a check-down, Robie came flying in with a really physical hit, Elijah had another one. I'm sure I'm missing a ton, but they were flying around.

Rashaan, felt him in a run game. I know they called the

guys forward progress, but felt him trying to rip the ball, rake the ball out, and it looked like there was a speed today that was fun to watch.

Q. How much did shutting down their run game early kind of make them play into your hands on defense?

MIKE VRABEL: I mean, I think we all anticipated them trying to run it with the success that they've had against us previously. They have good backs, obviously, Robinson, a lot of respect for him, Hyde, Shenault had been back there some trying to run the football.

For us I thought that was the number one key defensively was to stop the run, including the quarterback run, including the RPOs.

Q. Do you feel like (indiscernible) played maybe as well as possible?

MIKE VRABEL: Certainly. Yeah, that was a well-timed call for them. We were in man coverage. Kevin just helping us out, know what I mean? But that's a great break out of the middle of the field and a good legal, physical hit to break that up.

Q. Missing the speed on defense in the pass protection game. Did you see that across the board?

MIKE VRABEL: It did, yeah. I felt like you could just feel it down there. It felt like guys were moving around, flying. Again, it's not perfect, but I felt like it was where it was maybe earlier, and I hope that the film will indicate that, as well.

Q. Talk about the sideline setting the tone, getting the takeaway party started.

MIKE VRABEL: Yeah, Rashaan had been working hard to get back and just hadn't been able to go. But I think you saw him in there in the run game early. I saw him flying through, playing fast. I thought he did a nice job. Playing with their rat -- there was a rat on that play, and they tipped the ball up, he was around it where he was supposed to be and made a play on it.

Terrible return, but it was a nice interception, and then obviously -- they were excited to be able to both have interceptions. It was good.

Q. Buster Skrine's developed quickly to get in --

MIKE VRABEL: He is a professional. I mean, he has been nothing but a consummate professional, coming in here, meeting. Play inside, played outside today. I've really

enjoyed being around him.

He's been a really good addition to our football team. It was a really nice play today. Then we'll just work on him down the field today or whatever happened today.

But his professionalism I would say has been up there with anybody that I can remember that we've brought in midway through.

Q. What did you like about Tannehill's play today?

MIKE VRABEL: We've got to take care of him. We do. He stands in there, and unfortunately he took too many hits, but he has a command of our offense and really comes up with some great plays.

We've got to help him out in protection. I thought the screen would have been -- the screen was a great pass to get it over the blitz, but we weren't able to hang on to it. He just leads our football team, and he is incredibly tough, and when we give him time and a clean pocket, we can complete some plays.

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