

# Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Seattle, Washington, USA

## Geno Smith

### Weekday Press Conference



GENO SMITH: Good afternoon.

#### Q. How are you feeling, Geno?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I'm getting better every day. Looking forward to Sunday.

#### Q. When you got your leg twisted did you fear something worse?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, yeah, was definitely the like one of those scary falls. Just didn't know what was going on. Definitely didn't feel stable enough to get back out there.

#### Q. Mike said you were trying at some point to get back in. What are those conversations like where obviously you want to be back out there but trying to take care of yourself?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, that's toughest thing, is trying to fight the competitiveness. Once before I tore my ACL and was trying to go back in that game. I'm always going to be precautionary just because I feel like I tolerate pain well.

If I can do anything to get back out there I will. Just felt like it was decision made that was best to not risk it anymore.

#### Q. There was a moment there where it looked like you grabbed your helmet and were ready to go back on the field. Did you feel like you were about to?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I was trying to. I was trying my best to get out there. I had to make a decision in this moment.

#### Q. Do you expect to play Sunday?

GENO SMITH: Yes, I do.

#### Q. Is it accurate to say you'll be less than 100%, not fully recovered?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, a lot of guys are less than 100%.

I've been that way pretty much the majority of the season. That's just the way the NFL goes.

But no excuses. Got to go out there and perform.

#### Q. You popped back up there initially. Did you know it was as big of a thing or did it take a couple seconds to kind of ring through to you?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, yeah, once I put pressure on it and got up and stuff I just felt it there.

#### Q. What did you think of how the offense was performing before you got hurt?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I thought we were moving the ball. Seems like all year, right, 20 to 20, we move the ball. We're doing a lot of good things in the play-action game. We ran the ball pretty well. Got a couple big runs when I was in there.

Just felt like we didn't finish again in the red zone. Once we get past the 50 yard line we got to execute a little bit better there. Just feel like we didn't finish when we had our opportunities early on.

#### Q. How do you feel about that? That part of the game is where you guys are not consistent, particularly at this time of year.

GENO SMITH: Yeah, it's just something to work on, man, something we got to strive to perfect. We got to get better at it. We got to execute better. It always goes back to that. I always say this: The coaches can only do so much for us. We got to go out there and play the game.

Yeah, something I'm working hard on, studying, and doing everything I can to make sure we can get better in that area. Something that I feel like we definitely need in order to go where we want to go.

#### Q. When you look back on the interception, what stood out to you about that play and maybe what you saw on the field at that moment?

GENO SMITH: Yeah, the corner, man coverage, one double. They were doubling DK, so basically cover zero for everyone else on the field. Felt like Noah won on his



route; gave him a ball that was catchable. The corner wheeled back. He was covering Lock. Wheeled back and made a heck of a play.

Always going to say that I got the ball, I got the decisions to make. Whenever it's an interception, it's going to be created as a negative decision.

If that guy didn't make the play and Noah catches a touchdown it's a positive. Again, just focused on the process and making sure I'm doing the right things and reading the right keys, and most importantly protecting the football.

**Q. Minnesota's defense has been doing a lot of things well this season. What jumps out?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I mean, first of all, up front, man, just got a lot of stout guys up front, a lot of veteran guys in their secondary. They do a lot as far as personnel, different fronts. They like to show you a lot of different blitz looks and try to confuse the quarterback in that way.

I think they have a really good scheme, really good plan. Coach Flores has done a really good job with those guys. It's something we been -- you know, kind of similar to Arizona where it's going to be like blitz bluff bandit. It's a period we have in practice. Is it cover zero? Are they going back to cover two? Are they spinning it to cover three?

So a lot to decipher. Try to put pressure on the quarterback in that way; they've done a great job.

**Q. Did things change at all when our Olu got hurt and you had to go with Jalen. How do you feel things went?**

GENO SMITH: I thought Jalen did an outstanding job. You know, all along we've always spoken highly of him and he's been so professional. He's a young guy, but he's got such a wise demeanor to him.

I thought he stepped in, he was calm. I thought that one touchdown that Charbonnet had, you saw him out there leading that. He knew the assignment. He was getting the guys lined up and was communicating well. I was really happy for him to get out there and show what he's got.

**Q. What challenge has three different centers presented you this year?**

GENO SMITH: It's football, man. You got guys in and out the lineup. We would like to have a lot more stability there, but that's the way the game goes. Guys are fighting their

butts off and at times get injured; other guys got to step up.

So the challenge is to go out there and execute no matter who is out there. That's something that I take pride in, so never be an excuse or anything like that from me.

**Q. How was your visit with the Children's Hospital earlier this week?**

GENO SMITH: That was awesome. You know, right after the injury I was able to go out there and kind of see the kids for about an hour. I wanted to be there for two hours but obviously had to get back to recovery.

I felt like it was healing me just being around all those smiling faces and being able to kind of spread some Christmas cheer, holiday cheer.

Man, it's just one of those things where as an athlete it just warms your heart. The more you can go out there and do those things and be a part of the community, uplift people, you know, it's what it's all about.

**Q. Was the first time you went to Seattle Children's with Russell Wilson?**

GENO SMITH: No, it wasn't.

**Q. In Seattle?**

GENO SMITH: No.

**Q. What do you get out of that personally?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I mean, like I said, just being able to, number one, uplift those in need. You know, a lot of kids have to spend their holidays in the hospital. You can just think about how trying that is for them and their families.

There is one specific kid who couldn't leave his room and I was able to deliver some gifts to him. Big Seahawks fan. Big DK Metcalf fan. It's one of those things the more I can get out and just lend a helping hand, try to put some smiles on some faces, you know, be a part of the community, this community that supports us so well and that we represent, just means the world. Really means the world.

I know my mom is happy. Grandma is happy that I'm able to do that.

**Q. What's the most memorable reaction you've got?**

GENO SMITH: You know, just the kids seeing Santa. You know, couple kids were saying, you know, because a lot of people go down to the mall and take pictures with Santa.



The kids are like, no, we can stay here. Santa is coming to see us.

Just for the kids to be able to tell Santa what they want for Christmas, for me to be a part of that and just help them, try to uplift their spirits, that's what means the most to me.

**Q. Do you as a team talk about that? There is a lot of players that are doing that. (Regarding Echo Glen.) Was that something you manifest and discussed?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think all the guys. You talk about Chenna being the Walter Payton Man of the Year nominee and just the stuff he's done in the community.

But we all want it strive for that. That's something I want to be nominated for. We all want to be a part of the community and we want to be supportive because they're so supportive of us.

We all in the locker room, on the team, want to be a big part of the community. They mean so much to us and we want to continue to bring that together.

**Q. Much has been made throughout the season about the number of opposing fans at Lumen Field. You weighed in a little bit after the Buffalo game. TK weighed in yesterday. Now that you've just got one home game left, what have you thought about that situation with what would you like to see different?**

GENO SMITH: You know, one thing about it, like when I was on other teams, you know, before I got to the league, there was always, always the aura of the 12th Man. Playing in Seattle has always been like a tough task for anybody. I think it still is.

As far as like opposing fans and ticket sales, you can't really control that. That's not in our control. What we can do is go out there and be the best team at home, you know. Give our fans something to cheer about. Give them something to want to pack the stadium and be a part of it.

Like I said, they been that since I've been here, before I got here, and I think that will be long after I'm gone. You know, this fan base is one of the best. Like I said, I mean, the more we win the atmosphere gets crazier and crazier. That's something we're building and working towards.

**Q. Mike on Monday said you were back in just doing your regular routine and everything, workouts.**

GENO SMITH: Yes, sir.

**Q. So from the start of the week you kind of had it in**

**your mind you would be able to overcome this?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah. Honestly, I really wanted to get back out there on Sunday, but, you know, these things happen, man. Everybody is going to fight through something.

I want to be the guy who's known for pushing through. I want to finish the season on the right note. I want to make sure we get every opportunity we can to close it out the right way.

**Q. What do you think of the play itself that you got hurt on?**

GENO SMITH: I mean, there is a lot to be thought of. Honestly, they didn't call a flag so I'm not complaining. It is what it is.

**Q. Considering where you guys are in the playoff picture and how many games left, is there a sense of urgency this week to win against the Vikings, particularly since it's your last home game as well?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, definitely a sense of urgency. That's every week. Every week. We got to take that approach every single week. We've been talking about being in playoff mode and all those things.

Yeah, last home game. Big game against a really good team. We look forward to it. You know, our last home game of the season possibly so we'll see how it goes.

Yeah, want to make sure we go out there and put on a good show for our fans.

**Q. As a leader on this team, how much do you take it upon yourself to get back on the field after injuries, prepare after losses, those kinds of things? How much of that do you take upon yourself?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think that's a big part of the NFL. You know, it's the ups and downs of it. It's the wins, losses, the injuries, the bruises, nicks. Those are the things that make this game so special is the adversity you face and you got to push through.

I think I'm a living example of some of that and I just want to continue to be the same way. You know, if I can go out there and help my guys in any way, shape, or form, that's something I'm going to do.

I'm always going to try and push through injury. I've always been that way. Just want to go out there. I love playing the game. You know, just want to make sure that I'm



giving myself every opportunity to be successful but also my teammates.

And that's a big part of it. Like you said, just pushing through things and being available.

**Q. As a quarterback who has had the journey you've had, do you pay attention to whether quarterbacks like Darnold, a guy who maybe didn't succeed early on and had to be a backup and now he's thriving? Do you pay attention and root for those guys?**

GENO SMITH: Of course. Of course. Big fan of Sam's. I'm definitely always rooting for him; except for Sunday obviously. He's done a phenomenal job this season. He's in a great system. He's on a great team and he's lead Thanksgiving team. He's done a phenomenal job.

We share the one thing in common that we both were drafted by the Jets. So that's always going to be something that gets talked about. I followed his career since he was at USC. Great prospect coming out. Battled through some stuff. Getting an opportunity similar to what I went through, it's good to see guys get those opportunities.

I think he's done well with it.

**Q. You talked a lot to the referee after hits. You got hit quite a bit throwing against the Packers. Is there a hierarchy in the league of quarterbacks that get those calls and quarterbacks that don't?**

GENO SMITH: That's a question for the refs, a question for the league. But, I mean, you can look at cases where the same thing happens and some guy gets the call; some guy doesn't.

They're humans. Leave it at that.

But, yeah, I mean, it's like the Jordan thing. Jordan used to get all the calls sometimes and other guys didn't. Maybe I'm not there yet. Got to keep working.

**Q. Going back to Mike's question about the red zone struggles, you've had a few picks down there this year. When you think back to those, is there anything you take away from those moments when you kind of analyze yourself?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah. Again, process over results. You know, I think as long as you stick to the process, the results will come. Over the course of my time here I've been exceptionally well in the red zone; this year, not so much.

So yeah, got to fix some things. Got to figure out some things. We're doing that internally. I'm doing that myself. So we're looking to improve on those, the red zone. You never want to have turnover and I feel like that's happened to us far too many times.

I'm the main culprit so I got to fix that and I look forward to doing so.

**Q. Does DK get doubled a lot more down there?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, yeah, he gets doubled all game. You know, still that's not an excuse. We still got to find ways to get him the ball. Even if they're trying to find ways to double him.

Just about us figuring it out and working together and that's something we're doing. Yeah, getting our guys touches and putting them in the best position to make plays.

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