

# Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Seattle, Washington, USA

## Geno Smith

### Weekday Press Conference



GENO SMITH: Good afternoon.

#### **Q. What are the challenges of a short week and travel?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, you know, quick turnaround. Obviously you got to put the last game behind you and then get right onto your next opponent. Obviously guys got to get their bodies right, you know, study, make sure they know the game plan.

So those are some of the challenges, but we have done this before, and today walk-throughs look great; guys are dialed in I think.

#### **Q. What's the challenge, the biggest challenge that that Bears defense presents?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think just overall, man, just a very talented group. You know, I think maybe one of the highest paid defenses in the league. They got first rounders all across the board; Pro Bowlers everywhere. Their front is just filled with so many great guys. We know DT is there. We know about him.

And just the way they're playing, man. They're playing hard. I know their record doesn't always show the effort you see on film and tape, but those guys are playing hard and they're playing inspired. That's something we got to be ready for.

#### **Q. When you've got question marks at running back this week, what does that do as you think through the game plan for Thursday?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, just how we've done all season. Just having guys step up. I think Kenny Mac is going to get some opportunities and maybe George gets in there and gets some more. Burns.

Just getting the guys opportunities to showcase what they can do. We have a ton of talent. We have a ton of depth. Every single one of those guys are capable.

We're just working through the game plan right now and making sure guys are dialed in. Once it's time to get out there on Thursday night, guys got to show up.

#### **Q. You mentioned the walk-through. What is kind of the psyche of the team right now given the last two weeks?**

GENO SMITH: On to the next thing like we've always been. Business as usual. Got a lot of pros in that locker room and guys are going to go about it the right way. Guys are focused and dialed in and preparing for a short week to go on the road and travel on Christmas. You know, going out there and try to get a win.

#### **Q. How do you assess how you played this season?**

GENO SMITH: None of that really matters right now. Just focused on the next game.

#### **Q. How about the offense?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think that doesn't matter either. What's important is that we get ready for this next opponent. We got a tough game coming up Thursday night.

#### **Q. Do you remember watching sports during the holidays growing up, and do you have any memories of what it means to be out there in front of the country?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, for sure. Just memories of sitting on my grandmother's lap. She was the biggest football fan in my family and really stoked my passion for the game. Just being around family, you know, opening presents and gifts and just being around my friends and enjoying the holiday with family and watching good football has always been a tradition; definitely an American tradition.

But definitely a tradition in my family as well.

#### **Q. You mentioned Kenny. What have you seen out of him? Played a little bit more the last couple weeks.**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think he's been really, really dynamic when he touches the ball. I can think of just a few



explosive runs he's had. Just the way he's finishing the runs always, always falling forward. You know, like I said, he's a really talented guy. He's in a room crowded with talented running backs and, whenever he's got his chance showcase what he can do he's done great. I expect the same things from him.

**Q. What can you say about the way he's taken advantage of the opportunity that was given to him? He wasn't seeing some time and he stayed the course. Now he's taken advantage of the opportunity.**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, what people don't see is all the hard work Kenny has put in and the work he does behind the scenes. KP does a great job those guys and preparing them, but he does a lot of work on his own as far as the weight room, classroom, asking the right questions.

And so when he's got the ball in his hands he's a dynamic runner; he showcases that. Every time he's touched it it's been a positive game for us for the most part.

I think just all the things he's doing, little things he's doing is showing up in his game, and I think that's the main thing. He's being a true pro. He's coming to work every day trying to get better. You know, it's showing up on the field.

**Q. What's AJ Barner brought to your offense?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, AJ, man, he showed me a lot. I didn't get a chance to really watch him in college. Just getting to know him here early on, he was asking a lot of questions about routes and stuff. I was like, hey, hold on. Let's see what you can do first.

The minute he got out there he's been a playmaker. Every time he touches the ball it's usually a big play or a positive play; scoring a lot of touchdowns. That catch that he made in the end zone, you know, not an easy catch. For him to come down with that and give us the lead, I thought he's just been really outstanding in his preparation, and that also has shown up on game day as well.

**Q. Bears have given up some yardage to tight ends. Noah Fant had a better game. Start to feel him coming on a little bit?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, we want to make sure that Noah gets involved and that we can be dynamic in that way. I think he's such a special talent, the way he can run. One of the faster tight ends, great pass catching tight end out there.

And so when we can get him involved, spread the ball around, allow him to win his matchups against those

linebackers and safeties inside, just gives us that extra umph that we need to go out there and make it happen on offense.

And so we got our to get all our guys involved. Noah is a big part of that. We got to continue to find ways to get him touches.

**Q. You mentioned got a lot of guys up front. How are they using Darrell Taylor?**

GENO SMITH: You can see him, especially on third down. I think pass rush is kind of his specialty. You know, he's so quick off the edge. Again, he's a guy we've faced, training camp, you know, for the time he was here, and so we know exactly what he brings to the table. They're moving him around. He could be on the left side; could be on the right side. They got a bunch of different packages for him.

So just knowing where he is as well as their other guys, making sure we got a plan for those guys is going to be a big, big emphasis in this game.

**Q. You and Michael Penix Jr got a little connected while he was at University of Washington. Did you guys talk after his first start?**

GENO SMITH: Not at all. You know, I know he's doing his thing and I got to worry about mine.

**Q. What do you think is the cause of some of the pre-snap penalties you guys have had this year?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think just comes down to focus and execution. We have got a number of guys who have been in there. I can't like say exactly what is the reason for a guy -- I think the person particularly can speak on that.

Overall, execution, focus, being dialed in on the snap count, or sometimes a guy might flinch here and there on the defensive line and causes a guy to move.

Overall I think we got to do a better job at executing and focusing, not putting ourselves behind the chains. I think that will help us out a bunch.

**Q. What impact do you think that has had on your ability to score on offense?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think any time you're playing backed up in the NFL it's going to be tough. If you're starting out first and 15, first and 20, you know, those are going to be not advantage scenarios for us.

So we talk about not shooting ourselves in the foot. We talk about not having self-inflicted wounds. That's the key contributor.

So we got to do a better job at that. We know that. How do you correct that? You just got it lock in and focus more. Preaching to the guys about that and making sure I'm on point as well so that type of stuff doesn't happen.

**Q. Jaxon over 1000 yards last week. Got a shot to make the franchise single season record for catches. What have you seen in year two, the last few months?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, he's always been a special talent, special player from his days back at O State, back in Texas.

What I've seen from him is just the commitment to his own personal growth. It's something that is showing up every single day. He's working hard every single day; taking practice reps extremely serious.

You know, he's working his game, trying to find now ways to get better. You know, again, he's one of the more talented players in this league, one of the more talented receivers in this league.

But just his work ethic, his want-to, and the way he's approaching the game every single day is helping out.

**Q. The throw over the middle on the first touchdown drive, is that a sign of trust and the chemistry guys have to pull the trigger on that one?**

GENO SMITH: For sure. Again, I trust all those guys and believe in all those guys. I'm going to throw passes that maybe shouldn't get thrown at times because I believe those guys will get to the spot and make the catch.

So I'm going to keep believing in my guys and keep trusting in our process. We got great receivers, and Jaxon is a big part of that. The more I can lean on those guys the better off we'll be.

**Q. When you characterize him as one of the best receivers in the league, what measures are you using to quantify that? We can look at the numbers of the touchdowns, but there has to be something else that you see as a separator for him.**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I think the main thing is getting open and catching the football. That's his job: Get open, catch the ball. He does that very well.

Usually the best guys do that well.

**Q. How have you seen Tyler handle a role this year where he's not getting the ball as often?**

GENO SMITH: I think Tyler has been the same guy every single day. He's the consummate professional. Again, he's such a great human being. He's never once complained for the football.

He's going out there and doing his job to the best of his ability, giving us maximum effort every single play. I think that speaks volumes to his character.

Like I tell him all the time, you're Tyler Lockett. No matter what happens as statistics go, you'll always be Tyler Lockett. Nothing is going to change that.

Keep working and the ball will find him. I think sometimes when get caught up in the fantasy stuff and the stats and it takes away from the little things he's done that helped this team.

Every week he's going out there and giving us a chance to win, and that's what matters most.

**Q. What does he bring to the locker room and off the field?**

GENO SMITH: Just, I mean, just tremendous character; a selflessness that goes beyond measure; being a friend. You know, real estate agent helping guys get into houses and stuff like that. Just doing it all.

Tyler is such a wonderful human being. All the things he's done since I've been here speaks volumes to his upbringing, to his character, and to the type of man he is.

**Q. You mentioned some of the little things that help you guys win. What are some of those things that maybe wouldn't see with the stats?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah, I mean, just Tyler draws up plays, and not for himself. He's drawing up plays for other guys. He's out there blocking. He's blocking at the point of attack, blocking linebackers, going out there and he's putting his body on the line. He's the most clutch receiver I've ever played with. Every single time there is a big play to be made, he's right there to make it.

And so all the things that he's done, man, just being himself, just being Tyler. It brings everything to this offense.

**Q. What impact, if any, did Kerry Joseph have on your time here?**

GENO SMITH: Tremendous impact. Really, really happy for Kerry to get his opportunity as a quarterback coach. You know, every single day from just the small talks we had about just life to, you know, him coming up with red zone plays that help me throw touchdowns, he did a lot for me. I still talk to him often. Always rooting for him.

**Q. Is that one of the things he was big on was red zone?**

GENO SMITH: Yeah. He was big on our red zone. He designed a lot of our red zone stuff and did a great job.

**Q. Minnesota obviously brought a lot of pressure and has been successful all year. How do you feel like the offensive line performed against that crew?**

GENO SMITH: I thought they performed really well honestly. Gave us a bunch of looks, a ton of looks up front. Olu's communication was great throughout the entire game. I thought we were good at picking up their blitzes in a lot of their sim pressures where we had to slide or sort here, I thought we did a good job picking some of those up.

They gave me time to get the ball off. I think that matters the most. So we're going to continue to see stuff like that just based on the type of guys we got and how defenses want to play us, but as long as we continue to pick them up and then obviously being in attack mode, it'll help us out.

**Q. Is the knee thing behind you at this point?**

GENO SMITH: No, it's not. I mean, it's going to be there for a while. But got to keep pushing.

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