

# Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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**Kevin O'Connell**

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Seahawks 26, Vikings 0

KEVIN O'CONNELL: A couple injury updates here in a second. But just in no way shape or form can we play offensive football like that and try to win at a place like this. I did think our defense played as well as they could considering the amount of lift that they had to do today. Forced the seven negatives and a takeaway.

Thought we had some moments in the kicking game field position-wise. We just did not have the type of an offensive performance that is ever going to be acceptable with the Minnesota Vikings organization. That obviously starts with me. It's not about any one particular player or position. It's a collective group thing right now where we are just not good enough to overcome some of the things that we're doing, overcoming some injuries up front and overcoming some of the things that are happening.

We've got to find a way to put a game plan together as simple as it needs to be or as tight as it needs to be from a call count standpoint just to get a little bit better execution and get some of the things that winning football looks like and try to play our part offensively with the other two phases on our team.

Ryan Kelly had a hip flexor. He did not return to the game when he came out. Aaron Jones aggravated his shoulder a little bit. He's going to be evaluated. Josh Metellus and Jonathan Greenard didn't finish the last drive, but no injury. Those guys have been dealing with some things. Was not injury related. Jordan Mason, you saw him go down there later in the game. He was evaluated and returned.

Really Kelly and Jones could be the names that we'll be evaluating here.

**Q. As best as you can see today as least, why was the offense so poor?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: I think early on in the game we had our struggles running the football to try to stay efficient.

We had some screens and some kind of plays that kept us in manageable D and Ds.

Some plays where I thought early Max was honestly maybe processing too quickly. There were some moments there where he was getting back to some things where we had some explosive chances for either Jordan on the backside catch and run, even on some of the third downs where he just a little sped up like a normal young player can be in his first start.

We just never could really make that one or two or three in a row kind of play. When we did move it, we weren't able to sustain it long enough to get in the end zone. Obviously the red zone play on fourth down went totally flips on getting the turnover we've been so desperately waiting for. Our defense does that. That sequence ends with them getting seven points, is losing football.

**Q. Fourth down, what were you trying to get done there?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: Thought we might have had a little bit better spot on the third down play where they caught the ball. Ends up being one plus, whatever it ended up being.

We struggled to run it at the point of attack and things like that. Wanted to try to see if we could get Max out on the perimeter kind of a run-pass option. They ended up having a looping player in his face right away.

Fourth down he's trying to make a play. Just ends up being obviously catastrophically bad. One of the reasons why you go for that in that moment is even if you don't get it, the field position is going to be on your side with a defense playing really well.

Got to call a better play there. Got to decide the best option for us to try to limit that ever being the outcome in that scenario, but also give us a chance to score.

We knew we'd have to score some points to win the game and to try to capture the momentum off that turnover which I thought was critical, critical sequence to try have a chance to win it.

**Q. With the third-and-short, fourth-and-short type of plays, where you turn it over as much as you do...**

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KEVIN O'CONNELL: We have run it. That's been a well-documented thing. I just have to call a better play there. It's all going to be results based. That's about as bad of a result as you can have on that sequence.

Early on in the game it was a struggle. I think we were under 10 yards close to our first 10 or so attempts. Just trying to find that yard with a physical front, it felt like a chance to maybe have an opportunity to try to get the quarterback out on the edge, not drop-back pass or anything in that situation, or see if we can have multiple options besides just seeing if we can hammer it up in there.

Felt like it was the best option for us at the time, but obviously it was not a good option.

**Q. The second half of last week, does it feel like the offense is pressing right now?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: It just feels like between some of these throws, throw and catches, that we're just not getting, whether it's location, timing, rhythm. There's no question we're pressing. Guys want to make those plays, guys want to make the throws.

We've got to do a better job early on in games where it's really there's no excuse to be made. Third and manageable when we're moving it, third-and-three or four, whatever it was, going to have a chance for Oliver on a play early on in the year we had success with, scored on a very similar D and D, a little tighter against Cincinnati. Have the same coverage, same look, same everything. We give up an immediate sack there. For a young quarterback, it can have an impact and maybe speed you up the next few sequences of drives. It all is connected.

But yeah, I know how hard our guys have prepared, are trying. We just can't quite seem to catch the rhythm of positive plays with all 11 guys executing right now. That's guys maybe trying to do too much.

Maybe we've got to try to limit what we're asking of the group as a whole, especially with some different guys stepping into the lineup, just to try to get some more consistency at the very least to try to give ourselves a better chance.

**Q. How do you think the hostile environment has affected things?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: Pre-snap he made a couple. I can think back to there were a couple early down, they were sending some pressures, which you kind of come in here knowing between their defensive scheme that Mike has,

which he does a great job with it. Also a young quarterback that they're going to try to activate some of those things.

He got the play, made the adjustment to the play, slid right into the pressure. Just gets sped up a little bit. Jordan is on a backside read, which we knew would probably be the primary on that play. He gets sped up, throws it a hair early. Going to the right place, doing all the right things. Could fall in alignment with a young guy that we wanted to allow him to function in our offense 'cause he showed the ability to.

Yeah, it's a tough ask obviously. I thought from a procedural standpoint, running the huddle, making some of the calls that he did, we tried to take as much of that off his plate as possible. I thought he was functioning at a high level.

Really, like I said, we'll go back and watch it and spend the time with him going through it on a deep dive. If anything, it was him playing quickly and processing. He was getting back to his check downs. Getting to Aaron Jones on the backside of some progressions early on, just putting it in play, kind of checking a lot of boxes where hopefully you can get him settled in, then he starts finding that rhythm and timing to be in alignment with the concept called when eligibles might be open.

**Q. Easier to deal with that than the opposite end of that?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: That's what I told him after the game, is that is great experience for him. It won't get harder than going to Seattle for your first start against that defense. He's such a competitor and wants to obviously come out here and lead this team to a win.

But I told him that's great experience. Unbelievable learning op. Knowing what it felt like, how you were seeing it, maybe even able as you get maybe more experience, which Max is going to play a long time in this league, the game will slow down a little bit, even though he is what we believe to be a fast processor.

**Q. Is it just coaching to get guys to slow down when they're younger or is it a matter of reps?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: I think it's reps. You look back on a couple of those plays, they seem very much long ago when you see the score kind of get to where it is and we don't end up scoring on the day. You forget about those plays early on in the first or second quarter where all those plays matter for a young quarterback. Very much like seeing the ball go through the net. When you're going to the right guy,

maybe it's a click early, you get moved off the spot with an NFL kind of pocket, all those things can have an effect, just like the positive effect of those throws being thrown and caught, maybe a catch and run, we get our play-makers involved.

I thought he made some nice plays, too. T.J. up the seam. Making some check down throws on some play-actions where we were trying to be a little bit more explosive today.

We were moving the ball at times without a very consistent run game. We got it going a little bit later on in the game. It was a tough ask.

Probably needed just a little bit more all 11 guys doing their job and playing with a little more physicality up front early to try to set the tone for how we wanted to play. I thought took it us a little bit too long to get those early down plays to stay efficient.

I think we had a few too many third and 10 pluses, whether it's a penalty or a negative run, those are hard, tough for us right now. We're not going to just dive into the world of continuing to just throw the ball over and over again. We're going to try to see if we can manage it with some ball out-plays, screen game, trying to stack some runs to get back to manageable if we can.

**Q. T.J. still on concussion protocol?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: He is as of right now. We'll see how he does tomorrow. Our goal is to he clears and can have a good week of practice and have an opportunity to play next week.

**Q. Adam Thielen, is that a healthy scratch?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: Yeah, I just file it under a coach's decision, looking at where we are at at some other positions around our roster. You're just trying to do what you think is best to win and make sure you've got some depth at some other spots where guys were dealing with some things. That receiver position is one that has stayed remarkably healthy this year.

**Q. How close was Christian Darrisaw to be able to go today?**

KEVIN O'CONNELL: I think it was close. Just a combination of the ankle, some discomfort there, then just kind of we're still in a world where his knee is something that he's working through every week.

I think he's obviously such an important impactful player to our offense that we're always going to try to get him out

there. CD wants to get out there. He just couldn't quite get there to play. Having Donovan out, as well, just starts dipping into some things. Ryan Kelly eventually going out.

We had some guys step in there. We'll take a look at it this week and hopefully get him back. Hopefully get the best five we can to go back home and try to win a game this week.

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