

Seattle Seahawks Media Conference

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Seattle, Washington, USA

Sam Darnold

Postgame Press Conference

Seahawks - 41, 49ers - 6

SAM DARNOLD: Obviously a good team win, really good team win from the first snap. The kickoff, that guy taking it to the house. That was special. To hear that stadium, too, rocking the way it was tonight, unbelievable, man. The 12s came out. It was fun.

Our defense doing their thing. And as an offense, too, the ball control, I feel like that was huge for us all game and finishing in the red zone. We harped on that these last couple of weeks of working. And I feel like we just controlled the football and finished in the red zone, and that was the story tonight.

Q. What was your pain level tonight?

SAM DARNOLD: I felt great.

Q. Could you just take us through what your pregame routine was? It seemed like it changed.

SAM DARNOLD: Yeah, so obviously I didn't go out for the non-padded warm-up. I think that kind of stirred some questions, which was funny. No, I got to throw in here, and did the same thing, did my routine in here.

But just wanted to throw and make sure that I was -- once I put the pads on and got that first, like, that padded warm-up, I wanted to be rolling. I didn't want to waste anytime getting warm on the field and coming in, having 40 minutes to get warm again and then go back out.

I just wanted to get warm once and then go back out there in the pads. So that was kind of -- that was why I did it that way.

Q. When you say you threw in here, where is in here?

SAM DARNOLD: In the locker room. In the locker room. We have a ton of space. I was just throwing back and forth, got warm, and was able to go out there, like I said, in



pads and throw it.

Q. What does winning your first playoff game mean to you? I know it's only been two, but you've been in the league for years.

SAM DARNOLD: It's huge. I don't take it for granted whatsoever. It's just a special group. I think that's the biggest thing, and that's why it means so much. Just the way those guys are in the locker room, ever since I got here.

They were tight before I got here, obviously, but just the way that they took me in as one of their own. And that's what's so special about this league in general. You make so many great relationships throughout this whole process.

And that locker room and these coaches, you know, just the way that we play together. That's the reason why I play this game, and they've made it really easy for me to come in here ever since I did in April to be able to help lead this team and drive the ball down the field, score touchdowns, all those things.

Q. Did you feel you could do everything you normally do? Were you limited at all with the injury?

SAM DARNOLD: No, I felt really good. Felt really good.

Q. You bounced around for a long time now. What would it mean for this to be home? You obviously sunk your teeth into this place now.

SAM DARNOLD: I think, for me, I'm just taking it one game at a time. It's what I've always done my entire career. I'm not going to look past that.

Q. Was there any hesitation on some of throws early, or was it, like, I can let it rip no matter what?

SAM DARNOLD: No, I was going to let it rip no matter what. That was never a question in my mind. Because if I wasn't able to give it 100 percent then I think I would be doing this team a disservice.

So I was going to let it rip, and if my body said, no, you're not going to do that, then I would have told my coaches and we would have gone from there.



Q. What's it like watching this defense? No touchdowns in eight quarters now, just watching that defense operate.

SAM DARNOLD: No, our defense has been amazing throughout the entire year. They've had our back. You know we've had their back in certain situations. Our special teams, I can't say enough great things about them.

But yeah, it's really fun to play with a defense like that that has your back throughout the entire season, and especially when you get big games like this one.

Q. I know you said you're going to let it rip no matter what, but when you took that first big hit near the sideline, did you feel anything?

SAM DARNOLD: No, like I said, I felt good, and if anything was going to -- if I did get hurt, I feel like you all would have probably known about it. So, no, I felt really good the entire game. And any hits I did take I didn't feel it on that side.

Q. Cooper led you guys, led receiving this game. This hasn't always been his role this season. What has he meant to you and this offense, even in games he's not (indiscernible)?

SAM DARNOLD: Coops been great. He's obviously such a great leader for us. But the way he's stepped up -- I don't think people realize what he does in the run game as a blocker. He's one of the best if not the best run-blocking receiver that I've ever seen, or in the NFL throughout his entire career.

And with the accolades and everything that he's done in NFL, to be unselfish like that in the run game, it's something special.

But, yeah, he's obviously been showing up, you know throughout practice and training camp, all those things as a receiver and catching the rock. And so for him to do that in a game and in games, especially in big-time games, that's huge for us.

Q. (Indiscernible) surprised you threw the pass game to him, because of how covered he was? Why did you decide to throw to him?

SAM DARNOLD: With the touchdown?

Q. Yeah.

SAM DARNOLD: I felt the safety's demeanor, I feel he

wasn't running full speed and Jax was. And I knew Jax was going to outrun him to the corner of the end zone.

Q. What does it mean to you to have the opportunity to play for an NFC Championship?

SAM DARNOLD: Yeah, it's big for us to, especially to play here in an NFC Championship at Lumen with the 12s behind us. It doesn't get any better than that.

Q. When you guys got the lead and you were able to run with such physical brutality, what does it feel like out there? Do you feel like the defense wearing down? And how much confidence did you generate from it?

SAM DARNOLD: No, it's just I think for us as an offense, we understand what we're capable of. We've showed glimpses of it throughout the season. And I think these last few games we've proven, our offensive line, our tight ends have proven what we can do running the football. We're just going to continue to watch the tape, get better and see where we can go from here.

Q. Is this something you feel you're going to have to continue to manage for the rest of the playoffs?

SAM DARNOLD: Yes, absolutely.

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