

BRONCOS HEAD COACH VIC FANGIO

POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE
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Denver Broncos 18, New England Patriots 12

Q. On injuries, updates on Risner and Spencer?

VF: I don't. They just kind of told me in the locker room that it's a shoulder, clavicle area with Spencer. I don't have an update on Risner yet.

Q. Your defense today, sacks and takeaways, how impressed were you with their effort today?

VF: Thoroughly impressed from start to finish. That's a game that the way that turned out in that fourth quarter, it did get away from us but could have gotten away and been fatal.

I think it speaks to the type of players we have, the type of team, the conviction they have. Those guys went out there and fought, fought, fought. They did a great job.

That's a good offense we played. They were averaging 30 points a game with Cam Newton as the quarterback.

Q. Is there something of the notion that a team has to learn how to win? If so, what do the last two games say about where your team is going?

VF: Yeah, I don't think there's any doubt you have to learn how to win. But that's a three-phase operation that has to do with that. We've got to do better in the fourth quarter there, close that out.

But, hey, sometimes it's going to happen that way. Sometimes the offense is going to struggle and defense is going to have to continue to go back out there and finish the game. Sometimes you're going to get in the shootout. It gets to where the team that has the ball last has the chance to win the game. That might have to be us someday.

Hopefully we can learn from that. That's two games we won on the road that were tight, tight games. Hey, I'm proud of the guys.

Q. I'm not sure your reputation is as much a blitz guy. Talk about that blitz on fourth down to sew up the

game there.

VF: Well, unbeknownst to you and everybody else, at one time I was the leading blitz-krieger in the NFL. I've been, I don't know, calling defenses now for 20-some years. The last few years with the teams I had in San Francisco and Chicago, we didn't need to. But it's there when it needs to be had. Obviously we needed to have it today.

The final one today was one that we put in for this game. We had never run before. I had never run before in my career. We put it in. I called it there.

Q. Could you kind of review the last two weeks. I thought the first three quarters you just seemed sharper, better prepared. The way you handled the whole COVID-19 situation, it seemed like it paid off for you as far as having mental toughness for this game. Secondly, game ball, who got those?

VF: Yeah, I mean, like I've said before, our guys have been fantastic in handling everything that comes with COVID. It started in training camp. But it was stressed this past two weeks, obviously with the game having three different scheduled dates, the guys losing their bye week, everything that goes with that. I think they were a lot like me in a way in that, yeah, you're mad, you're disappointed, you're frustrated, you wonder why. Five minutes later you take a deep breath and you move on. I've tried to get the guys to think that way. I think they have.

They are a tough-minded group of people. I think that was on display today. To come up here and win that game, the way it turned out, it could have been an easy win where we were high five-ing each other for the last three or four minutes of the game. As is the case sometimes in the NFL, that's not the way it turned out.

It took all that fortitude that we are using to deal with COVID to go win that game. I do think there's a carryover.

Q. And the game balls?

VF: We gave one to McManus. He set a record, I was told, a Broncos team record for six field goals. I thought hard about letting him try for the seventh one there. It would have been 57 or 58. If he had missed, I didn't want to give them the good field position and jump start their



offense there. I don't regret the decision.

We're going to deliver a game ball to Curtis Modkins in his absence here. I'm sure he's thrilled that we won. He's feeling great. He has no symptoms. But I know it's tough for him to miss the game.

Q. The teams that score in their first six drives are now 34-1, but all yours were field goals. Did you ever feel comfortable or were you on pins and needles?

VF: Well, I mean, obviously I'm happy we're scoring. I'd like some of those to be touchdowns, as everybody on this team would, every Bronco fan would. We're going to have to work harder finishing our drives, particularly in the red zone. I don't know how many of those were down in the red zone. Really only two of them, I guess. They were fairly long field goals.

Yeah, we'd like to finish them with some touchdowns. Usually they can come back to bite you. If we hadn't held on, it would have bitten us. But they proved to be enough to win the game. Right now that's all we need.

Q. You took a lot of shots at the end zone. A couple of times the receivers were just missing it. Was that just rust from the rhythm not having drew the last few weeks? How do you think Albert O did in his debut?

VF: I don't think it comes down to rust. I mean, the ball is up in the air. There's a chance there. We got to find a way to make those plays, whether it be just another inch or two farther in the throw, going up there and competing for the ball. We got to be better at those. You're not going to get them all, but I think we could have converted at least one of those which would have had a major impact on the game.

I thought Albert came in, he caught two balls I believe for 45 yards. I believe both of them were first downs or both good gains. I thought he did well. He had a lot of practice the last two weeks with Noah being hurt. He had some practices that were just so-so in catching the ball, some that were real good.

Him and I talked. I just said he's got to play free. I thought he was practicing a little tense. To free himself up, be who he can be, go out there with confidence, run the routes, ball is thrown, go get it. I felt a little better body language from him through the game.

Q. Can you expand a little bit on the last blitz, on why you decided to put something in you've never run before.

VF: Well, I just think at times during the season you have to come up with something new on a week-to-week basis. That's one that I've been looking at. Just decided this was the time to do it.

I mean, this was the week to put in, plus was the time for us to do it as our package evolves here. With Cam Newton, as you guys saw, I think he was their leading rusher. I don't think many of them were called runs. Most of them were scrambles.

We've got to add guys sometimes to contain a good quarterback that's a good runner. It's just where we're at right now. I just thought the timing was right for it.

Q. Phillip Lindsay, how did he look in his return?

VF: I thought at times he looked really, really good, like Phillip always has looked. At other times I thought he was a little rusty. But that's to be expected. He hadn't played since the first half of our opener. I think when you consider everything, he played good. But I think he'll look at it and think he left some yards out there.

Q. How would you evaluate Drew's performance?

VF: I thought Drew played well. He hadn't played since about the 10th play of the Pittsburgh game. Didn't practice until this week really. I thought he looked good out there.

When I say that, I just thought he looked comfortable. He didn't look like a guy who's coming back from injury. Wasn't tentative. He was out there playing football the way we want him to play. Obviously the interceptions we don't want to have. One was miscommunication. I'll look at the other on tape.

I think it's a great learning experience for him and the entire team. Hopefully we'll be better to close out the next time we get a lead like that.

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