

# **BILLS HEAD COACH SEAN MCDERMOTT**

## **POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE**

December 29, 2020



Buffalo Bills - 38, New England Patriots - 9

**Q. I know it's just another one in the win column for you guys or at least that's how you're playing it, 1-0 every week. The aggressiveness that you guys showed in the first half, with the fourth down, not just the fake, but you had another fourth down conversion that you just said, Hey, go, and then there was another drive that finished with a touchdown with Lee Smith, that you went for it on fourth down as well. I know every situation is different, but it just seems to be a pattern now where you don't hesitate, you have that much faith in your offense. Does that speak to the maturation this offense has made to give you that level of confidence?**

SA: Yeah, trust is big in terms of having that confidence to go for it in those situations and the guys have executed at a high level and that starts during the week with the plan and in the practice and the way they practice.

**Q. Just the maturation of Josh. I asked you this a hundred different ways, but like the 50-yard touchdown to Stefon, he waits to let Gabe kind of clear out on the deep route and pull the safety with him and nobody behind Stefon. Stefon called it quarterback stuff. How do you witness that kind of maturation out of Josh being only a third year guy?**

SA: Yeah, great to see. I mean, he continues to take steps in his development, which is awesome. I mentioned before, as you've heard, he's hungry to grow and when your top player or your top players embrace that growth mindset and lead by example, I think it goes a long way in our locker room.

**Q. I know you take each one of these singularly, but I also know you understand the appreciation of this rivalry and what the Patriots have been for the past two decades. So what does this win and this one moment mean to you and what do you think it means for this franchise?**

SA: Well, it feels great. It's hard enough to win in the NFL regardless of who you're playing and this is an organization, being the Patriots, that have given the Bills

fits over the years and so to win both games this year against the Patriots and then to win the way we did tonight, I think it just speaks volumes about our players and the coaches and again the team that Brandon has put on the field.

**Q. Stefon and Josh, once again, they seemed to be really rolling on all cylinders. I don't want to say compared to what you expected at the beginning of the season, but do you ever take a back seat from your position and say, this is incredible, what they are able to do, especially this early on in their connection together?**

SA: Yeah, they're both on the same page and that goes back to during the week. Again, what they do with getting on the same page with communication and the necessary communication that needs to unfold and there's new plays every week so they have got to do their part studying and getting on the same page with that as well. So really impressed by the two of them and overall impressed by our offense tonight.

**Q. I was wondering, how much does the underdog mentality, like, the chip on your shoulder mentality motivate this team, especially during this pass four-game stretch?**

SA: Yeah, I think if you're wired the right way it motivates anyone. It should. That is how I lived my life and I think a lot of the guys in our locker room have lived their life to this point and they have been counted out before and they just continue to prove people wrong, I guess.

**Q. And that's kind of, it feels like the culture of that locker room that you guys have put together, that it's guys on their second chances, guys who can say, I've been fired, I've been cut, I've been X, Y, Z. But how does that, how do you think the transition looks like, what does the transition look like now that -- I mean, you're not often going to be seen as underdogs anymore, now that that target's on your back instead of kind of like the chip on your shoulder?**

SA: Yeah, and you can, you're spot on with that. You can ride that underdog deal for some amount of time, but when you become good, I guess is the best way to say it, at some point you got to also know how to be good and I



think that comes over time and I think what you're seeing is a maturation and professionalism and leadership of our players.

**Q. I know you have the utmost respect for Coach Belichick and you guys seemed to have a long hug/handshake there at the end of the game. I'm not going to ask you what he said to you, but just what did this game kind of mean when I know you have so much respect for him and what he's accomplished?**

SA: Yeah, I mean, listen, I've been on the other side of it before. And so he was very complimentary, and I certainly appreciate that. And as you mentioned, a lot of respect for what he's been able to do. So I just think it says a lot about the way we're doing things as an organization, not just on the field what people see, but off the field. It's not just the team I'm talking about. It's the extended team, the way we do things, in ticketing, community relations, the business side of our operation and organization, so I just think it's a standard across the board, not just on the field.

**Q. Pretty cool moment for you to be out there at mid field tonight?**

SA: Yeah, pretty cool. He's a legend in terms of what he's been able to do and I certainly appreciate that and I'm humbled by it.

**Q. How do you set the tone in practice to know when to rest guys, when to push guys, if you feel they're not underachieving, that you may need to push them in practice? How do you walk that fine line of getting these guys ready to play, because your defense, the defensive unit seemed to be tackling -- each week they're getting better and better with their tackling skills.**

SA: Well, I think that you try and coach everyone up to their potential. So if they're not playing up to their potential, then they will hear about it.

So that's the only way that we as a staff know to do things, is to tell them the truth and when it's really good we'll praise them and when it's not they will know and they will know how to improve it more than anything.

**Q. In the adjustments, you're really good at making adjustments. It looked like New England came out running the ball. They were successful for a little bit and then obviously some adjustments took place on the sideline and you guys were able to stop their running attack.**

SA: Yes, sir. I thought Leslie and the defensive staff did a

good job and the players executed those adjustments at halftime.

**Q. You guys now have the second most points scored in a season in franchise history and to go from 19.6 points per game last season to now above 30 point per game, I mean, as a coach you probably hope something like that is going to happen if your goal in the off-season is to increase your points total. But what is it like just seeing that that's paid off, seeing that the Diggs trade has paid off and the draft picks the last couple years has paid off to be able to say, we have done what we wanted to do this off-season?**

SA: Yeah, I give Brandon a lot of credit, his staff. Our personnel department does a great job of building our roster.

And then just philosophically what we have been able to get on the same page with in terms of wanting to score points, building it with the personnel, and then schematically doing things that give us a chance to as well.

So I thought Brian Daboll and the offensive staff did a phenomenal job again tonight. The players executed. And so I think you're seeing the results of a lot of, it sounds maybe small and a copout, but I think you're seeing the results of a lot of good communication, honestly, from the end of last season to where we are now.

**Q. I know you're in the zone coaching during the game but watching how many players touched the ball tonight and a trick play in the first quarter, do you catch yourself at a split second just smiling at the way that this offense is playing and just how fun it is to watch this team?**

SA: Yeah, it is fun. I mean, when you're watching these, these are grown men having fun, like I mentioned before, just showing a lot of love for one another, playing hard for one another, supporting one another after bad plays so they can reset, and there's a lot of good energy in our group. That's not by accident. It's because of the DNA of the guys that we have.

**Q. How important was it for you guys to come out there and just be aggressive at all costs tonight?**

SA: Yeah, I mean, we, it was important for us. We hadn't played in seven-plus days, eight-plus days, whatever it's been, which is unusual for us, it seems like, over the last four weeks on these short weeks that we have had. So I was a little bit concerned about how we would come out.

I thought the guys did a really good job of, we gave them Christmas off and then we had the COVID situation come



up yesterday before we left and I thought they really handled it well.

**Q. You got Siran making plays all over the place. You've got Dawson Knox making clutch catches. You got a great schedule, a tough one by the way. Was this the statement game that you was looking for?**

SA: Good try. Good try. I appreciate the effort, man.

**Q. Now with the win you guys are looked are locked into either the No. 2 or the No. 3 seed. Just wondering how important is the No. 2 seed to you as a franchise with the potential of maybe even getting some rest to your guys?**

SA: Yeah, it's a good question and I think I know where you're going with it -- and fair. No, I'm not ready to answer it yet because I got to talk with Brandon and we'll put our collective heads together and do the right thing by our team. Every team's different and these are all, obviously, tougher decisions. And there's no, no one has a crystal ball here, so I just want to do right by our football team and that's what we'll do.

**Q. I'm wondering, back in 2004 the Red Sox beat the Yankees kind of exorcised the demons for the region up here. Does tonight's win kind of do the same for you guys?**

SA: I appreciate where you're coming from on that, but no, it's one win and we have a lot of respect for the team up here and the coaches.

**Q. But as a quick follow-up, I mean does this, is this an official passing of the torch from New England to Buffalo?**

SA: Good try. I appreciate that. You guys are great. Yeah, no, it's, we, we played a good game tonight, certainly things we can improve on and just happy to get the win.

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