

# HEAD COACH RON RIVERA

## POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE

November 5, 2023



Commanders 20, Patriots 17

**Q. How about that? What are your thoughts after getting that one done?**

RR: Well, you know, it was a hard-fought game. It really was. I mean, it went back and forth. We had opportunities. We missed some opportunities. Um, you know, one thing we got to take better care of the football. Defensively, we can't give up an explosive like we did, but for the most part, I thought the guys came out, competed, played hard, did good things. Did things that they're capable of and show what we can do.

**Q. You've talked a lot in recent weeks about Sam's promise and what that can mean for this organization. How did he add to that belief today?**

RR: Well, with exception of the interception in the first half, I thought he played the type of game we believe he is capable of. He made some really good decisions, some smart things. I mean, there's some things he's going to want to have back once he gets a chance to look at the tape and we get a chance to really evaluate it. You know, again, we got to make sure that we put those guys in position to have the success that we can have, and, again, we're still growing and developing with the guy, but he did a great job for us and led us to the victory.

**Q. Ron, the two interceptions, his and the then the one at the end, what did you see with each of those?**

RR: Uh, with his, he tried to force it. I mean, that play calls for -- it's a quick read. He tries to extend it a little too much and then he saw Jahan coming late, and at that point, just throw it into the endzone. I mean throw it just completely out of the endzone and that was disappointing. He knows better, and he was really disappointed in himself at halftime, but he got over it quickly and came out and, you know, regrouped and played well in the second half and did the things that, like I said, we believe he can.

**Q. And the last interception, Quan's?**

RR: Oh, it was a really nice play. Defensively, again, he's lurking there. He's a guy that's in position that if something does get tipped that hopefully he can come up with it, and he did.

**Q. I know it seems like I ask you this every week. What did they say to you about KJ's roughing the passer?**

RR: They thought it was full bodyweight, um, you know, and, again, we, you know -- (deep sigh) (laughter).

**Q. Fair enough. (Laughter) Coach, your thoughts on James Smith-Williams and Casey Toohill?**

RR: I thought they went out and played with a lot of energy. You know, they did some good things, but there's some things that, obviously, they're going to have to clean up and do better with. You know, I thought the guys we tried to rotate in did some nice things.

I thought KJ had a nice rush. Unfortunately, it got called, but, again, these guys are going to work the form. They're young guys and they're going to have to get opportunities, and that's what they're getting right now.

**Q. And what were your thoughts on the sideline? It looked like the patriots were targeting Jamin a little bit in the passing game late.**

RR: Um, you know, again, it's one of those things that during those types of plays, they are going to target. They are going to target the linebackers. They're going to try to create one-on-one situations, especially with receivers on the crossing routes and you can't hide him in those situations. You just got to hope that he fights and battles the way he did, and that's what he did.

They tried to run a wheel on him and he was in great position and showed great poise and at the right time he made his move to tip the ball, you know, that's the growth that we're looking for from him, and he's continuing to play well for us.

**Q. I think all the drafted rookies had a big play. What did you see from that group? And, kind of, how did you feel about them stepping up?**

RR: You know, it's a good group of young guys. What we're doing now is giving opportunities and they've got to step up when they've got their opportunities and, you know, that's kind of the growth part that you want from the young



guys that when they get a chance, that they take advantage of those chances and make plays for us and we saw a little bit of that today and hopefully we can continue with that into next week.

**Q. Just with Forbes, he seemed to have a much better day. Kind of, what did you see from him in particular?**

RR: Basically what you're seeing is the result of his practice habits right now. He's been working hard. I know things that they've been working with the defensive backs, particularly with him, about being disciplined about doing little things the right way and you start to see it. So, again, if he can continue to do those things, play within himself, play within the scheme, I think he's got a chance to continue to grow and improve and hopefully he can grow from here and he can improve on what he did today.

**Q. Ron, some tough losses along the way and then you have the trade deadline sweating Young out. How important was this performance today to come up here and get the win?**

RR: I think it was very important. Every game's important as far as winning is concerned, but you know, in light of what did happen last week and so far this season, victories are big, so when you get one after a tough week for the guys in the locker room, it's a big win. It really is.

**Q. What did you learn about Sam coming out here today?**

RR: He's resilient. You know, he was really -- he was so disappointed in himself on the interception. We went into the locker room and you could still see he was upset with himself, you know, and Jacoby was right there with him. I went over and said something quickly, and then he had a little grin on his face, so I knew he was going to get over it quickly and come back out and play.

**Q. You guys started fast hit that lull and then kind of came back. What was the key to holding on this week?**

RR: Not letting it get away from us. You know, we hit a little bit of lull. We had a couple of big mistakes that did hurt us. You know, we got knocked out of our crease and we didn't get over the top to make the play and they popped a big run on us. You know, we drive the ball, get the ball, and, you know, an opportunity to score a touchdown and instead of throwing it away we make a huge mistake trying to force it.

But we came back in out in the second half and I thought the guys really -- I mean, really proud of the way they did.

The offensive line was terrific. You know, they did a great job. You know, this is a very difficult defense to block all the time, and we were able to pick up a lot of the things so a lot of those guys did a great job for us.

I thought the receivers, you know, made the plays that they had to. There were a couple of stretches where Jahan really came up and did his thing and you watch and Terry stepped up in the second half and he did a couple of big things that were explosive for us. And when guys all contribute, you know, we ran the ball hard. We really did. Our running backs all ran hard. A little disappointed that we lost the fumble, but B. Rob came right back, and he continued to play hard and that's why we want a kid like that in this offense, because when there's balance and we run the ball like that, you can be successful, and EB knows, that. So it was good to see that as well.

So many guys contributed, so many players did the job that they needed to do to give us a chance to win today. And then, you know, defensively, some of the things that some of our guys did, but, you know, it was a great effort. It really was, by that group.

**Q. Sam stormed down field a lot more the last few weeks. Is that his confidence? Is that what you're seeing on tape from the other teams? What's the cause of that?**

RR: Well, it's a little bit of both. You know, EB's been goating him to do. He's gaining more and more confidence I think, again, as stout as we are up front. It's giving him an opportunity to really throw the ball and drive it and that, I think, has been a big plus for him that we've been able to do those things.

**Q. Kind of following up on that, when you talk about the offensive line, the pressure and all that, for Sam, what's the result for him and just his play and how much the comfort level, what do you see from that?**

RR: Well, I think, again, just being able to step into the pocket and have it clean and have a throwing lane. He got one ball tipped today or got a couple tipped, but his throwing lanes were clean for the most part. You could see his decision-making was really on cue, and I think being able to see the whole field and keeping your eyes up. That's probably the biggest thing, John, that you see, is that his eyes are up so when he steps up into the pocket, he's not looking around as much as he's looking down field and that's one of the big keys I know that EB talks about all the time.

**Q. Two plays, the run on third and 23, what did you see on that? And then the touchdown pass to Jahan.**

RR: That's really what Sam is capable of doing. We saw that when he was coming out of his last year at North Carolina. He ran the ball well. Rushed for almost 900 yards his last year there and he did a really nice job, so he does have some ability if he has to scramble, he can pick up valuable yards. I thought the throw to Jahan was nice anticipation, you know, and you saw Jahan kick in a little extra gear to go get it. That was pretty impressive, so it was great job up front with protection first of all. They were bringing pressure and he just put it out there and Jahan went and got. That's kind of what you really look for and what you're hoping for our guys to do.

THE MODERATOR: All right thanks, guys, appreciate it.