

PATRIOTS QUARTERBACK DRAKE MAYE

POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE

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Patriots 16, Chargers 3

Q. Drake, take us through this night. Certainly was a battle. What did you learn from it? How proud are you?

DM: Proud of this team. We never doubted it. We never doubted it. Wasn't pretty, that's for sure. But this defense was so fun to watch. Congrats to them. It was so fun to watch. They won the game for us. I didn't throw very well tonight. Need to be better.

We did what we had to do. That's what it takes in the Playoffs. Proud of this team. That was fun to get one at home. Look forward to being back here next week.

Q. You said you didn't throw it very well tonight. Anything that contributed to that?

DM: Just got to be better, whether it's accuracy or ball placement or little things, making decisions faster. Held onto the ball a little bit tonight. Finally got one in the ends. I missed Hoop on a touchdown. Feel like I missed Pop on a third down low.

It wasn't my best tonight. But that's why you have teammates, those guys picked me up. Never lost confidence. Was still slinging it around.

Kayshon made some big plays. Came after the ball twice on some big plays. That's the thing about us, we spread it around, can do a lot of things.

Q. Is Playoff football different? Did it feel different out there with the stakes, the opponent?

DM: Yeah, I think the biggest thing that Coach McDaniels said with the offense, is you come to the stadium with that finality feel. It's win or go home, or win and advance. That's kind of the feeling you get. That's kind of the biggest thing I felt out there.

From there, the teams are going to be good. They had a great defense, a great quarterback. We were the better team tonight. We made plays when we needed to.

Q. You talk about nerves set in sometimes at the beginning of the game. Was that going on a little bit in the first half, you had to settle in, make a couple throws, get into who you are?

DM: No, I wouldn't say that. First one to Stef, that's right where I wanted to put it. Picked up the first down. Had the one to Hunter over the middle that I tried to protect from the safety. Probably need to throw, fire it in there a little more.

From there, high-pressure throws. Critical plays, I just have to make them. I like my chances of making 'em. I'm not going to think too much about it, move on to next week.

Q. What did you see in terms of their rush lanes and having some open lanes and some opportunities to put it down and take off?

DM: I think they're powerful. Credit to them. Those guys up front, they play hard, they're relentless. They want to get to the passer. Oftentimes when our guys stay inside-out protection, that leaves some lanes for me to take advantage.

Play some man in the back end. Anytime you got that, you have a chance to go and make some plays. From there, it was just trying to get down, just give us a chance to pick up some mobile first downs.

Q. How valuable is it to have someone like Rhamondre, who can pick up a big gain on a short dump-off?

DM: It's huge. They always talk about catching, getting up field. He's really consistent. The one on the sideline he broke a tackle, thought he was going to keep going for a while. He's so good at making the first guy miss. So valuable to have him on third down, be able to pass protect, catch it out of the backfield.

I missed him a little wide on one of the third downs. Yeah, that happens. Like I said, 'Mondre is a great player for us. He has been all year. He and TreVeyon are fun to be back there and watch. I have the best view in the house.

Q. Family members here tonight. Who was here to



support you?

DM: Yeah, my parents come to every game. They're always here. My three brothers were here, which is pretty cool, all three of 'em being here. It's just special sharing these moments with them. Going home, probably playing ping-pong till 1:30 or do something with those guys. Having them in the house is cool. Three of my best friends. Obviously (indiscernible).

Q. During the week, there was a big emphasis on Derwin James, what he can do to an offense, individually. Was there a sense tonight that you went away from him or you made a point of neutralizing him?

DM: Yeah, that was the goal, try not to let him be a factor. They try to put him on the ball, play him at the star, blitz him some. I thought we did a good job handling him.

He's going to make plays. That's what great players do. In coverage, he is a good player. He had some man reps tonight. I thought he did a good job. He almost got a hand on the one to Hunter. He's everywhere.

With guys like that, you try to neutralize. It's tough when they have guys up front as well that are good players.

Q. Derwin James, on that touchdown pass to Henry, it must have missed Derwin's hands by a couple of inches. How did you process him getting open at the right moment?

DM: Usually got a flat control that kind of holds Derwin. It really didn't. Just trusting Hunt. He just makes big catches over and over. Was a similar throw to the one to Hoop. I missed the one to Hoop. Give him a chance to make the play. Like I said, it's a game of inches. Come up on the right side of it.

Q. You talked about the feeling of win or go home. Can you describe that feeling? Is it an elevated sense of urgency? Excited energy?

DM: Yeah, I think it's just Playoff football. That's what it is. Kind of running out of that tunnel with the crowd, that was a cool moment. I kind of was running off the field like, man, that was pretty sweet, listening to the crowd.

I don't know why they put me last. They need to put Stef or somebody that hypes up the crowd. I just kind of run out there. Or Big Willie. Big Willie loves doing something funny.

It was cool. Proud of the fans for how they showed up

every week. Looking forward to getting back here at home.

That is it, Playoff football. That's what we said at the beginning of the season, we want to play home Playoff games in the Playoffs. That's what we did. We are 1-0. We got to go to the next one.

Q. Seems like you got almost every receiver, target, a ball tonight. What does it say about that room, the targets you have to throw to, the weapons you have?

DM: Yeah, I think the biggest thing about that room is they care about each other. Coach Downing, those guys in that room, they do a great job of blocking the run game, doing little details right. We knew it was going to be a details game with how much zone they played.

Those guys are fired up in the locker room to win. Everybody made some big plays. Proud of that group for how they've grown up, allowed me to grow with them.

They're great players for us. Nobody complains. They all want the ball. I don't blame them because they are all good with it in their hands.

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