

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Philip Rivers

Postgame Press Conference



Pittsburgh Steelers - 28, Indianapolis Colts - 24

Q. Phil, immediate reaction would be did you feel like you guys got away from the run game too much in the second half? I know there's a lot of things that go into that, and if so, why; why not?

PHILIP RIVERS: Shoot, I don't know. You know, I think you look at the first drive of the second half was good, other than not getting a touchdown, which would have been nice to go up 28 to 7. The second drive we started on our own one. We ran it, tried to take a shot to get out of there, and then we threw a screen to get out of there. And then the third drive we started with a run action pass which had been good for us, and they just had a great -- they had a good blitz called on for the protection, and had I been able to back up in the shotgun and allow Jonathan to block him. So they get us to 2nd and 20. So you're looking at three possessions. We ran a ton the first one. I don't know what more we could have done different in the second two. It's always going to be a question when you only score three points in the half when we've been very efficient and scoring a bunch lately. So I don't know that that was the reason or that's the thing to point to. We just didn't get it done the second half.

Q. Philip, you've had a lot of these as a team, these second halves where offense, you know, maybe wasn't as consistent as you wanted to be especially compared so some of the first halves and some of the starts. The reasons that we see are different but the trend is kind of there. Can you make sense of it? You just outlined reasons. They're all different week to week. Why do you think this keeps happening?

PHILIP RIVERS: Yeah. I don't know, and this is as respectful as I can say it. I think if we knew, we wouldn't do it. I don't know if there's one thing. I know that Houston game this reminded me of that. We were rolling the first half against Houston and we did nothing the second half. It felt good to start the second half. That first drive of the third quarter felt great, and we had a couple other drives,

obviously get the first down before the interception there at midfield. And then felt good at the two-minute drive, felt like we were going to go win it there as we got down inside, 30, 35 wherever we were. So, yeah, I don't know if there's one thing to point to other than we just gotta find a way to keep the same -- there was a -- if you could have been in the stadium, there was a feel of complete domination in the first half, all three phases, just kind of like -- you all don't have an answer and we're not going to give you an answer. And in the second half it was like almost we -- we gave them a glimmer of hope, and then it felt a little bit like we were hanging on. You know, and obviously you say, well, if you felt like you were hanging on, why did you stop hanging on and just go push the gas down. Maybe that's easier said than done. And I'm not saying we did that. From a mentality standpoint, man to man, but it had that feeling like we were hanging on to protect something rather than just continue to go attack.

Q. I'm not asking you to and I know you won't kill the guys that filled in for Anthony Castonzo and Braden Smith, but that has to be a much different game for you to play knowing that you don't have two of the better tackles in the NFL on either side of you. How different is that game for you today?

PHILIP RIVERS: I thought the guys did a heck of a job. I know we're going to be able to look at the sacks and whatever. It was well covered on the first sack fumble. It was well covered. They changed it up and played a little something different off of a same pressure that they had shown, so it kind of had me a little bit stuck with the ball. I was trying to just buy a little time to get rid of it. The one sack on first down there was really nothing to do with the offensive line. Another sack, again, was pretty good coverage on the one scramble with Heyward. So you look at those, I thought the guys up front did a heck of a job filling in. Yes. You missed Braden and A.C. I wouldn't be doing them justice if I said we didn't miss them, but I thought the guys up front competed their tail off. The way we ran it and protected, I thought it was more than adequate for us to go win the ballgame.

Q. Philip, what a swing. You guys go from controlling everything to now you need to win and need help. I guess it's a dumb question, but is it hard to bounce

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back or does that sort of reveal something about who you guys need to be?

PHILIP RIVERS: Yeah. I don't think it'll be hard to bounce back. At this point in the year you're playing for your season, you know, and that's what we were playing for today, a chance to continue to control our own -- not only control our own to get in, but really control our own, depending on what happens in Green Bay tonight, with a chance to still -- a division title still out there. So, again, our mantra is going to come back into play again, controlling what we control and try to be 1 and 0 this week, because whatever happens, they all include us winning. So we gotta make sure we take care of our business. And then I have to believe that 11 is going to be enough. It's only been one or two times ever that it's not been. Obviously I know -- I'm not denying that we don't need help, but I think let's control what we control. We certainly, I know I do, still have a little bit of a bad taste in my mouth from week one. So, find a way to get to 11 and 5 and go from there.

Q. Philip, early in the third quarter after you kicked the field goal, you all went away from the run a lot as we were asking about earlier. How much of that was just coming in from the sideline pass plays or how much of those RPOs where you got the choice or you're audibling and that kind of thing?

PHILIP RIVERS: Yeah, again, I think there can be a little bit more made of it than it was. Again, until we watch in succession -- and it's not my job to talk about how many run to pass ratio and that. I think the key thing in the third quarter to me is we ran it well and had a really good drive. We were on our own one yard line, ran it on first down, threw it twice and backed up. And then we run a good run action out of our base personnel and got sacked because they had a good for the pro, so now we're 2nd and 20. So those were the first two possessions. I don't know if that's so much getting away from the run, but, again, we just gotta execute better, whether it's run or pass. And a lot of the times when we were in our three-wide personnel, they were in base defense. There's not a lot of good runs that you can draw up against that base defense when we're in 11 personnel. So that's some of the reason for some of the -- I'm not here to defend them. I don't think the run-pass ratio is the reason we lost the football game. We lost the football game because we didn't execute well enough in the second half on either side of the ball. And I can say that -- obviously not pointing the finger at our defense. I think all our defense will say the same thing. We just didn't play well enough as a team in the second half, and when you do that against a team that had won the first 11. I know they'd hit a skid. It wasn't like we were playing the Bad News Bears over there. That's a team that's had a

heck of a season. So we gave them life. We've been on the other side of those before, when you get going, you get behind, and we let them -- they were the aggressor. As it went to the 10-point game and a three-point game, they were the aggressor. And I don't mean that from a play calling standpoint. I just mean in general it had a little bit of that feel, like, oh, boy, and that's not good enough.

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