

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Monday, January 11, 2021  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Ben Roethlisberger

### Postgame Press Conference



Cleveland 48, Pittsburgh 37

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Ben.

**Q. You and Pouncey sat on the bench after everybody left the field. Can you share with us what was going through your mind there, what you were talking about?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I love that guy. He is one of the best competitors and teammates I've ever had. It's been so much fun to share a football field with him. I hate that it ended the way it did. I just wanted to apologize to him that I wanted to win it for him.

**Q. When you get behind, it starts the way it does with the bad snap, how do you come back from that? What do you try to do?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I mean, that half was one of the weirdest halves I'm ever been a part of. You get down early, but you still got a chance. Then you turn the ball over. We still believed. We still were fighting all the way to the end. That's what I'm most proud of the guys about, is we never gave up.

**Q. You said you and Pouncey would play as long as the other one did. I know the loss is fresh. When do you start to have that discussion about the future? Is that something you talk about in those moments?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: You just said it best: this loss is fresh. It's just sitting on our hearts and our minds right now. It will for a while.

**Q. When you look back at the whole season, maybe not this game, but do you still enjoy playing football?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I do. I enjoy the guys. Miss the fans this year. Obviously that's a big part of this game. We've got the best fans in the world. I need to apologize to them for tonight, the rest of my teammates, for the way I played. Very disappointing. I hate it for our fans. I hate it

for my teammates.

But I enjoy playing this game for those reasons.

**Q. When you go back to the second half against the Colts, it felt to us watching like kind of a breakthrough. You were able to get downfield, make things happen. How did that change here tonight? Something that they did?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I felt like we got down the field a few times. When teams have a big lead, they can just sit back in zones, take deep throws away. You put yourself in a hole, you limit yourself to what you can do.

Even with that deficit, I feel like we got down the field pretty well, those guys sitting back.

**Q. You guys have had slow starts the last five or six weeks, not all turnovers. Can you point out why that's happened?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Just not playing well enough. I'll take that blame. I'll take it for tonight, too.

**Q. You threw 68 times tonight, 501 yards, four touchdowns, yet four interceptions. We've heard you say you're not playing well enough a couple times this year. Do you think you still can play at this level the way you have?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I'd like to think so. But obviously you can't turn the ball over. It kills your team. Kills your chances.

**Q. When you said you hate it to end the way it ended, what do you mean by 'end'? Season? Careers? What?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yeah, season. What an amazing run we had. A great group of guys. I know only one team ends the season the way they want it, want to. It's just disappointing that this season didn't end the way we wanted it to.

**Q. This was a rocky finish. What was the difference**

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**between what we saw over the last stretch versus what we saw earlier in the season?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: We just didn't win. I don't have any magical answers. We didn't put it together. Like I said, tonight the glaring issue is we turned the ball over. We turned the ball over a ton. That just can't happen.

**Q. You have owned this Browns team unlike any other team in the NFL. JuJu made the point this week that this is the same Browns team. Their players were running off the field saying, Same old Browns. Anything you'd like to say about this version of the Browns you saw tonight?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Tip my cap to them. Congratulations. They got the best of us tonight.

**Q. JuJu has a different kind of decision obviously this off-season. If it turns out to be his last game as a Steeler, what can you say about his time as your teammate?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I told him how proud I was of him, how much I enjoyed being his teammate, being his quarterback. I don't know what the future holds. He doesn't know. I'll always support him. I'll always be proud of him.

I think he embodies what it is to be a Pittsburgh Steeler. He's tough. He shows grit. You saw some of the plays he made tonight. They were black and gold through and through.

I hope I can speak for the fans when I would say that they don't want him going anywhere, we don't want him going anywhere. He's Steelers and he's fun. I'm just thankful for his efforts.

**Q. This is all fresh to you, you will have a decision to make at some point. How do you feel that will play out? Will it be just your family you talk to? Will you talk to guys like the Steeler organization, Pouncey?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: It's going to start between me and God, a lot of praying. A lot of talking with my family, discussions, decisions. I still have a year left on my contract. I hope the Steelers want me back, if that's the way we go.

There will be a lot of discussions. But now is not the time for that.

**Q. That's three straight playoff losses, two in a row where you've come off good seasons. Elimination at**

**home in the first game. Something more that needs to be examined? Is there something to look beyond that?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yeah, I don't know, maybe we need to have a bad season and try to make the playoffs.

I don't know. It is disappointing when you have a really good season, you get to the post-season and you don't play well. Like I said, I'll take tonight on me. I need to be better to give our team a chance to win it.

**Q. How much did they change how they played you defensively? Looked like they were giving you some of the middle stuff but not the outside or short stuff.**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yeah, I mean, they had a big lead. They don't want you to score quick. They don't want to give up the big plays. They were giving us the underneath stuff, some of the middle stuff. We were trying to take it, take our shots when we had them.

Guys did still make some plays down the field when we had to. When you have a lead like that, you can sit back and just take away the big play.

**Q. The quarter changed end of the third, start of the fourth. You had the fourth-and-one. Was there much conversation about going for it at that point?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I mean, that's coach's decision. I was prepared to go for it. He said we were punting it. That was the end of the discussion.

**Q. A lot of free agents on this team. Do you feel this team is going to look a lot different the next time you get together with the guys?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yeah, just like any season. Teams are never the same, whether it's free agents, draft picks, trades, whatever it is. That's the hardest thing about this business. You lose some really good friends. Things always look different.

Yeah, we anticipate it looking different.

**Q. When you were talking about JuJu, you said you hope you speak for the fans. Do you feel like he has been underappreciated, especially with some of the off-the-field stuff that's happened this year?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I'm not on social media. I don't listen to a lot of the stuff. I can't answer that for you. I'm sorry. I know what we think of him.

**Q. How do you take stock and evaluate your play?**



**You're an MVP candidate six or seven weeks ago. How do you look back at your performance?**

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: It wasn't good enough. When you lose a game like this, you can look back and evaluate all you want on the season, how you did during this game, that game, runs, stretches. I mean, at some point we'll look back on the whole thing.

But when it doesn't end the way you want it to, you're always going to feel some kind of way, like you came up short or it's your fault.

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