

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Monday, January 11, 2021

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Juju Smith-Schuster

Postgame Press Conference



Cleveland Browns 48, Pittsburgh Steelers 37

**Q. This week there was a lot made of your comments from this week before, saying that "this is still the same old Browns team that we've seen before," seeing how that was going to be used for the Browns, they were shouting it as they were running off the field. Do you regret that phrasing and did this look like the same Browns team you had seen earlier this season and at other points in your career?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: You know, I don't regret what I said. I said the Browns is the Browns. They came out and they played a hell of a game. You know, there's been games where we feel we lose them and today wasn't our night and hopefully the same Browns will show up next week against the same opponent and go out and do the same thing they did tonight and have a hell of a game.

**Q. Mike Tomlin said you guys died on the vine. What would you say about the last month of the season, what happened offensively to this team?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: You know we just wasn't executing. I think it was a lot of miscommunication and little details here and there just wasn't clicking. We tried to put it together going into the postseason, and we started off very slow and turnovers killed us. At the end of the day, they played a hell of a game tonight and I give props to them.

**Q. You're one of a number of guys pending free agency after this season. Does that make this loss different, this season-ending different than other seasons? Is it more emotional for you knowing that probably the last time a lot of these guys will be together?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: Yeah, it's tough. I sat on the field just taking it all in. You see Ben and you see guys who I've been with for the last four years, tremendous guys, not just players but guys off the field. I've learned so

much and so thankful to be part of them and it means so much. I don't know what God has in plan for the veteran guys, but all I know is that I'm so thankful for those guys and they taught me everything I've known, and we can't take it for granted.

**Q. At the end of the game, you and Ben shared a moment, a lot of emotions running, I'm sure, but what did you two share before you went to the locker room?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: I just said, you know, I'm so thankful to have him as a quarterback and I wouldn't change it. I told him, I don't know what your plans or what's planned for you guys, but I'm truly thankful, from the time I walked in, first day to the time Ben taking me under his wing. Ben told me that "you fought hard, you're a warrior and thank you." It was just all love. That's all I said.

**Q. Ben said he wants you back, and speaking for Pittsburgh fans, they want you here in Pittsburgh. I know you still have decisions to make but what are your feelings going into the future and the off-season at this point?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: Just staying healthy. Honestly, I wouldn't mind, I would love to stay in Pittsburgh. I built a strong foundation and a strong fan base. I love Coach Tomlin and Coach Ike everybody I've been around. They've helped change the way I am, I love the game of football and I would love to do it again.

**Q. What was the mood in the locker room? I'm sure everybody is pretty crestfallen, but when you have a season like you do and it ends the way it does, what was everybody feeling?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: You take it in, one by one, some guys take it in differently. Some guys, first time first time been beating in playoffs and for me -- you fall short and veteran guys, you never know -- one thing that I've noticed after every year is that the locker room is (indiscernible.)

**Q. When you get behind like that, the way it just snowballs into first quarter, you know you have a big**

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**hole to climb out. What did you guys -- what did you say to each other? What was the feelings on the bench?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: You know, obviously it was just like, I mean, what more -- what more can happen to us? We're down 21. We're down 28. And it's just like, all right, well, we got to make a play. Ben was calling the plays, calling stuff to make it happen. We got a huge -- touchdowns here and there, but we just couldn't finish it off.

But I will say this: I will say our guys did not quit. We fought to the end of the whistle and we played our ass off.

**Q. Just more specifically, the first play that ended up being a touchdown for them, was there a thought, that, okay, it's just one play, we got this or what was the feeling in the huddle then?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: Man, you know, it happens. They got the ball and they scored and on our first play of our drive and it was like, all right, let's go back right at them. But like I say, you know, lose -- just didn't execute the play we wanted to do and it just didn't work out. At the end of the day, I think we live and learn and we just keep moving forward.

**Q. We were told what Ben said to you in post game off the bench and there's talk that this might have been his last game. Is that anything you've thought about?**

JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER: No, all I said is thank you. If it was up to me, yes, I would love to have him back. He's an amazing guy. I've known him for four years of my life and I watched him growing up. To have the opportunity to play with him again would be unbelievable. It's up to him and his family and the Man above to decide. Like I said I'm appreciative of him and all the veterans who have helped me throughout.

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