

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, December 5, 2021
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Ben Roethlisberger

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers 20, Ravens 19

Q. Ben, this is a big win, and this is important especially the response after the way you guys played last week.

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Huge win. Any time you play that team, that rivalry, that's a battle, and that's what that game is. That was kind of the perfect Ravens-Steeler game, if you will. Huge win for us. Especially at home against that team. Especially after last week. Great bounceback by everybody. Just so proud of everybody.

Q. Hoping you could speak to relevance of the report that says that you basically have told everybody that you're going to be done after this year.

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I haven't told everybody that. Honestly, we just got done with this game, I'm exhausted, and we play in a couple of hours, it feels like. My focus is on Minnesota and what we have to do to get ready. I'll address any of that stuff after the season. I've always been a one game at a time and a one season at a time person, and I'm going to stay that way.

Q. Is it hard to do the one game at a time and not think about this might be last --

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I've been doing it a long time. I've enjoyed this game, and this game specifically, and winning at home in front of our fans, it's awesome.

Q. You talk about bouncing back. How about Diontae today drops the touchdown pass and then caught everything.

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yeah, that's I talked about before the game. I kind of told the guys without going into great detail, you can go against teams sometimes that are better than you or equal to you in terms of skill. What's going to separate you is your heart, and I think tonight we had guys that showed a lot of heart. He is one. You drop

that ball, and then he comes back and makes a bunch of tough catches, a bunch of physical type plays running for extra yards, and I'll speak on him, but other guys, too. Leglue comes in at left guard early in the game and steps up and does some amazing things. I mean, we have to run the ball on that last drive a bunch, and then we threw it, but we had to run the ball. Benny Snell comes in and makes some big runs. I told Naj going into the last drive or the second to last one that he is going to enjoy this rivalry for a long time, and it's his opportunity now to set his mark. The physicality of what it means. I thought he did an amazing. Everyone stepped up and made a play today, and that's what makes me the most proud of this group.

Q. You got the game ball, and I'm sure you have gotten many over the years. Is this one anything special?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Kind of caught me off guard. I don't think that I deserve it. I think a lot of guys deserve it, and we deserve it as a group, but it's always humbling when you play this team at home and Coach recognizes you like that, so it's kind of cool.

Q. How much no-huddle, two-minute that you did, how much of is that you? Is it partly Matt? Do you think that that's where you play your best?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: There was some of it today. Some of it's just him kind of calling the play in my ear. That's not huddling. I think that he called a really, really good game today. Some of the plays down the stretch were -- I was even surprised when he called the naked and some of the other plays, but I thought he did a great job, and so I'm just happy with the victory, and I'm sure he is too.

Q. Do you feel you play your best in that situation?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I think we all -- when you are playing that style of offense, I know we've talked about this in the past, they tend to get more vanilla, and you kind of dictate what they do a little bit more, so that's why sometimes you can take advantage of things in that mode of offense.

Q. In the first half the Ravens defense was kind of constricting you guys, almost limiting up the box. What was the key in that second half to be able to change that and open up the field for you?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: We went to a lot of run pass options. The line blocked. Naj ran really hard. So did Benny. When with he got it to the outside, guys made plays.

Q. When you pointed to the booth, if I'm not mistaken

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BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Oh, on the other side of my family? Yeah, I just told Matt, great call. Giving him props for a great call.

Q. Is there a way you can unlock some of this competitiveness and heart, all the stuff you guys talk about after these big Ravens games and apply it to a Kansas City or a Tennessee or a Minnesota?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: At this point of the season we need every game is as big as this one. Yes, this week is not AFC North Ravens game, but it's still kind of a must-win. We've been saying that now that every game that we've got moving forward is a must-win for us, so it's never easy to play in four days. Half the time I don't even practice on Thursdays, let alone play a game, so we're all in the same boat, and we have to go out there and do what we can.

Q. Ben, when you are making decisions every year about whether or not you're going to come back, I imagine this is the feeling. Do you savor these moments anymore?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: You should always savor moments like this. I try and reiterate that to guys, whether you are in your first year or your fifth year or 20th year. You should always appreciate this moment because God has blessed me in an amazing way that I can throw a football like not many people in the world can, and guys can run and catch and do things that not many people can, and we should always count our blessings that we're able to do this. You never know when it is going to be taken from you, as we, unfortunately, have seen. I just think that we all should really take advantage of these opportunities, win, lose, or draw, to be appreciative of the opportunities we get out here to play football.

Q. How much can a game like this and a win the way that it happened be a momentum for you guys offensively and defensively going forward down the stretch?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: We'll see. I would like to think that it will help to say, okay, listen, this is what we can do, this is what we need to do, but you never really know until you get going. Hopefully I can maybe answer that in a couple of weeks if things are going well.

Q. You guys took the lead. How nerve-racking is it because you can't really do anything about it after you have already scored a touchdown. You have to sit there and watch. How tough is that?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: A lot of praying. They jumped off sides on purpose to get that first down to keep the clock -- to avoid all the timeout stuff. Smart play, I guess. At one point before that play I think Naj -- I think it was before that play, but Naj said, hey, if I get a chance, do you want me to score and take a knee? We're thinking about those things as the game is unfolding because you don't want to -- all of us have seen their games. You see what happens when you give Lamar too much time, so you do get a little nerve-racked. I think we had on the one naked play, we had Derek Watt in kind of the back corner of the end zone, and I thought about it, and if it was any other point in the game, I probably would have thrown it, but it was, like, nah, I just didn't trust myself to make that play. Got to Gentry, gets a couple of yards, and you are thinking, listen, how can we use the time? I wouldn't have cared if we would have kicked a field goal with a couple of seconds left, but we scored, and then you sit there and wait for your defense to do what they did, and it gets scary as they get closer, and then they go for two, and you think about Friday's practice where we had Seven Shots every day -- or every Friday. Just glad that our defense stepped up.

Q. Would you have wanted to go for two?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: If the role was reversed, sure. I love it. I don't have much energy left for an overtime.

Q. Did you consider declining?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: I don't know that I can make that decision, and I don't think at the time Coach was thinking -- I guess you could. I don't know. I have never heard anyone decline an off sides, but maybe.

Q. Maybe next year.

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: There you go.

Q. At what point of the drive was it?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: It was the last drive. I don't remember which. It was there towards the very end.



Q. Before first and goal, right?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Yes, I believe so. Once you realize that they were firing off the ball and trying to stop, I'm, like, they're not going to let you score, Naj, so get what you can and do what you have to do.

Q. Were you surprised they went for two?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: Coach Harbaugh, Miami of Ohio guy, nothing surprises me. That's why I consider him a great football coach because he takes those chances and believes in his team, and as a player, I'm sure they love that belief in them.

Q. The second time you've played Lamar Jackson. I don't know if fun is the right word. What was it like to compete and go drive for drive in the fourth quarter with a guy with that magnitude?

BEN ROETHLISBERGER: He is special. I just got to see when I get home if my son still thinks I'm his favorite quarterback or if he liked that guy better. We'll see.

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