

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, September 18, 2022
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Alex Highsmith

Postgame Press Conference



Q. Alex, (indiscernible) said the offense was designed to keep you from getting to the quarterback. How much were you aware of that coming in, and is it frustrating as you're going through to not be able to get to him?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: It's on us. We've just got to be better. I've got to be better. We know that going into the next game. We've just got to be better. We've got to have more of an attack mindset and getting off blocks better.

Like I said, we've got to be better. I know the type of front we can be. I think it's just on us as a whole, just to be able to get there.

Q. Nick said afterwards on that last drive, they were running and running effectively, that he noticed Mac Jones checking a lot at the line of scrimmage and getting them into the right play. Were you seeing that as well? What were you thinking he was trying to get them in and away from during that last try?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: I noticed a couple plays they'd run away from the tight end, but I just know -- we all knew they were going to run the ball. We just unfortunately didn't make the plays when the plays were needed.

Q. You tried a lot of different people in what would have been T.J. Watts' spot. How did it go? Did you feel like anything was especially better, maybe the three down linemen thing or the nickel?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: I think guys stepped up when they came in today. We got some good plays out of a lot of guys. I just know we can be better as a defense as a whole, especially coming down that last drive. I know I've got to play better too. I'm far from what I wanted to do today.

Q. You moved around a lot, back and forth on each side. Is that something you might be doing more of?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: Just in the game plan and stuff like that. I felt comfortable with the right side too. Just got to continue to refine my moves on that side because I haven't been over there in a while. I'm primarily a right side guy. I've just got to continue to work more from the left side.

Q. A lot of guys talked before the game about not trying to be T.J. and just do what you do. Did you find guys trying to get out of where they were supposed to be, trying to make a play? Was that anything that happened out here?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: Like I said, guys that came in, they knew what to do, and they were in good spots. I think Malik had a really good game rushing-wise, and they were able to get a couple of hits on the quarterback and draw a holding call and stuff. Jamir as well.

I just think we've got to continue to improve from each game because we know the type of defense we can be. I feel like we can be better than we were today. We all saw what we did week 1, and we know that we can be better.

Q. How much did you feel like them winning on first and second down put you guys in a position where you couldn't really attack on a lot of those third downs?

ALEX HIGHSMITH: Yes, that was kind of the key to this game, and we've just got to do that better next game and from here on out. Third and ten against our defense is a lot harder than third and three. We've just got to sit down on the run and just really be better on first and second down as a whole so we can get them in those long distances.

Q. Why was that stretch play so effective for them today? They kept going back to it, especially on that final drive.

ALEX HIGHSMITH: We just weren't able to stop them. We'll just look at the film and see how it went. Ultimately you know that's on us. We've got to get off the field. We know that this one stings because we knew -- like I said, we know the type of defense we are. We've just got to be better.

Q. Alex, do you feel the variables are there going into a heavy run team in terms of the run defense to make the adjustments on such a quick turnaround like that?

ALEX HIGSMITH: For sure. It's an AFC North team we're about to play. We know them. They know us. I feel like in the history we've played good in the run against the Browns coming up.

That's going to be the focus for this week because they've got a great running attack. So we've just got to flush this one down the toilet and move on because we know we can play way better than we did today.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports