

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, October 16, 2022
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Mike Tomlin

Postgame Press Conference



Pittsburgh Steelers - 20, Tampa Bay Buccaneers - 18

MIKE TOMLIN: Just appreciative of the efforts of the men in that room. Obviously we were leaking today, we were looking in a lot of ways in terms of physically, emotionally and so forth. And I just appreciate the metal that the group showed this week in terms of remaining singly focused in the midst of the storm and in putting together a winning performance.

Like I said also though at the beginning of the week, where we are is more than one good day, one good plan, one good winning performance in terms of working our way back to respectability.

So we're appreciative of today but we still understand exactly where we are. And we ain't running away from it. We'll continue to run to it and get better and prepare for our next opportunity. We have some bumps, some bruises along the way. Kenny is in the concussion protocol. James Pierre had what I guess could be described as a stinger. Myles Jack had an ankle but I think he was able to go back. Ogunjobi, same thing, I think he was able to go back. I can't say enough about that secondary group that we had out there today. Man it was a great opportunity for a lot of those guys. First opportunity in some instances. Redemption in some instances. Guys getting an opportunity to get back in the fold. Guys that hadn't been a part of us like Josh Jackson being one. Just can't say enough about what they were able to do collectively.

It's a challenge when you play Tom Brady. I thought they did a really good job of letting our disguises work for us. We didn't have a big menu because we can't have a big menu. We got some young guys and inexperienced guys playing. So whatever we had, we had to dress it up. And I just thought they did a really good job dressing it up and fighting the fight down-in and down-out.

So hopefully we learn and grow in the right ways through this success and this experience, because that's what the journey's about. I'll pause and open it up for questions.

Q. What's that say about Mitch to come in a game in that situation and make the plays that he made?

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that it says anything that I didn't already know as I got to know him throughout this process. He's been professional and class at every step of the way.

That's why I mentioned it repeatedly when you guys ask me about what's transpiring at the quarterback position. Not only him but Mason Rudolph was engaged and has got good ideas.

We are a collective team and I just appreciate the unselfishness of all of those guys throughout this process. That's why I repeatedly bring it up.

Q. What does it say about your offense that they responded the way that they did with Mitch in there?

MIKE TOMLIN: It just says we got it done today. We're not looking to make any more statements than that. We realize that it's more than one day, one good plan, one winning performance as we work back to respectability. So it's what I said.

Q. When you have multiple injuries on the defensive front and the secondary and I asked you earlier would you put more pressure on the defensive front because of the injuries and the secondary. How do you think they responded to that?

MIKE TOMLIN: Like I answered earlier in the week, we had to pick our spots. In some instances some pressure was on the back end. In some instances the pressure was on the front end. And we had to be right. And largely we were. We played that cat and mouse game and that's what we had to do.

Q. Was there anything specific you didn't want the secondary to do or you wanted them to do?

MIKE TOMLIN: In the state that we're in we're more concerned about ourselves as opposed who we're playing. We didn't want to screw ourselves up. We wanted to

handle what we could handle and dress it up to the best of our abilities.

So our decision-making process from a schematic standpoint on the back end was geared toward our guys and what they could handle probably more than any other variable.

Q. The defense made a number of big short-yardage stops. I think eight for like zero or fewer yards. What were you able to do, how were you able to do that?

MIKE TOMLIN: Again, we moved some people around a little bit in an effort to create hopefully some confusion. But just individual effort. How many times did you see Larry Ogunjobi in the back field in those moments? So I'm just appreciative of the strain and the effort of the men.

Q. Brian Flores is more of a behind the scenes guy, but how much just did his insight into Brady help in a situation like today?

MIKE TOMLIN: It was contributions from all parties involved.

Q. Claypool came through with a few really, really big catches there. What have you seen from him over the last few weeks?

MIKE TOMLIN: It was a good day today. We're talking about what transpired today. He made some critical plays today. We're not trying to paint with a broad brush and show some trajectory. He made some plays today and I'm appreciative of it.

Q. With all the young guys in the secondary how big of a role did TD have?

MIKE TOMLIN: He had to be a hub of communication. He was the only regular back there. I'm just appreciative. And not only that but he was coming off of a missed action himself.

So I just thought he did a good job keeping the group cool today and communicating in that calm and soothing voice that's needed sometimes when you're in the huddle with some young people.

Q. What specifically the key for the defense in the red zone? The fact that you bent but didn't break and the key to getting stops there when they got inside the 20.

MIKE TOMLIN: I just thought we kept them off balance with some disguises and things of that nature and rush and coverage kind of worked together. I thought it was a

collective. I don't know if it was one individual component of what it is that we did. The guys played hard. They understood what we were trying to do. They dressed it up. Rush and coverage worked together.

Q. How does getting an early lead help a defense that's obviously missing a bunch of pieces?

MIKE TOMLIN: We had to play 60 minutes when you're playing a guy like Tom Brady. The start of the game was going to be irrelevant in terms of the outcome of the game. We understand that.

Q. Your thoughts on Steven Sims and his returns and the affect that it had.

MIKE TOMLIN: Steve gave us what we expected him to give us. We're appreciative of his efforts. We're excited for him we were excited for him a week ago. Glad we were able to get him out and up and running today.

Q. You had Harris, seemed like he started to getting going throughout the game. Is he feeling better?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'll let him speak for him. I haven't talked to him.

Q. The secondary obviously, did you see something from them during the week that just showed like that they had like any kind of extra chip on their shoulder or anything like that?

MIKE TOMLIN: No, man, they just had a lot of work in front of 'em. They knew who was waiting on us in the stadium. And they knew the state we were in. So not a lot of discussions need to be had. Talk is cheap. We needed a good work week.

Q. You had a number of pass breakups from your linebackers. What can you talk about that group in coverage today?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'm appreciative of that group. We asked a lot of them. We were running thin in the secondary and so we called on them a lot. We play all three of our inside linebackers in various packages because that's where our depth was. Robert Spillane I thought was critical today in terms of us being able to do things because he played positions other than inside linebacker.

In some instances he was representing a nickel. In some instances he was representing a down safety. To be able to do that, I'm just appreciative of his intellect and his efforts. It allowed us to put our very best collection of people on the field and that's what you got to do

sometimes when you're in less than ideal circumstances.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....

