

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, November 13, 2022
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Kenny Pickett

Postgame Press Conference



Pittsburgh Steelers - 20, New Orleans Saints - 10

Q. Kenny, beyond the victory, no picks. You said you wanted to protect the ball better in the second half. You threw the ball away a few times today. Were you satisfied with that?

KENNY PICKETT: I was. I thought it was a step in the right direction. We took more shots. Obviously, want to hit more than we did. The one to Diontae was big, but we need a lot more than that. But I thought guys played really hard today. Feels good to be up here after a win.

Q. In terms of shot taking, looked like there was at least a couple plays where you threw it right away, almost like you decided before the snap. Slant to Diontae was one of those. Did you have more of that today where you just decided and made it happen, as opposed to letting it unfold?

KENNY PICKETT: It's just trusting what I see, and I think we had a lot more end breakers today with what they were showing and what they were giving us. I think we did a good job of hitting those, giving guys opportunities to have more run after catch. Something we want to continue to improve on.

Q. Kenny, what do you think was key to the ground game today?

KENNY PICKETT: The O-line, man. The O-line was unbelievable. Those guys stuck with it. They worked hard on the bye week and obviously this week getting prepared for it. Najee and Jaylen do what they do best. We have two really talented backs. We lean on those guys. I thought we had good balance today. They did a great job in the pass game as well. In all phases, I thought we took a step in the right direction today.

Q. How much easier does it make your job as quarterback when the running game is going like that?

KENNY PICKETT: It's awesome. It adds more elements. Third and short, you can lean on those guys to get it, extend drives, extend plays. Really happy and proud of the way those guys played by both of them. Great job.

Q. Kenny, it's the most 20-yard plays you had this year. What was the difference? What was working?

KENNY PICKETT: Stuff that we worked on, and we saw what they were giving us and went off that. Just getting it to our guys and letting them make plays. We have talent all over the place. It's my job to distribute the football and get it to those guys. They take care of the rest. Like I said, a step in the right direction. Not where we need to be or where we want to be, but it's a good start.

Q. Najee downplayed the effect for him personally of that early 36-yard run he had. What did that do for you guys as an offense to kind of give you energy early in the game?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, gave us that spark early in the game. We jumped up on a lead. Wish we could have put this one away a lot earlier. That play really sparked the offense and, you know, we were getting behind Najee and felt great with how he's been practicing and everything. He came to the game with a lot of confidence. It showed. The O-line did a great job as well. They complemented each other as well.

Q. You were pretty far downfield on that play. Were you trying to get a block?

KENNY PICKETT: I was trying to. I thought he was going to get tackled, and I saw him pop up. I was like, damn, he might be gone. I got to get a block. He almost made it. It was an awesome play.

Q. What did you see that allowed you to run as many times as you did?

KENNY PICKETT: There were sometimes we got covered up. The O-line did a great job. If I see a seam, I feel like I can utilize my legs to move the chains and get positive yardage. I think it's something I can continue to do and build on top of today.



Q. Kenny, how good did this win feel for you guys and to you personally?

KENNY PICKETT: Feels awesome. You put your whole life into this. Coming out with a win feels awesome. Definitely, you know, enjoy the 24 hours, and it's on to next week. It's something we definitely need.

Q. This was different for you because you got to start and finish it.

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, my first one all the way through. Wish I was able to finish the first one. But it feels great to get this one and be up here after a win.

Q. Your touchdown, was it designed to go there? Are you reading that? Is there a skill to a one-yard touchdown run?

KENNY PICKETT: I think there's just a little feel to it. The previous sneaks, I felt they were really crashing the A-gaps, and I think if I side-stepped a little bit, I could get around it, get in the B-gap, and no one would be there. So I took the snap, paused for a second, felt where it was at and was able to get in.

Q. You guys came out in the shotgun, felt like you used shotgun more frequently today. What kind of factor do you think that was?

KENNY PICKETT: Being in the gun, I didn't notice that much different than being under center. What we've been doing in previous weeks, but definitely something to look at.

Q. Kenny, you mentioned making plays with your feet. You took a couple big hits. You were limping around a little bit. How do you feel like you're making the adjustment of feeling the rush and knowing when you should stay and when you should go?

KENNY PICKETT: It's something that being an athlete growing up, you get a good feel for it. Did it at the college level, and feel like I can extend plays at this level long enough to free guys up downfield or take off and get good yardage.

So it's just something to be smart about, get down what I can get down. But in crucial moments, obviously, it's something I can use.

Q. Is that the left ankle, Kenny?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah.

Q. How does it feel?

KENNY PICKETT: Feels good. I'll ice and be good to go.

Q. Was it touch and go? Did you know you would stay in?

KENNY PICKETT: I knew I was staying in.

Q. Did not having Claypool almost compel you to throw more to Pickens, Johnson, and Freiermuth?

KENNY PICKETT: By him not being there, obviously, the ball would go to the playmakers we've got. I think those guys stepped up. Pat's awesome. Shout out to Stevie, Gunner and Myles. Those guys come in unselfish, do what the team asks them to do. All around great teammates. Love playing with those guys.

Q. Did you have to fight your instincts to throw downfield when you were throwing some away and maybe taking off on runs?

KENNY PICKETT: A little bit. You're battling, you're a competitor, you want to make a play, but it's got to be smart. You're always balancing and always fighting the urge to make a play. Felt like I did a good job today taking what they gave me. Glad I hit the shots to Diontae, but there's more out there we need to take. It's something we'll continue to play on.

Q. Was that a touchdown if they don't interfere on that one, the one slant?

KENNY PICKETT: I gotta watch it. I feel like he probably had a good shot at it.

Q. Was that against (indiscernible)?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah. So I felt like we had a pretty good shot at it. He probably held them because he knew. It was a smart play by them for sure. I have to watch that.

Q. Was that the play, or did you see that and figure that was the way to attack it?

KENNY PICKETT: That was the play we had. I felt that was the side to work. Obviously, Diontae is the guy I want to get the ball to a lot of times. He does a great job with it. Honestly, tip your cap to them. It's a smart play.

Q. In your eyes, how much of today was a complementary football game?

KENNY PICKETT: It was huge. Our defense is unbelievable, obviously. I feel like we have the best player in football in Najee and what I've seen him do. I've only been here for a little bit. The guy's unbelievable. Having him out there was great.

We complement each other well offensively and defensively. We need to put more points up, like I said, and kind of run away with it a little bit earlier. A win's a win. It feels great to be up here, like I said, after a win.

Q. The first touchdown, the hurry-up after you got to the 1, was that impromptu? Was it planned ahead of time? How does that work?

KENNY PICKETT: Gets communicated, obviously, from Coach Canada to myself. Something we've been working on throughout the weeks, and you kind of get in those situations where you want to use it, and it's a feel thing by the play caller.

It was a great call by coach. That was another instance where they were tight with their alignments and the interior defensive line. Was able to give it to George, and he was able to go around and get it. It was a great play. Thanks.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports