

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Saturday, December 24, 2022
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Coach Mike Tomlin

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers 13, Raiders 10

MIKE TOMLIN: Man, I'm just so thankful of the effort of the guys. We had a chance to be a part of Steeler history tonight and, man, we don't take that lightly. We're just so appreciative of the ground that's been laid by those that have come before us, the men like this man's jersey that I'm wearing right here.

Man, we get to enjoy the fruit of their labor daily just in terms of the standard of the expectation here in Pittsburgh, the relationship that we have with our fan base.

We just want to honor him, his teammates, and all the men that have come before us, man, that's made the black and gold what it is. So we're just thankful to get the victory. I think it was a grow-up evening for us tonight. Obviously this was not an easy game, but we showed resolve, we complemented one another, we stood up and didn't blink, even when it got thick.

We continued to punt the ball and support our defense who was playing well. They continued to deliver until we caught fire and finished some drives.

Don't get me wrong, it wasn't lack of moving the ball. We just didn't finish drives. We missed a couple field goals, threw an interception. You know, just got to be better in those areas, and we'll keep working.

But as a collective, particularly some of the young offensive skill guys, I thought it was a grow-up night. 8 and 14 and 22 and 88 and 18, all of them. They showed poise and resolve and made the necessary plays, and so we move forward. We move forward with a really good Christmas.

A few injuries. 21, Tre Norwood, has a hamstring. Marcus Allen has a biceps that's being evaluated. I think the rest is bumps and bruises associated with play.

Questions.

Q. The way the game ended it wasn't deflected pass, but to get that last-second touchdown, symbolic of 50 years ago?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'm not going to try to put it in that neighborhood, not even into that city, okay, but it was a nice play. (Laughter.)

Q. Given the whirlwind of the week, all the emotions, is it one of the more moving wins you can recall?

MIKE TOMLIN: You know, we're professionals. Football is our game; our business is winning. We're going to be an emotionally charged environment from time to time, ceremonially or just weight of the game. I just think that's part of professional football.

We got to find ways compartmentalize that and do what's required, which is play winning football. Make no mistake about it, it was a significant game, but it's probably just a significant game because so many of our guys are young and they stood up tonight, and it was a growth outing probably more than anything.

Q. Frigid temperatures. What can you say about the crowd that was in attendance and how they supported you throughout the night?

MIKE TOMLIN: Man, we don't take our support and our crowd for granted. I tell you, I don't know that any of us noticed the temperature tonight. It was just one of those games. You never really notice it unless you're winning definitively or getting smashed.

It was a close game. I kind of forgot about the weather.

Q. Could you elaborate on the way your defense made plays. It seemed like every drive in the second half, whether it was a sack or interception.

MIKE TOMLIN: Let's be honest, we've been pretty clear that if we were going to do something in this season that they had to play like that. They're the more senior group. They got the more established players and so forth.

So not that we don't appreciate it, but it's expected. I think

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

they expect it of themselves probably the most important thing.

Q. Jacobs and Adams were really kind of (indiscernible.) What can you say about the defense shutting down those play makers?

MIKE TOMLIN: That was our agenda. We talked about it all week, that it was those two guys and I talked about our experience of having two significant guys, and we kind of understand how to manage that dynamic runner, dynamic receiver. I just think we did a good job balancing the schematics, and when we didn't balance the schematics, the guys made the plays and understood when they were in the kitchen that they had to stand up.

Q. Talk about skill positions; what about both of your lines throughout the season?

MIKE TOMLIN: They've been consistent in terms of getting better. I think what we have done as a collective in terms of staying on schedule and establishing the run and so forth has been an indication of that.

Although I will say that the Raiders did an awesome job tonight, largely versus our run game. We didn't control it the way we desired to, but sometimes you're going to be in games like that. It was rough and tumble.

Q. You mentioned growth on offense. What comfortability do you think that Najee and Pat Freiermuth provided Kenny tonight?

MIKE TOMLIN: I think all the guys made plays. They made the plays when called upon. I think the end the game a kind of reflected that. Muth made a big play. Naj made a big play jumping somebody. GP made a play in the end zone. We just got a bunch of young guys that's got some talent. They're getting better. They are good enough win as that happens.

We just better keep rolling our sleeves up and keeping our head down, out mouth shut and working. That's this game. We got a battle waiting on us.

Q. You had mentioned poise. What are your thoughts on Pickett's poise on that final drive?

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't think any of us are surprised with those intangible things. I'm so happy that our young guys had an opportunity to do that in some small way tonight.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports