

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Sunday, September 10, 2023

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Kenny Pickett

Postgame Press Conference



49ers 30, Steelers 7

**Q. Kenny, what were they doing out there that was giving you problems, particularly in the first half?**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, we just didn't execute honestly. I think it was more us than them. I felt comfortable what I was seeing and what they were doing. We just didn't execute like we needed to.

**Q. Did you feel like your timing was off a little bit?**

KENNY PICKETT: No, wouldn't say it was a timing thing. Just need to be better.

**Q. The difference in execution, you guys were able to score so often and so freely in the preseason. What do you attribute to that lack of execution today?**

KENNY PICKETT: I think San Fran's starting defense is a little bit better than some teams in the preseason we played. They're a good team, but at the end of the day we didn't secure anywhere near at the level that we need to or want to. Have to get a lot better.

**Q. Talk about that 95-yard drive to end the first half. What do you think changed for that drive and why do you think you weren't able to sustain that later on in the second half?**

KENNY PICKETT: Well, it's a two-minute drill, so it's a little bit different than normal down football. Good to go down there and get points, but we needed to have more balance, and felt like we were kind of one-sided today. Couldn't get anything going really on the ground. Wish we had more balance, but we need to improve in a lot of areas.

**Q. Did the pressure that they applied change how you were looking at things or stop you from executing more of your progressions that you were looking at today?**

KENNY PICKETT: I think we held up great. Obviously they're going to get some pass rush on me here and there, but I thought the guys protected really well and they were asked to do it a lot. Need to help them out, get the ball out fast. Guys need to get open fast and got to improve.

**Q. When you didn't get a 1st down forever and you're falling behind slowly, how hard is it to play from behind against that defense?**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, we wanted to get out fast. We didn't do that. Obviously playing behind against a really good team, you're putting yourself in a hole we can't do. Moving forward, we can't allow that to happen.

**Q. The fourth down pass to Freiermuth in the second half, did you have to rush that or was there a breakdown somewhere else that led to that play?**

KENNY PICKETT: No, Pat saw it differently than I saw it, so it was just us communicating and being able to connect on that.

**Q. Can you walk us through the pass that was picked off intended for Connor York?**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, Tampa 2. Fred was running down the middle with Connor, wanted to put it up and over and give Connor a chance. We were playing from behind. At some point you've got to push the ball down the field, and that was it, just taking a chance down the field.

**Q. How hard is that when you're trailing, and you talked a lot about coverage dictates where you go, but sometimes you need to make a play down the field. Do you feel like that was an area where --**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, you get down behind like that, it puts you in situations where you're forcing things that you shouldn't be forcing or you're trying to make a play to get us back. That's why the key is to stay in the game and not get down like that where you're trying to run-and-gun and score.

**Q. I know it's one game, but coming off the preseason and everything, was it disappointing to come out and**



## **play that way?**

KENNY PICKETT: 100 percent. No doubt about it, it has to be a lot better moving forward.

**Q. You guys have talked about cohesion and being on the same page, so how frustrating is it on that 4th down play you and Pat weren't on the same page, that you did see it differently?**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, listen, it happens. If Pat saw it one way, I saw it the other way, it needs to get fixed. Obviously you put a lot of time in, but we'll get it right. I'm not worried about that. We're staying together, playing downs, football, being able to do what we put a lot of time in to do.

**Q. How much time goes into studying what went wrong in this game versus preparing for your next opponent next week?**

KENNY PICKETT: It stays the same. You prepare the same way. You handle losses and wins the same way. You look at the game the same amount of time. Nothing really changes.

But the miscues need to get fixed quick.

**Q. What was San Fran doing to be able to take those big plays away from you?**

KENNY PICKETT: I don't think they were letting us get behind them at all really. They were making us kind of throw it underneath, catch-and-run type of deals, so doing more stuff, getting guys on the run and punishing the defense, getting north-south. If they're going to play some soft coverage and not let us get behind them.

**Q. How important is it for you to have even keel demeanor throughout the week here so the guys realize it's only one game?**

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, it's very important. Like you said, it's one game. Another tough test coming in here Monday night. Things are going to get fixed, need to get fixed quick, and get back on track Monday night.

**Q. What's being said when you guys are struggling, you have one yard of offense several drives into the game. What were you saying to get yourselves back into a groove?**

KENNY PICKETT: Just trying to get a 1st down, get in rhythm. You move the chains a little bit, you get in a rhythm, you start playing the football that we know we can

play, and we didn't do that. Got to get 1st downs early, move the chains, and get guys settled into the game.

**Q. You mentioned that you guys didn't see a lot of adversity in the preseason. Obviously that was all you wanted. But how important will it be the way you respond to this?**

KENNY PICKETT: It's very important. I think we have great veterans, and myself, I'm going to lead the guys the same way I always know how to. We're going to put this behind us. We've got to learn from the miscues, put our best foot forward next week.

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