

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Matt Canada

Weekday Press Conference



MATT CANADA: Before we get going, obviously the start of the game was not what we wanted, so I'll say it. Five three-and-outs is not what we expected. Obviously not acceptable, but certainly not what we expected, going through camp and all those things.

Once that occurred, probably the only high point of the game for us was the two-minute drive, the 95-yard drive, got ourselves back in it a little bit, continued to stay down by three scores, and at that point we were always playing from behind. Did not get into a routine, our plan. Our guys all know that, but that's just the facts of how it went. Disappointed in how we did with that.

Had one shot down there 1st and 10 on the 14, had a chance to score, make it a two-score game. If we do that, I think there's a chance to get back in somewhat of a rhythm. That didn't occur, we stayed down three scores, so then you're really in a two-minute mode the whole time.

I say that. Wasn't good. Can't score seven points. Can't do all those things. No secret about that, so I'm giving you that, but I'm also saying it's one game, and we've got to move on, and for me it's Thursday. We've got to do this now with you guys and I appreciate that, but for us we've moved on. It's not what we expected. It's not how we practiced. It's not how our guys have played, and by no means do we have concern that that's going to continue, but certainly appreciate that that's what we did, and it was disappointing, but we've got to move on.

Now I'll take your questions.

Q. After watching the tape, what do you think Kenny needs to clean up the most?

MATT CANADA: I think we've all got to clean things up. We've all got to be better. There's some things that Kenny would like to have back just like everybody else. There's plays -- that's every game, though. That's football. That's certainly NFL football. One play goes here or there and it's a different game and you're not down.

You can't go five series with three-and-outs and get ourselves down 20-0 and have any kind of a normal routine or rhythm. Everything that we talked about doing, you can't do, and if we'd have done those things and been down three scores, it would have looked like we were trying to catch up. We've got to play to win.

Kenny can improve, but we all can.

Q. 4th and 14 you referenced a minute ago, the chance to get back in it --

MATT CANADA: 1st and 10 on the 14.

Q. 4th and 4 from that area, I'm sorry. Did that play start to unfold the way you wanted it, and is it correctable --

MATT CANADA: Yeah, I mean, honestly all four of those plays, if you look at them -- again, it's how it works out. We have GP 101 out there, he made an unbelievable catch but he was just out of bounds. The next play we went to Ant in the flat. Those plays all were basically what we expected, we just didn't get the results that we wanted.

Obviously we coach to improve those little details. The players work to improve those details, and we have to have different results.

I'm just referencing that, that at that point if we'd have got that done after the turnover -- you come out after halftime, they went out and scored so it's 27-7, have the big play to Tae, he goes down, we kind of stall at that point. Defense gets the turnover. We drive it down, 1st and 10 on the 14, we've got to score a touchdown there. We've put a lot of time into that. We do that, then it's a two-score game, and I think we have a chance to get back to some of the things we wanted to do. When you're down three scores, it just doesn't allow that so we get the ball back in the fourth quarter. So yeah, I wish we would have made all four of those plays.

Q. What's the expectation for Calvin now that Diontae is set to miss some time?

MATT CANADA: Obviously not just Calvin, all of our wide outs their roles are going to increase. That's going to be part of the deal. Calvin in his first game made some plays, did some things, so all guys are going to have to step up. Obviously Diontae is a big part of our offense, so it's not just going to be one guy.

Q. It seemed like Kenny had been having such a good off-season. Were you surprised that it was a poor performance in the first one, and what gives you the reasoning that it'll get better quickly?

MATT CANADA: I was surprised at the performance by everybody. Again, I'm not going to single out Kenny. Obviously Kenny has come out and talked to you guys and he's taken ownership and everybody has.

We didn't expect that. All you guys have to do is see what's on tape, and I said it last week, the only one that counts is that one, so I'm not running from that. We didn't perform well in our first game, and it's very disappointing.

But everything we've done through the spring, through the summer, I don't have any doubts or concerns it's going to be better. How much better, I'm not making any kind of big bold predictions, but we didn't play like we've played or practiced. I don't have the answer why. We're certainly working on it and evaluating like you always do, win or lose, but that just -- for sure surprised with the whole deal, but you can't run from it. We've got to be better and we will be.

Q. (On the emphasis for this week.)

MATT CANADA: Obviously we did the same as the bye, we kind of have the same approach. We came in, met, did our deal as a unit, talked about what was there. Again, I don't talk about it out here. In that room we talk about it, what was good, what was bad, what play, how this should have worked, and everybody has great accountability and ownership for it. We've all just got to be better.

Obviously we're going to tweak things here and there that we might see, but the bottom line is we just -- a play here or there and it's a different game.

Again, for that game got away so fast, and it's completely because we went the way we did at the start. But if that's not the case -- we didn't get to run the plays we wanted to run, do the things we wanted to do by our own fault, and we own that, and we're looking forward to playing better and getting to see that work in the things that the guys have done and giving that a chance to work.

Q. Did one player get Diontae's snaps on the outside

or do you rotate it?

MATT CANADA: Rotate it. It'll be by committee. Allen, Calvin, those guys, Miles, Gunner.

Q. More two tight end part of that, too, maybe?

MATT CANADA: Yeah, that's a game plan thing, situation, how we play that, but just as far as Tay's reps, we're going to give those and kind of share them.

Q. Looking at the tape, how much of what you saw that went wrong was San Francisco specific? In other words, how much did you analyze we're going up against the No. 1 defense perhaps in the National Football League?

MATT CANADA: There was a couple plays early and a couple runs that we didn't quite get the way we wanted. They're a really good team. I'm giving them all the credit. Just there were some things and some opportunities to make some plays that we felt like we could have made even as good as they are. They did a great job. They've got great players, and they won the game, so they deserve all the credit.

But I don't think we looked at it like we were surprised or shocked at very much. We just didn't get the execution or the plays or whatever. It just didn't work. It's on all of us to find out why and get back to playing the way we were playing and have played and worked through this whole process.

Credit to them. They won the game. They deserve all the credit. I'm not minimizing that. But we just have to be better, and we believe we will.

Q. When your quarterback is struggling the way Kenny was, what things do you like to do as a coordinator to maybe help him settle down?

MATT CANADA: Yeah, we do those things like everybody does. Obviously we've got a list of plays that he likes that we try to get to and get going, and for whatever reason we just -- not just him. There's a multitude of things that happen. Kenny is a quarterback, and that happens when you don't play well, the quarterback gets it, and he admittedly could have maybe done this or that, maybe could have thrown a little bit better, but we obviously went to those plays, and credit to him, we get -- again, it doesn't matter, but the 95-yard two-minute drive with no time-outs was a good drive. That got us -- all of a sudden we cut it to two scores and there's a little bit of like okay, and some of those plays he likes, and you kind of go to those and go back to those as he feels good with them. We just didn't

continue to do that, and again, I referenced the first drive coming out, we have a big play to Tae and we kind of had an opportunity and we didn't make, then we got the ball back and didn't make it.

We've got those, and everybody does that, but we certainly did that. In some cases it worked, and in some cases it didn't.

Q. As you look ahead to the next challenge, what is the challenge when you've got a team that likes to play tight coverage on the outside but also (indiscernible) on the inside?

MATT CANADA: This is a really, really good defense. They went out and held Joe Burrow and the Cincinnati Bengals to three points. It's going to be -- that's great credit to them. They've gone out and acquired players. They've got great players, a new defensive coordinator, and their first week was certainly exactly I'm sure what they hoped it would be through camp. So we've got a tremendous challenge, and we've got to answer that and go out and play much better football at a much higher level than we did.

Q. When Mike Tomlin spoke to us on Tuesday, he talked about how good the corners against the Cincinnati wide receivers. Can you expand on what specifically --

MATT CANADA: Well, you just look at the production. I think Joe had 82 yards passing or something like that. Obviously you talk about -- you guys know how good those wide outs, Higgins and Chase and those guys, so the fact they weren't able to connect on those balls that they do pretty much through the course of the game over their history, everybody they play against, so it shows how good their corners were and they challenged them and they were really good.

Our guys, we've got very good wide outs and we feel very good about our cornerback, but I'm just talking about guys that lean in the game (indiscernible) so we've got a tremendous challenge to go do that.

Q. I know Pat went down to Brooklyn this summer. Have you been able to see any difference, whether he learned anything down there?

MATT CANADA: I wouldn't know. I know Pat's improvement, I think he's playing like a guy who's in his third year. I don't want to minimize or maximize that trip. I know he's very engaged. He's very positive. Obviously he had the touchdown. We tried to get him some balls and didn't get him as many as we all would like. In some cases

he took a big hit, was out a minute, came back in for that touchdown.

Again, he's done a great job, and I'm excited about where he's at.

Q. How would you assess the play of the offensive line?

MATT CANADA: Offensive line I think based on what the situation did a great job. Statistically probably I think ended up -- what did they have, three sacks in that last drive when we're down three scores, again, we're playing to win and we're not going to just wave the flag, but I think we dropped back 50 times or something ridiculous like that. That's unfair to them, and they did it, and they did a great job. The protection was good for the most part.

Obviously we can't put them in that position. Not enough opportunities.

When we ran the ball we could have been a little better, but we didn't do it enough to even say that. I thought they played well. I thought they protected very well, and we've just got to give them a chance to be more balanced, and that's certainly what we went in to do. It didn't occur because of the situation, and we'll improve upon that as we move forward.

Q. You're talking about two-minute drill. Dating back to last year you had had a lot of success in those situations. Is that just a byproduct of the defense that you're seeing, or are there things in those situations you can take and use in other instances?

MATT CANADA: We probably do use it in other instances. I just think we obviously work on it, as everybody does. I just think that showed a lot of character for Kenny and the offense, a 1st and 10 on the 5 with no time-outs, 95 yards. You start talking about analytics, the odds of scoring in that situation, I don't know what they are, but I'm sure somebody else will find that out.

I think, again, I'm not -- what we did wasn't good enough, and there's no -- I'm not trying to confuse that, but I do want to credit Kenny and the whole group to say, hey, we were down 20-0 with whatever it was, no time-outs, and we found a way to go get a touchdown and get it back to where at least it was a two-score game and then we weren't able to keep it there.

But I think that's something that for them I want to compliment them on that as we talk about all the other things that weren't quite as good.

