

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Kenny Pickett

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers - 26, Browns - 22

Q. Kenny, could you go over the last third down. Was that a read option or a broken play?

KENNY PICKETT: Yes, the end spiked it. They brought the backer around. Felt like they were crashing the run. We try to get outside of them. Didn't pan out that way.

Q. What was the 71-yard touchdown, you guys -- George said it was cover 2 invert. You guys were looking for it?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, it was a great -- good look. Pat did a good job running his over G1 in the route, just had to put a ball there for him and he did the rest. It was a good play for us.

Q. What were you guys thinking or could you hear the chanting for firing Matt Canada in the second half there?

KENNY PICKETT: No, we were locked in on winning the game. I was going over two minutes, four-minute scenarios with the guys, finding a way to win whatever we needed to do there at the end.

Hats off to our defense, played unbelievable. We know we've got the best player in the world in my opinion in 90 and 56 is close behind. He's unbelievable. Those guys did a hell of a job and happy that they're on our side.

Q. You brought it up there. When 90 and 56 are making those plays, scoring two defensive touchdowns, how much of a load does that take off of you guys as an offense? How does that allow you to refocus going forward?

KENNY PICKETT: It's awesome. You got a defense like that, they make plays and put points up on the board and get those turnovers. It's unreal as an offense to have that.

We want to return that favor, though. I felt we left those guys out there way too long. There's things we have to do a lot better offensively to help those guys out.

Q. What things could you do better offensively?

KENNY PICKETT: Staying on the field, third downs, putting points up. Very ABC vanilla stuff. Playing better offensively, period.

Q. Do you feel like you guys did take a step forward as an offense?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, listen, winning's hard in this league. It's really hard. Feel like as you watch around the league, it always comes down to one possession, feels like, at the end of the game. However we have to get it done, I'm happy that we got it done as a team.

Look forward to getting back out there in the prime time game next week and continue to build and move forward.

Q. You guys talked a lot during the offseason about getting more yards after the catch and using the middle of the field more in concert with that. You did it a couple times tonight. Was it a little bit of an easier thing to do this time around after playing San Francisco, who is so good in the middle of the field last week?

KENNY PICKETT: They were great defensively as well, Cleveland. I don't think they're too far behind San Francisco. They're both great defenses. We were put to the test. We had some shots early over the middle.

George did a great job on a couple things, and obviously that run after catch touchdown was huge. We want to continue to be versatile in his route tree and certain things we do with different guys.

Q. How did you feel the challenge -- the way you responded to their challenge of how the blitzed and continuously try to bring pressure?

KENNY PICKETT: You've got to stay at it. They're a really tough team. They've got a lot of pressure. They brought

some different things that we saw on tape. Some we didn't.

So hats off to them. Great defense. I like the way we adjusted on the sideline. Guys are communicating well. There's definitely positives to take from it, as much as there are negatives, there are positives. Gotta continue to put our best foot forward and get ready to go Sunday night.

Q. What was the biggest challenge? Looked like for a lot of the game they were close to the line of scrimmage, even the last guy had 12 yards off the ball.

KENNY PICKETT: They got great guys up front. Their linebackers run really well. They've got great guys in the secondary. They gave guys fits last week. We had our hands full with them this week. It was a different challenge as opposed to the week before we had against San Francisco.

But happy the way guys played on the outside. George made some great plays. We'll get the run game going here and get balanced and continue to do some things play-action-wise.

Q. To get George involved, that's the kind of game target-wise, production-wise?

KENNY PICKETT: They did a good job. That pick early in the game, it was funnel -- 22 passed off Pat and jumped inside on him.

So there was a lot of times he was getting doubled. It was tough to get him the football. But whenever we had that opportunity of one-on-one, I really wanted to get him the ball, let him do things thing.

That's something we have to continue to take advantage of, getting him singled up, moving him around being creative, finding ways to get him the football.

Q. You mentioned needing to stay on the field. You had some drives you were able to sustain, others that were cut short. What's the discrepancy, or is there anything you can put your finger on there, the difference in those?

KENNY PICKETT: The one play that gets us behind the chains, it seems like, that we're moving the football. We're having plays. We're getting explosive plays and then we have that one negative that sets us behind the chains and we don't execute after that.

So we've got to eliminate those plays, continue to move the ball forward, stay ahead of the chains and put us in third

and manageable instead of third and 11 plus or third and 10 plus. That's going to be key moving forward.

Q. Is there a common outlier with what that negative is sometimes, something you identify?

KENNY PICKETT: I have to watch tape to see it. It comes down to executing. Like I've been saying, hats off to them; good defense. But we have to execute at a much higher level.

Q. You said you were okay with your decision-making week one, more the physical stuff. Do you feel that was the case again tonight or do you need to look at it before?

KENNY PICKETT: I want to look at it. There's a couple of throws I wish I had back. That pick early should have worked away. 22 came off Pat. He made a good play. I should have worked, singled up with Allen. But besides that I need to watch the tape and see what it looks like.

Q. You said Wednesday you wanted to cut it loose. Did you or did they not allow that kind of game?

KENNY PICKETT: No, listen, we couldn't get behind them really. They were doing a good job of doubling George. We hit some good end breakers.

There's definitely positive to build off. Like I've been saying, it's hard to win in this league. Take the positives and learn from the negatives and move on.

Q. Did you get evaluated at halftime -- was it left shoulder?

KENNY PICKETT: Yeah, just normal bumps and bruises that come with the job. All good. Excited to get back there on Sunday.

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