

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

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## Teryl Austin

Weekday Press Conference



**Q. How do you think Joey handled himself last game? Maybe this is the week everybody keeps talking about.**

TERYL AUSTIN: I thought he handled himself well. He did some really good things coverage-wise. You know, it's what we talk about every week, is the more he plays, the better he plays, the more he progresses, the more snaps he gets, then he'll earn those snaps, and I think he earned those last week and he'll continue to do that.

**Q. So more of a 78 percent of the defensive snaps kind of guy now?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I don't know if I'm going to put a percentage on it. I'll say this: He's earned more snaps and he'll probably get some more snaps. I think he's played well. We were talking about with him, we're addressing the tackling. If you want to be an every-down corner in this league you got to be able to tackle. So he's continuing to progress in that regard and we will just keep pushing.

**Q. Does he put Pat Peterson in a position where you can move him around? Do you prefer to use him that way?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think you saw that a little bit last week. We were able to move Pat to different things and use his abilities in a few different ways. That's because Joey is playing better and allows us to have more confidence to keep him out there.

**Q. From an assignment standpoint, is Joey where he for the most part needs to be?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think so. He's a smart kid. He asks good questions in meetings, in all the meetings we're in. He's been around ball. He's doing a good job in that regard.

I don't have any worries about him in terms of knowing what we're doing, how we're doing it. It's obviously like everything, it's the execution of it.

**Q. For his development, do you just keep him on one side?**

TERYL AUSTIN: It's always easier to do that. When you're training a young corner, it's easy to keep him outside, let them learn that, get a feel for the game, how things are -- how the routes are run out there so you don't give them a whole bunch of different things and different sides.

It's always a lot easier to keep them on one side, let them learn, soak all that in, until you're confident he feels pretty comfortable. Then you might be able to...

**Q. I think I saw stats that TJ only had one snap on the other the other side this year. Very few. Why was this the game where you decided to move him around a handful of times?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think we wanted to try to move TJ because, as you guys know, he gets chipped, double teamed, all kinds of things every play. It's easy if everybody knows where you are all the time.

Sometimes if you set your protection, you come out, you set the formation, protections go with the formations and he's on the other side, you may not be able to get all those bodies to him.

So it was a little bit of a us trying to move him around, get him in an advantageous position.

**Q. If you do it this way, what do you think their counter would be? Flip a tight end?**

TERYL AUSTIN: You could flip a tight end. Maybe have to flip your -- bring somebody over, flip a protection. I'm sure there is way to combat it, but I think it's a little bit -- makes it a little bit harder on them instead of just knowing, okay, listen, TJ Watt is going to be to our right on our offense. This is how we're going to block him this week.

**Q. I was going to follow up on Mark's question about that. He's been pushed wide. Since Houston, seems like the line splits or they get the tight end out there as**

**well. For whatever reason, seems like he's starting wide on a lot of rushes. To Mark's point, how do you counter that?**

TERYL AUSTIN: That's what you do. We're trying to move him around and find some different things and different ways for him to rush.

Again, he moves wide, because if he stays there tight the guy has an outside angle to chip him down and that limits his effectiveness as a rusher, so it's our job to try to get him in the best positions.

So we'll do that, whether it's scheme on that side, moving him around, whatever it takes, we'll try to do something to allow him to...

**Q. Is that the most attention you've seen? I know he gets a lot.**

TERYL AUSTIN: Probably not. It's the same. We can watch a team and they don't do that all year, but when we show up in the stadium they do that to TJ, because he's that impactful.

It would be dumb for us not to plan for it and to try to give him some options to get free to rush the pass, because he does affect the game so much.

**Q. Was Wallace hurt in the game, and did that affect his playing time?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think he had a little bit of -- I don't know if he's nursing anything, but felt a little bit something during the game, you know, that probably affected a little bit. Also I think the fact that Joey is playing well affected it too.

**Q. Is that why Pierre was out there for a couple snaps?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yes.

**Q. What's the confidence level on James Pierre?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I like James Pierre. James Pierre comes to work every day. He started some games. I know he struggled a little bit in the past, but I think since then, when he's had spot duty and has had an opportunity to help us with limited amount of snaps, he's done a great job.

**Q. I don't think we asked you last week about Darius Rush coming to on the roster. Swapping him in for Kane, what does that give you guys?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think he gives us -- he's a big young

corner that's really fast. I know coming out of South Carolina he had really good special teams tape as well. So the object for us was to get him in here to see what he can do in terms of corner play and try to develop him.

I don't think you can have enough young corners in your program. As you guys know, they can go down in a heartbeat. If you're caught holding the bag, that's not very good.

**Q. What pops off the tape when you watch Etienne and the Jags' running game?**

TERYL AUSTIN: He's explosion. He can really explode. He's got tremendous speed, and for not a real big guy in terms of how some of the running backs are in the league, he runs behind his pads and he'll run through arm tackles in a heartbeat. The guy is impressive.

**Q. I know you weren't on staff when James Harrison was here, but as a defensive guy that has been in the league for a long time, what kind of reputation did he have around the league when you were an opposing coach or scouting him?**

TERYL AUSTIN: James Harrison?

**Q. Yeah.**

TERYL AUSTIN: Oh, he was a killer on the edge. He just man handled folks. I got to see that up close and personal when I was at Baltimore. We played the Steelers, and you just watch him and he just man handled the end. He did a great job in terms of rushing because he was so strong. Heck of a rusher in terms of leverage.

He's obviously an unbelievable player.

**Q. Are there a lot of similarities in his game and what TJ has been able to do?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think they're different players. They operate differently. They both impact the game in a great way for us; just different.

**Q. James' famous play he was supposed to rush but he saw something backed up. Intercepted it and went... Is that what TJ did?**

TERYL AUSTIN: No.

**Q. He was supposed to drop?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yes. (Laughter.) Other than that, I'm not saying anything else.



**Q. Was Harvin supposed to rush when he got a sack?**

TERYL AUSTIN: We'll say yes. How is that? (Laughter.)

**Q. It's after the Super Bowl. You can tell us.**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, I tell you all the secrets at the end of the year. Nothing going to be told right now.

**Q. Winning these close games is not something new for you guys. It's been going on for a few years now that your record in one-possession games is a lot better than 50/50. Do you have any explanation for that? Is it as simple as if it's close we feel like TJ, Alex, Minkah, one of those guys is going to make a play that changes it, or...**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think the mindset of our team is whatever it takes to win. I don't think our team, as Mike likes to say, they don't blink in tough situations. That allows us to still play well and make the plays that are needed at the end of a game. I think that's why we win so many close, tight games.

We expect that. This is the NFL. We expect hard-fought games and expect them to go down to the last possession. It's our mindset that we have the ability to make those plays at that time.

**Q. Is Fitzpatrick doing a lot more dirty work as opposed to ball searching?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, he has been.

**Q. Is he okay with that?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, Minkah is okay because all he cares about is if we're winning. All the guys want to play well, but he cares that we're winning and that's the most important.

**Q. Back to Harvin, is he deserving more playing time, earning it?**

TERYL AUSTIN: He's starting to. I think so. We know that from the pre-season that he has rush ability. It's just hard to get some time behind some of those guys ahead of him. We'll continue to fit him in when we can.

He is deserving.

**Q. You brought up explosiveness with Etienne. Is that a pretty good descriptor for the rest of the rest of the Jaguars' offense with their skill weapons?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Absolutely. They have an unbelievable group of skilled position players. We're going to have to play really lights out. Going to have to do things to affect the quarterback. Going to have to do things to affect the receivers so they're not running free.

We got to do a better job for us in the run game. We have to do better. It is, we won the game and we love all that, but we know we have a lot of work to do on defense in terms of being better and being a more consistent group.

That's really what we're striving for.

**Q. There was three (indiscernible) on the front. Any way you could work Loudermilk in that?**

TERYL AUSTIN: And have it always constant, yeah, we talked about that. That's kind of funny. But, no, we are just lucky that it was constant, guys are playing well for us, and they're out on the field.

**Q. So is the trickle down, what you were talking about before with TJ, there should be more opportunities for Larry or whoever is playing that left defensive lineman position on the outside right shoulder of the guard in that position?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, and Larry had a sack last week and I think that's what you want.

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**

TERYL AUSTIN: Absolutely. All those things work together. When you have dynamic edge rushers like we do, it opens up the inside guys and the inside guys have an opportunity, they'll have a better opportunity than a lot of times if your outside guys don't get pressure.

So it all works together, and we just got to continue to work at it and get production. You know, we'll get this thing figured out and get back to kind of how we like to harass the quarterback and really put them on the ground.

**Q. You talked Etienne's explosiveness being an issue in the run game. How about the pass game, can maybe match him up against linebackers and other mismatches that can really make him tough in an open field.**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, he is. It's the same thing. You have to pick your poison. They have enough speed and everything at the skill positions that you can't double everybody. You can't allocate doubles to everybody. Somebody at times has to hold up in coverage, and we just

got to pick and chose when that happens.

**Q. What are you seeing from Trevor Lawrence as he's now got a couple years in the league?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, really like this skill set. You can see he's a lot more comfortable now. You kind of watch him just drop back on some times and throw some outs, I mean, on a rope. He just makes some really good throws, has really good accuracy.

He's big. He knows how when the play breaks down he can escape and create positive plays out of something that doesn't look so positive.

I think he's really progressing and coming into his own in his third year.

**Q. What does Benton have to do to get more reps?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think he's getting plenty of reps. He's playing kind of how we do. I know Cam is an anomaly in terms of playing so many plays when he was out there, but we would like to keep those guys in terms of rotation fairly equal so they're fresh.

I think he's doing fine. He is getting the amount of reps he needs.

**Q. Lawrence and Etienne have been running together since college. Have you seen anything like that before, or how unique might that be that a quarterback and a running back like that from the same draft class, same college?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I don't put much into it. You know, I just kind of look at what they do once they're in the league and how they are in the league. When they come here they're under different coaches and schemes. I don't put much into that.

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