

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, November 12, 2023
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Coach Mike Tomlin

Postgame Press Conference



Pittsburgh Steelers 23, Green Bay Packers 19

MIKE TOMLIN: All right. That was easy. (Laughter) You know, just another tight ball game, man. I'm really just appreciative of the mindset of our group, man. They just want to make the significant plays and the significant moments and it's a good thing because these games are always tight.

Let's talk about why it was tight. We lost some significant possession downs early in the game. A couple third downs, they not only converted them but they turned them into scores, those two touchdowns in the first half. We gotta be able to win those downs and fight for those four points, make people settle for field goals. We weren't able to do it and so the game got tight. We had to settle for a few field goals some. They played on the back of those two touchdown opportunities, and so it was game on from there.

But really appreciative of the effort. I thought our bigs up front on offense did a really good job of kind of controlling it. I thought we were able to run the ball effectively and that's a good posture to play from. We made the necessary splash plays on defense in the waning moments, man, when they got somewhat one-dimensional. They do a really good job of kind of keeping you off balance schematically and minimizing that young quarterback's exposure to a defense, but later in the game when it gets a little bit thick, I thought we would have our opportunities and we did and we made them, so excited about that.

Bumps and bruises associated with play. It appears Kwon Alexander has a serious lower body injury. He's being evaluated, but not promising there. Diontae Johnson had a thumb, was able to finish. Keanu Neal had a rib injury of some description, and I think we had Trent in there at the end of the game for him. And so we gotta assess who is available to us and put together good plan. We won't make excuses about who we have available, who we don't. We got an appropriate amount of time to prepare. We're going

on a divisional road game so you know what that means, in the north. Has our attention. Questions?

Q. Mike, you talk all the time about starting fast. This the fastest you started all year today. What was the difference?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'm not going to act like something mystical is transpiring, you guys. We're just going to continue to work. We've worked and we will to continue to work, and we're starting to see some of the fruit of that labor, and it's really as simple as that.

Q. 33-year-old Patrick Peterson made a couple of big plays, blocked kick, IT, break-up. Can you just talk about his contribution his afternoon?

MIKE TOMLIN: I just love the spirit and wisdom that he brings, man. He is always a calming voice, a steadying presence. He works really well with Joey. When I'm talking to the group and I'm looking around, he's always giving you that knowing nod. It's just good to have a veteran player that's a quality human being like him because he is very much a component of raising some of the young ones that are contributing and contributing big.

Q. Mike, you guys were able to, like what Jerry was saying, able to start fast with two scores. Nine-play drive, 11-play drive. To be able to start with two touchdowns but also to have long drives where you can possess the ball, what does that add, especially at the start of the game?

MIKE TOMLIN: We're just working. We're going to continue to do so. Those are our intentions anyway, and so there's nothing spectacular about it, it's just mission accomplished.

Q. Are you concerned about the multiple injuries on defense going forward?

MIKE TOMLIN: There's a lot of things to be concerned about, you know, during the course of this journey. Injury is part of the game. It's as much a part of the game as block and tackling. I've learned over the years not to worry about those that are not available to me but to focus my

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energies on those that are available to me to make sure that they are ready and prepared and focused, and so that's my general mindset regarding injuries.

Q. ... ran the ball really well the last two games between both guys. Anything that you're just starting to round into shape now in the run game?

MIKE TOMLIN: It feels that way. It really does, but keep watching. You know how it is. We face a really stout defense here coming up here this week from what I hear.

Q. Talking about the guys you have available, how important was Elandon Roberts, especially given Kwon went down, in keeping steady on the inside?

MIKE TOMLIN: Elandon's been here the whole time and he's been a quality contributor the whole time, so I'm not going to pretend like he did something today that he hasn't been doing. He's a quality veteran player. He's a really good communicator. He takes the run game personally. Those are the reasons why we acquired him in free agency and he's consistently provided that.

Q. Mike, this is the first 100-yard game for Jaylen. What do you appreciate about the way he runs/plays the game?

MIKE TOMLIN: He just plays hard. He runs hard. He plays hard. He's a tough, hard-working young man. He's deserving of the recognition and the production that he's providing.

Q. ... see Broderick settling in there at second start right tackle?

MIKE TOMLIN: You know, I think he's been really good, and we have been really good. You can't deny that.

Q. Coach, your thoughts on the defense basically not giving up a TD the rest of the game in the second half.

MIKE TOMLIN: I'm more concerned about those two we gave up on possession downs in the first half, to be quite honest with you. We need those eight points. We get people in possession down football. We need those. We need those. Not only did they convert third downs, but they got the ball in the endzone in those two possessions, so we take that personally.

Q. Is Patrick Peterson about as good as there is coming off that edge in timing that extra point?

MIKE TOMLIN: Man, Pat was a rookie and he had a reputation for doing that. You know, we double cadenced

him and I think we got him to jump offsides, and so this is not a new skill that he has. We've known about it for some time. We were playing him out in Arizona. I think we got him to jump offsides as a rookie and he and I had a little exchange, a laugh about it in-game. He's been a dynamic player in that area.

Q. Mike, what's it like as a head coach to have Chris Boswell?

MIKE TOMLIN: It's automatic. You know, I've been really blessed here in the time that I've been here. I've been here a long time and essentially have had three kickers, and so that continuity, man, that ability to deliver with a high level of consistency is -- we don't talk about it enough, but rest assured it's appreciated.

Q. Zero turnovers by the offense the last two games. Can you just comment on that?

MIKE TOMLIN: You know, the turnover component of play is one of our key ingredients for engineering victory. Not only do we have to take care of the ball, but we have to get the ball. We haven't been clean through nine games, obviously. We've talked a lot about our, warts, but that turnover ratio has not been one of them. Generally, we do a good job of taking care of the ball. Generally, we do a really good job of searching for and getting after the ball, and that's probably going to be the difference in these tight games.

Q. Is Danny Smith okay, and what are your thoughts on what happened on that last play of the game?

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know what you're referring to regarding Danny.

Q. Danny got hit on the tackle out-of-bounds.

MIKE TOMLIN: I assume he's fine. I don't know that I've made eye contact with him, but I hadn't heard wind of anything, of any significance such as that, so no.

Q. Any thoughts on just that hit out-of-bounds?

MIKE TOMLIN: I didn't see it. I didn't see it. You guys love to chase emergency vehicles. All that transpired, you asking about that?

THE MODERATOR: Anyone else? All right.

MIKE TOMLIN: Thank you.