

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Matt Canada

Weekday Press Conference



**Q. There's a lot of anticipation about Freiermuth coming back in the locker room. First time you've had all your parts since the opener. What kind of impact might that have?**

MATT CANADA: Obviously you don't ever want to predict the impact, but it's nice to have everybody back. Since the first drive of the second half of the first game we haven't had everybody that we went through camp with. We're excited for him to come back and excited to have everybody kind of working the same way. We're continuing to try to get better, but we're excited about what he brings to the table.

**Q. How much over the last two weeks the improvement of the run game is directly tied to you guys running out of 11 personnel more often?**

MATT CANADA: It would be hard to say. I think obviously as always, it's somewhat game plan oriented, what teams do to personnel groups, and you go that way. I think our guys have done a good job. We've executed at a higher level. We've run the ball well. Our backs have hit holes. Our linebackers and tight ends have created some places to go. Certainly that's what we've done. I know statistically you know that and analytically you see that, but I think it's been a combination of a lot of things.

**Q. Do you think there's a correlation of having Broderick in the starting lineup as to why the run game has been so successful the last couple weeks?**

MATT CANADA: Certainly Broderick has done a great job. I think a lot of times in our business -- well, sometimes credit and blame gets thrown around. It's 11 men doing their job. I'm not minimizing the job Broderick has done. In two weeks he's come in and played extremely well and done a lot of good things. Certainly happy with what he's done.

But I think all our guys have continued to push and elevate the run game to where we want it to be.

**Q. Combining those two things, specifically about Broderick, he's the only tight end on the field, that's not a very heavy package, but he's a pretty significant blocker when he's played out of your --**

MATT CANADA: You're talking about Broderick or Darnell?

**Q. I'm sorry, Darnell in 11 personnel, he's a heavier blocking tight end --**

MATT CANADA: For sure. Darnell, obviously he's a blocking tight end. We know that, somebody you have to cover and manage and be where he is in the pass game, too. So certainly he adds a component to our game.

**Q. Does Allen in that regard, as well --**

MATT CANADA: Allen has done -- you talk about a great player, great teammate, great everything, Allen has just been everything we could have asked for. He does whatever you ask, blocks, run routes, leads, so he's been a huge asset for our offense and for our entire group in my opinion.

**Q. With Cleveland more downhill, what is it about their run defense that makes them so hard to --**

MATT CANADA: They've got a bunch of great players. As you all know, they're No. 1 in the league in defense. Schematically, they do a great job schematically. They also do a great job with the talent they've acquired and the way they played. They've certainly upped the field in their front. Obviously we know 95, leading the league in sacks and the tremendous talent he brings. You have to know where he is. The other guys certainly you can't not take care of the rest of the defense, either.

Tremendous challenge for us playing the best defense statistically in the league right now. It will be a big challenge for us. They're very, very aggressive whether they're blitzing or not.

**Q. Do you feel like you're in a better rhythm much more than week 2 when you faced them last time?**

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MATT CANADA: Yeah, probably, but every game is different. I say that all the time. All we've got to do is try and win the game. Obviously coming into week 2 we had not a good performance coming out of week 1, and jumping in, play a really good defense.

Obviously I hope we're improving. I think we're getting better at some things. All that'll matter is at the end of the game on Sunday if we win or we lose.

**Q. As far as the rhythm of the offense, Mason Cole has -- he talked to us earlier today. How much of the rhythm is literally the rhythm in the run game of the backs hitting the mesh point of the hole at the right time lately?**

MATT CANADA: Probably some of it, but I think it's just obviously getting 1st downs, staying on the field, being able to establish the rhythm as you're using that word of some consistency and not just a couple plays here and back and situational football. Getting some more opportunities to establish the run, I think it gets better and better as the game goes. I think we all know that. You see people waiting games in the fourth quarter, running the ball because they've started to build that throughout the game.

I think that rhythm is real, but we've got to continue to do it. A huge challenge against who we're playing this week.

**Q. Do you feel like you did -- the first Cleveland game the defense got you a lead early. At Tennessee you got your own lead early. This last game it felt like there was something a little bit different in terms of you got a lead and maybe were able to capitalize on that a little bit better in terms of taking advantage of playing ahead. Do you feel like you guys when playing with a lead and getting that running game going have kind of unlocked something over the course of the season?**

MATT CANADA: I view it as it's all we for me. The Steelers win and the Steelers lose. To that part of your question, I'm not sure I'm with you.

But it's obvious if you're ahead, it's better. Obviously certainly there's more opportunities to do things when you're winning. I don't know if that answers your question. Obviously I think the rhythm of an offense, you've got to stick with your plan. You've got to do things you've got to do. We've got to run the ball. We know that. We're a team that believes in running the ball. That's something that philosophically we've all not made any secrets about, so in games when we run the ball effectively, it helps us do the things we want to do.

**Q. What kind of season do you think Dan Moore has had on that left side?**

MATT CANADA: I think he's done a good job. He's playing left tackle in the National Football League. There's 32 of them in the world, and it's a really, really challenging job. He blocks in a lot of cases the best rusher on a team every week, and certainly getting ready to do that -- obviously move him around, but he's getting ready to do that again this week. I think Dan has done a really good job. I think the improvement he's made over the time he's been here is impressive. There's nobody that cares more or works harder. We're happy with what he's done, happy for him.

**Q. Because Pickett's stats have been so good in the fourth quarter, we've often bracketed off that fourth quarter from the rest of the game. How do you think he did in the fourth quarter last week when there was a couple opportunities like for instance the play to Pickens got wiped up by the OPI, there was a good shot down the sideline that Deonte couldn't haul in. Did he play better than the numbers indicated?**

MATT CANADA: Well, obviously that's the blocking thing. He's making plays at times. Sometimes it's opportunities. Like you say, some of the plays we've made, we've just made them and they've been really good. Some of the plays we've missed, we've just missed them. We've got to continue to go. Kenny is the focal point. He's the quarterback. He's who everybody talks about. But as I continue to say about the Broderick question earlier, it's 11 guys doing their job, and we've all got to execute and do well, but Kenny certainly has risen to the challenge in the fourth quarter, but I think our offense has done that, too, and our team has. Defensively we do the same things.

We've just got to keep finding ways to win.

**Q. Dan Moore has had about as much success as anyone has had get Garrett. Do you see something in that match-up that he elevates his play or is it a stylistic thing that maybe he has more success with that guy that other people really struggle with?**

MATT CANADA: Oh, I wouldn't -- Dan does a great job and works as hard as he can. Myles Garrett is playing at an elite level and has for a while, and it's a huge challenge. It will be a huge challenge on Sunday. We'll keep doing the best we can to hang in there and see what we can do.

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