

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Friday, December 8, 2023  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Bill Belichick

### Visitors Postgame Press Conference

Patriots 21, Steelers 18

BILL BELICHICK: I thought a really great job by the players and coaches this week. Obviously a short week. Tough, disappointing game last week. They came in, had a really good week of preparation.

I thought the guys played with a lot of effort, energy, toughness, resiliency. The Steelers are what they are. They battle you. They find a way to hang around, make it tough at the end, which they did.

Our guys really stepped up. Had a lot of guys really come through with some big plays in the game that we needed. Happy for our team. Happy for the coaches. Like I said, it was a short week. Not much sleep this week. They put a lot into it. It's very satisfying to see the results that we had today.

#### **Q. How nice was it to see the offense come out on the first drive, set the tone for the night?**

BILL BELICHICK: It's always great to see. Yeah, it's always great to see the offense put it in the end zone. It's great, yeah.

#### **Q. What did you see from that unit tonight, starting with Bailey, all the way through?**

BILL BELICHICK: We had our moments. We hit some plays. Third down conversion was a big play by JuJu. Hunter, two big red area catches. I thought we ran the ball competitively against obviously a very good defense.

So I thought Zeke ran hard. Zeke made a big play on the interception, keep them out of the end zone. Ended up getting a defensive stop on it. That was a huge play.

But, yeah, the offensive line, look, they're a good defense, try to neutralize, two guys Watt and Pickens. Both those guys obviously a big problem. Played competitively against them.



#### **Q. What has it been like working with Zeke this year?**

BILL BELICHICK: Yeah, good. Zeke comes to work every day. We needed him to step up and carry the (indiscernible) today, and he did. Carried the ball, a lot of plays, a lot of snaps. Short week. Got banged up last week. That was a pro performance today.

#### **Q. What have you learned about him that you couldn't have known from having not coached him on a daily basis since you had him?**

BILL BELICHICK: Yeah, I don't know. Obviously I didn't know him at all, so everything has been a new experience. I try not to judge people till I get to work with them, so...

#### **Q. What does that say about him on the football field, the second play on the interception where he saves it?**

BILL BELICHICK: It was a huge play. Great effort play, yeah. Yeah, played really competitively.

#### **Q. How did you see the initial explosive to JuJu on the opening drive?**

BILL BELICHICK: He caught the slant on a blitz zone. Split it, made a good run. Made a couple tough catches in there, third down conversions. Blocked well. Blocked hard. We sent him in there on Fitzpatrick most of the day, so...

Took advantage of his opportunities, did a good job.

#### **Q. (No microphone.)**

BILL BELICHICK: That was a huge play. JC made a good play earlier that got nullified. Yeah, I mean, I thought those guys played well in the secondary. Mixed up the looks. Tried to mix up the looks on Trubisky. I thought they did a good job of that with the disguise, late rotations, all of that. Linebackers had a lot of production, Tavai, Wilson, seemed like they were in on a lot of plays.

Again, all the plays that don't go to Pickens, it's a credit to somebody in the secondary.

**Q. One of your players said it was more simplified, short week. Do you think that helped Bailey to some degree of not overthinking, playing more freely?**

BILL BELICHICK: Yeah, I don't know. It's been about the same. I mean, obviously a short week is a little bit less, but it's been about the same. I don't think it was that significant.

Yeah, it's probably a little less because we had a little less time.

**Q. How did the initial offensive explosion allow you not to only dictate terms but play the game you wanted to through the second half?**

BILL BELICHICK: Yeah, I mean, I don't know. I don't think until you get to the end of the game you worry too much about the score.

**Q. You don't worry about the score?**

BILL BELICHICK: I mean, you just keep -- there's so much time left, you just keep running your offense, whatever it is. I don't think you go into a whole different game plan 'cause you're down by seven or up by seven or down by 10 or up by 10 with 40 minutes to go in the game. That wouldn't really change me. I don't see it that way, so...

**Q. What have you seen from the guys as they've gone through this streak, nice to see them get a victory tonight?**

BILL BELICHICK: Yeah, they've come in and worked hard every day. Again, we've tried to improve and correct things that will help us. Some of those paid off tonight. Hopefully they will going forward.

Still things we can do better. Made some mistakes out there. Again, Pittsburgh is a good football team. They've got some very good players. You got to take care of those guys and not let them ruin the game. We tried not to do that.

It's the way it will be every week. We'll see good players next week and the week after that. So have to take those guys into account when we prepare for the game. Hopefully go out there and play it the way we want to play it, hit our targets.

Thanks.

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