

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

## Teryl Austin

Weekday Press Conference



**Q. Teryl, how do you prep this week not knowing exactly who's going to be in there for them?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think we prep for the system and we prep thinking they're going to play their guys. That's how you have to do it. You have to approach everything, and then we go from there.

**Q. Is that what they did last year when they did play Huntley? Was it exactly the same, or did they cater some things to him?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think they run their offense. It's different with a new coordinator this year, but at the time, they run the stuff that they practice and some of the things you see.

So we'll anticipate the same. I think that's the offense they've been running all year, and I don't think they would change it.

**Q. Does it help you have familiarity at least with Huntley?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, we have a lot of familiarity (laughter).

**Q. I mean with Huntley himself.**

TERYL AUSTIN: With Huntley, himself, yeah, we've been in the stadium with him. So we know he's a quality player. Obviously you know what kind of season Lamar is having. No matter who is behind center for them, we're going to have our work cut out for us.

**Q. Speaking of familiarity, do you now have more so with your guys?**

TERYL AUSTIN: We're getting there.

**Q. A lot of moving pieces.**

TERYL AUSTIN: We're getting there. The biggest thing I like about our guys is we have some guys doing some new things, some new guys in there, and they're just working their tail off to try to get better and help us win a game.

Then we've been doing that. So we'll just continue to try to get better. You're right, we have a little bit better idea of who they are and what they can do. So we try to tailor some things to that as well.

**Q. What's your sense of how they're using Zay and Likely over the course of the season?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Getting better and better. You're talking about two young guys, a second year guy and a rookie, that just really are coming into their own and really making some splash plays, explosive plays, and it's going to be a challenge for us.

**Q. Can you or do you call the game differently when the offense is scoring points in the field, a little more room for error, if you will, when the offense is playing?**

TERYL AUSTIN: No, I think I try to call the game the same way as always, which is to try to not let these guys score.

Obviously, when our offense is scoring, when we're not playing as well or doing some things as well, that really helps. But as far as how I call the game, I'm going to call it the way I see it, the way I think is best for us to try to succeed.

**Q. What has Pat Peterson brought to your group? Not just on the field, but more specifically in the room?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think veteran leadership, things that only time give you, and he's seen a lot of things that some guys maybe haven't seen and has experienced a lot of situations some guys haven't had. I think that's important.

He gives that to the room. He does some other things in terms of meetings. He'll want to have some meetings on his own where he has guys in there and they're working together through things. As players only.

And that's good. You have to have that type of leadership.



Joe was like that. When you have that type in there, no matter what happens with your group, no matter who's there or not there, it keeps them together.

**Q. Pretty deliberate in how you brought along Joey this summer, even the first month of the season. How has he handled himself since he's been inserted as a starter?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think he's done well. The good thing is he's done well, but he's got so much room for improvement. He could be so much of a better player. He's got a lot of things that obviously we want him to continue to improve this year, but as we work into the off-season, he's got a lot of room to jump and improve, and you've got to push him that way.

So it's been good. We were deliberate, and I think it worked out well for him.

**Q. What are those areas you think he could improve on?**

TERYL AUSTIN: Just like everywhere. I don't want to get into specifics right now. That will be stuff for the off-season.

**Q. Lloyd used to wear a T-shirt that said, I wasn't hired for my disposition. James Harrison didn't need a T-shirt to say that. T.J. seems to have that kind of edge, MVP right now. But he seems to be a fun guy too, edge and fun. What's he like in that regard as a leader, and what's he like to coach?**

TERYL AUSTIN: He's outstanding obviously. He's a great player. He wants to be great. He wants to be coached. He does, he can be a little bit surly, and that's fine. We know that you need that edge if you want to compete at a high level in this business.

But he's good to be around, and we all -- like we all do. We all have our days when we're not real pleasant to be around, but he moves on to the next day. He helps his other teammates.

You know what's really neat, you see him sitting in the back, he sits next to Alex. He helps all the guys in there. They all talk about different things and what they see. He and Larry, because they work on the same side a lot, they always talk about things.

He's an outstanding player, we all know that, but also I think he's a really good teammate.

**Q. Does Joey agree that he has areas he needs to**

**work on?**

TERYL AUSTIN: You've got to ask Joey that.

**Q. When a young guy is talented, he has confidence in himself and he has success early, as a coach, do you kind of have to almost let him enjoy the successes he has but also try to like work --**

TERYL AUSTIN: It's our job. The bottom line is he's going to have some success, but he knows and we know there's lots of things on tape that can be a lot better. If you're not always improving in this league, you're going to fall back, and people are going to catch up to you and pass you.

He'd better work and do those things to get better and not feel like he's made it because, if you feel like you've made it in this league, that's when you get swallowed up.

**Q. He asked to cover these five guys, right?**

TERYL AUSTIN: He does, yes.

**Q. Has he ever asked so far where you said no?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I don't think so (laughter). I don't think so.

**Q. What does that allow you guys defensively to do? When he goes side to side, everyone else's job changes as well? Does that limit what you can do with the other guys, or does that make it easier on the other guys?**

TERYL AUSTIN: No, it doesn't limit because I think we have a pretty smart group. So when you get put in different positions, they're able to handle that. What that allows us is to get the best matchups across the board and it hopefully helps us. That's really why we do it.

It hasn't hurt us where we're just terrible. We haven't done -- you know, we've blown some things, and we've had some deep passes on us, which we all want to get better at. I think overall in the big scheme of things, the guys are playing well together. Just some things that we have to get better. Those come with more practice.

**Q. In what ways have you seen Benton growing as well in his rookie year?**

TERYL AUSTIN: He's really just -- you just see him understanding the game a little more. He's big. He's strong. I think really the big thing for him is he's gotten better because, as the season has gone on, he starts to understand blocking schemes a little better.



When guys that are really talented kind of understand what's coming at you, then they have an opportunity to defeat it, and he's starting to get to that.

**Q. How is this Wisconsin farm team doing this year?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I love it. Just draft a few more because they've all been pretty good. Obviously we know about T.J., and Herbig is doing well. Milk is a guy that's kind of under the radar, but Milk's really developed into a valuable backup for us, get us some solid minutes in there. The Wisconsin farm team is doing great.

**Q. When Mike was asked about why the Steelers have had a little bit more success than others against Jackson, and his response was because we respect him. In what ways do you show respect to Lamar that's aided you guys?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think we show respect for the simple fact that he's a multidimensional talent. He can run. He can throw. He can make plays out of nothing. He can stay within the script. He can do it all. We respect that part of him. Consequently, when we put game plans together, they've got to be really complex and complete to take care of all those things.

If you just try to treat him as a one-dimensional guy where he can only do this, only do that, that's where you run into trouble.

**Q. Has Todd Monken's offense showed respect to that in certain ways?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think so. I think he's really taken to this new offense and the freedom it gives him in terms of throwing the ball down the field. It's not as run heavy as it's been, but he still gets his runs and does the things that he's really good at as well.

So all of a sudden, it's not just, hey, it's run. It's pass, it's run, it's everything. You can see from our first game to this game, I think the amount of growth in the offense they both have, you can see they're kind of familiar with each other, the OC and the QB, and they're on the same page, and it shows. Obviously he was spectacular last week.

**Q. Do you just apply that to whoever's playing at this point?**

TERYL AUSTIN: At this point, you have to because I think that is the offense. That is the way they want to run their offense, and it's been successful for them.

I think Huntley, if he plays, if he happens to be the guy, I think he's perfectly capable of running it.

**Q. How do you approach a guy like Alex who's getting a ton of pressure, maybe not finishing on sacks, and embracing that messaging to him and all of that?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I think Alex is a pro. He understands that sometimes the sacks are there, sometimes they're not. We know how valuable he is. The guy can get sacks, but he's gotten interceptions for us and done multiple things for us. He knows his value, and he is not underrated in our room.

And I think he's got enough character and heart to stick with it and understand that, hey, sometimes they just go -- they come in bunches. He didn't get them as much as he would like, but he's really done a good job.

**Q. If Baltimore turns to Huntley and rests Jackson, how much different do they do in there with Huntley compared to Jackson?**

TERYL AUSTIN: I don't think they do anything different. They run the offense. I think Huntley is capable of running the offense the way it is. Obviously Lamar is dynamic and does all those things at an extremely high level, and Huntley will do them at a really good level as well.

So I don't think there will be any change out there.

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