

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Teryl Austin

Weekday Press Conference



Q. What are you seeing from your run defense that has made it so effective here early in the season?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think our guys are doing a really good job of really taking control of the front up front and getting off blocks. I think our backers are doing a good job in terms of coming downhill and helping our guys get the double teams off our guys.

I think one of the big areas the gets overlooked is our corners are doing a really good job right now of tackling. I think early last year we gave up some big plays when balls bounced outside and we didn't get it corralled and on the ground.

So I think all three levels are doing a really good job.

Q. When is the last time you had an every-down inside linebacker like Patrick Queen? He played every play. What does that do for you?

TERYL AUSTIN: It's been a while. I know we been kind of shuffling through that and trying to get that for a few years here, but it really is, it's a good feeling because you know what you're going to get down in and down out.

There is real nice steady stream of communication that goes on between he and the rest of the defense, and so I think really when you look at all those factors, it's really a positive thing to have that guy that is able to play every down.

Q. Building off that about run defense, can you give us a picture of Taylor versus JK and how they approach their run game?

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, well, everybody has their own little run scheme they do. I think just talking about the back specifically, Taylor is really patient. Does a really good job. Has good contact balance. The thing that really I think separates him from a lot of backs is once he sees a crease he can take that thing the whole way.

He has unbelievable acceleration and you see it on tape. When he hits a crease, you know, all of a sudden he's in the clear. And so we got to do a really good job of minimizing holes, not giving him things that are downhill, understanding that sometimes guys that are really fast aren't very patient runners.

But he's a patient runner that has speed. That is dangerous.

Q. Nick in the run game (indiscernible) pass rusher in the doses we've seen. How do you trust him in the run game?

TERYL AUSTIN: Oh, I trust him. I trust him as a football player. I think obviously he's still a young guy, but I trust him as a football player. He has plenty of toughness to get out there and do the things that we need him to do, and so we'll count on him to do those things.

Q. Obviously has some size, but what's unique about Richardson's mobility and ability to get out unfortunate pocket?

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah, he's a big man who is agile. He's strong. You'll see him on some designed quarterback runs, you know, guys will have angle on him and he'll beat them out to the sideline.

He's unique in that way. He's just an avatar of an athlete. And then obviously when you are talking about him running, he has the ability to -- even as he's moving a little bit off balance -- to uncork a bomb. And so that's always dangerous.

So the thing we obviously preach with our guys is to make sure that don't relax at any time versus this guy. He has enough ability to avoid rushes, create some pace, and then also get the ball down the field.

Q. You mentioned that ability to get the ball down the field. Obviously he likes to get the ball down the field. (Indiscernible.) Do you have to balance that on the back end helping out with the run, and also keeping an eye out for that?



TERYL AUSTIN: Sure. We're all going to have to be diligent in that regard, because they do have -- he has the ability to throw it and they have a couple guys that have the ability to go get it.

So we have to be really good. Our front has to be really good and solid versus the run so we don't have to (indiscernible.) We can keep him back there to defend those big balls. It's going to be a big challenge for us.

Q. Looking more broadly, you guys being at the top of the league in a lot of defense metrics, what do you feel like are some of the things that need to continue to keep it that way?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think we just have to continue to play good, sound football. I think it always starts there in terms of first things first. Let's make sure we're getting lined upright. We get lined up correctly in the right stance, get our right keys, and then the play starts.

I think if our guys continue with that and that mindset and continue to fundamentally do the things the right way, we'll continue to have success.

Q. The yards after the catch so far for you guys are considerably down from last year. What are you guys doing in order to keep the cap on whatever guys, the offense making completions when they're not getting those big chunk plays?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think the guys are doing a good job of tackling. Really it's not anything we're doing special. We work at it all the time. We're just doing a better job of to this year. That's always a big thing.

First guy that's there is tackling but also guys get to go the stack, second and third guy getting there to make sure there aren't any extra yards in the first guy misses. Second guy gets there. So we're just -- the guys are doing a good job and we just got to continue to press and do it because nothing is guaranteed.

We have to press and work and do the things that got us to this point and continue to do those so we can continue to have success in those areas.

Q. Picked up three guys in the off-season; started on defense. Is it unusual how quickly they assimilated to the defense?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think the thing is we got three guys, veteran guys. Two of them have been in our division, so they know what it's like. So I think that may have helped

some of their assimilation in terms of us. They've seen us play. They see us across the field and how we play. You know, but I just think the biggest thing is they're all three good pros that came in with their minds open and, hey, what can I do to help the team. That's the biggest thing.

So that helps your development all the time.

Q. How is DeMarvin a different player than he was a year ago. Said yesterday he feels like he's going to be a little more mature.

TERYL AUSTIN: Yeah. I think so. I think that's a big thing with him in terms of how he approaches his job and the consistency with which he tries to do his job is a change.

We kind of expected that when we drafted Marv. He was a young guy, 21 year old guy who is coming in and going to have some growing to do.

We figured there would be some growing pains along the way. He is started to go obviously mature and he sees it and he feels it. I think his performance at camp and the things we like and saw about it this off-season and everything, is because of his maturity and the things he is starting to do more consistently.

Q. Do you get the sense when you guys asked him to stand up that he kind of like reengaged him a little bit? Sort of like he gets to maybe be more...

TERYL AUSTIN: He likes it. He thinks he's a big athlete. You know, if he was a guy -- I would be willing to bet that if he went and played basketball he would want to be the point guard, you know what I mean? Everyone would be trying to move him down to be the center.

Marv is a really good athlete and guy. He's engaging in this way. He likes to be challenged. I think he feels that is a good challenge. Like to be able to play inside but also to step out, stand up on two feet and get going outside.

So it's a credit to him. He is a good athlete. He can handle it. Now I think with Alex down he'll have an opportunity to really show.

Q. Curious, injuries are part of the game. After losing Trice and also (indiscernible,) lost two guys in your dime package. What will that mean for that dime package? How will that have to evolve?

TERYL AUSTIN: Well, let's see, if I tell you all that stuff, then they may know. But no, what I'll say is this: We'll continue to have our packages. How they'll shake out on Sunday we'll have to see. But I don't think it'll make us

fundamentally get away from what we do.

And so that will be probably the best way to answer that.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

TERYL AUSTIN: He has. He's good. TE has always been good. Always been an early meeting guy coming in, so that helps him reacclimate to our environment and everything.

So he's doing a good job and I think he's kind of got his feet back under him in terms of what we're doing here and how we're doing it. So I would hope that probably see him sooner than later.

Q. You referenced the nice job of minimizing how much work he what to do so far with the time of possession. Do you feel like that plays out more in the fourth quarter of the game or maybe more over the course of the season where you're adding up snaps come December?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think it'll all -- obviously at the end of the season we'll be able to really tell the story. But I think so far it obviously is really good because I think what it does is as they hold the ball, if we continue to give it back to them at a good rate like we're doing, it allows them more opportunities to get on track, wear down the opponent's defense and take control in the fourth quarter.

I think that's what has happened in a few games. You know, it's really just to me just an aspect of playing really good team football. I think that is where we are right now.

Q. You guys are ranked No. 1 defense in the NFL right now. I think it's a different pace because you guys haven't had an obsessive amount the turnovers like the Packers. Does that say something about your defense that you can dominate a game and limit a team to negative total yards without needing big splash consistently from your defense?

TERYL AUSTIN: I think, you know, I mean, I love our defense. I love our guys. I do think that really I just think we're playing really good, sound football.

I think that we can be better because if we do start to get some of these turnovers and give our offense some short fields and play with leads, those are good things that help a defense and help your team.

So I think we have some room for improvement. But I'm not -- I won't be concerned if we don't get a lot of takeaways that kind of changed momentum right off the

bat. I feel really good in our ability to stop opponents.

But we do want those takeaways because to me, those are things that help you win games when you look at the percentages of teams and when you win the turnover battle you win a lot of games.

And so that's been really a guiding thing for us, that we feel like we can win a lot of games by creating turnovers.

Sometimes they come; sometimes they don't. I think they'll start coming because I think it's an emphasis of ours. It's something we want to do. I think when you combine a team that takes the ball away like we normally do with a well strong, solid defense, I think you have a chance it really dominate.

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