

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Monday, October 28, 2024
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Mike Tomlin

Postgame Press Conference

Steelers 26, Giants 18

MIKE TOMLIN: Man, really appreciative of our efforts. It wasn't as fluid as we'd like, man, but that's football. We got to guard against style points and things of that nature. It was prime time television, football against a team that came in here with a good mindset.

We shot ourselves in the foot some early settling for three. We gave up a couple big plays that allowed them to generate some scoring drives. They kicked three.

But I just liked the overall look of the group at halftime. We acknowledged where we were. We acknowledged we needed some plays, man, to break this thing open. I had a bunch of guys that wanted to be the reason why we were successful.

Can't say enough about Calvin, man. I thought that's a big play, that punt return. It was a catalyst for us. Again, as I mentioned, we just got a lot of guys that want to be the reasons why. T.J. Watt, Alex Highsmith.

Really consistent pressure, particularly in the second half. We're just thankful to be 6-2 at the turn. We need this downtime to get some guys healthy. We had some bumps and bruises associated with play. I think everyone that went down in game was able to return.

Open it up for questions.

Q. Fourth straight week special teams making a splash play. What can you say about that unit?

MIKE TOMLIN: It's a legitimate phase of the game for us. We give it that respect, not only in words but in our approach, in how we work. The guys make it real with their efforts.

Not only Calvin, but I saw a couple of guys that secured really, really sharp blocks, man. They're blocking toward their inline and they shielded as opposed to forcible blocks.



It's just a display of football understanding.

We're not going to be great unless we're not only good at techniques but display football understanding. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention those guys. I think one of them was Rodney Williams.

Q. Did you sense this is another step forward for Russ and his play?

MIKE TOMLIN: You know, I just thought he didn't need to warm up to it. A little less rust than the week before. But I'm not surprised by his capabilities, if that's what you mean.

Q. Your thoughts on the running game, 167 yards today.

MIKE TOMLIN: It was really impressive again considering some of the circumstances. Can't say enough about guys like Ryan McCullom who are getting an opportunity to step up and put their hand in the pile, carve out space for themselves in this thing.

We talk too much about guys we don't have in this business. There's always other deserving men on the other end of that conversation who are getting an opportunity. Ryan McCullom is one of those guys. A major component of why we were successful in terms of running the football.

Q. Procedurally when you get an overturned call, when you challenge there, are you just trying to give them more time to look deeper at it?

MIKE TOMLIN: I didn't know that they used replay assist. I really wasn't really clear on why it was ruled a non-touchdown. I went to the flag. Had I known they used replay assist, obviously I wouldn't have thrown because you're not allowed to throw when they use replay assist.

Q. You've been asked about him a bunch of times, but as T.J. continues to make plays like tonight, what are your thoughts?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'm not surprised by it, but it doesn't mean

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

that it's not appreciated. I just come to expect it because he's got a unique talent, a unique approach. Usually that produces unique results with a really consistent tone to it and usually at the most timely moments.

I think the new Steelers are shaking their heads. I think the guys that have been here kind of expect it.

Q. Given how much the penalties affected and maybe stalled some drives for both teams, had to settle for field goals, can you talk about how much the momentum changed with Calvin's punt return and you didn't get called for a penalty?

MIKE TOMLIN: I didn't think we did. I don't live in that fear, to be quite honest with you.

We were ready to make this thing open, man. I talked to Calvin on third down before he took the field. He'd just been close for a couple of weeks. I thought it was his time. He thought it was his time. He delivered.

Q. How about what Calvin did as receiving options for Russ?

MIKE TOMLIN: We talk quite a bit, man. We got a lot of confidence in our collective. They want to prove that they're capable. Oftentimes George gets a lot of attention. That creates opportunities for others. It's their job to deliver.

I think some of those plays you mentioned are an example of guys delivering when given an opportunity.

Q. Have you diagnosed what went wrong with the run defense at times?

MIKE TOMLIN: I'd have to look at the tape, man. Sometimes my natural inclination is to give credit to the people that we compete against. They work hard and formulate plans. Sometimes we're disrespectful when we don't tip our caps to them for the efforts that they did.

Q. What did you think of Russ' deep ball to George?

MIKE TOMLIN: Again, I am getting used to taking a look at it. I know if you give George an opportunity, he's going to come down with it. But Russ is doing a lot of things well.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports