

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Russell Wilson

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers - 18, Ravens - 16

Q. George told us that the Ravens threw some looks at you guys that you guys didn't necessarily see as much on film. What are some things that caught you guys off guard that you had to adjust to?

RUSSELL WILSON: They did a good job. We knew it was going to be a battle back and forth in this game. I knew it was going to be a tougher will in the end. That's just how these games are.

It was huge for us to be able to respond. I think that we reacted and responded really well on certain things, especially as the game went on. We kind of started figuring out what they were trying to do, and I think we just stayed the course.

Q. Darnell's become a big part of the game plan in recent weeks. How have you seen him improve just since you've been here?

RUSSELL WILSON: Darnell's been so big for us. Obviously him in the run game, him in the passing game. Obviously he caught that big seam up the middle, which was a huge, huge play for us. I think he's done some really, really good things for us. We've got great confidence in him. That was another key part to the game.

Q. Coming from the AFC West, what was it like your first experience with this rivalry?

RUSSELL WILSON: Just the passion, man, just the winning. Winning is everything, just to be able to get a huge win, that was really big.

I think obviously to play in front of our fans. Obviously this is my first time. It's such an honor to be a Pittsburgh Steeler. Man, what a gift it is and to wear the black and gold and to be in front of our fans for the first time, obviously the amount of history.

We knew this was going to be a game of a long battle throughout. We knew it was going to come down to the wire, and we were able to pull it out.

Our defense was unbelievable all night. Obviously guys like T.J., Cam, Minkah. I thought Payton Wilson's play was a heck of a play. DeShon Elliott has been playing so great for us.

It was a great team effort. Obviously for a guy like Queen to be able to step up and make big plays against a team he used to play for, I know that meant a lot for him as well.

Q. Coming into a game like this, are you anticipating it's going to be a dogfight? When it unfolds the way it does, do you play it just a little bit more careful, a little more close to the vest, if you will?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think the biggest thing for us knowing it was going to come down to the wire is staying calm in the midst of it. Staying calm in the midst of the storm of the game. I think we did a really good job of that as the fourth quarter went on and the games went on.

We knew it was going to be a battle. It was kind of ugly at first how physical the game was and penalties and this and that, and we just had to get rid of some of the penalties. We were putting ourselves in third and 15 and third and 20 too much. As the game came down to it, we were obviously able to get key first downs and key moments as well.

Q. Did you know that Fields was going to be used in some of those late game situations? What's your thought?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, we had a whole cool package for him. Obviously Justin is so talented. He's just a great teammate. Whatever it takes for us to win and get another first down is key.

Obviously he did such a good job on that zone read and reading it out. I think the biggest thing is that we have a really good package. He's such a great athlete and can do so many things for us. We were ready for that too.

Q. Last week you guys needed your offense to step up in a critical moment. You were able to do it. This week you needed the critical two-point stop and you get it from the defense. What are you learning about your team in these crunch time moments?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think the best teams in the world, the teams that I've been on that are championship teams and everything else is that everybody does it together. I think that we've been able to do it on offense. We've been able to do it on defense. We've been able to do it on special teams with Boz. We've got the best kicker in the world.

I just think that just to be able to do it together and have fun while doing it, nobody cares about stats or anything like that, we just care about the one stat that really matters, and that's the winning. I think that's been huge for us.

To obviously take the lead in the AFC North and really -- think about it, I think it's a two-game lead now? 1-1/2, almost 2. I'll round up.

Then obviously going into this week knowing we're playing a really talented football team in Cleveland. I'm not sure if they won or lost today, but I just know they're going to be ready to go. They're a tough place to play. It's a tough environment. So we're going to have to bring our best and know that we're going to have to respond again.

Knowing that we're having to play two games in ten days essentially and whatever it is, really a few days, I think that's a big thing for us to respond, and that will be a great test for us and we'll be ready to go.

Q. Going up against that team, how big was this win?

RUSSELL WILSON: It was huge. Obviously when you're thinking about the best teams in football, the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Ravens are up there. So we had the best talent in the world on that field today, on an historic field. There's been some all time greats, some of the greatest players to ever play in the Pittsburgh Steelers uniform on that field.

To be wearing this jersey, to be out there and compete, and to know that we got a huge win together, that was huge. I think that we've just got to stay the course. There's a lot more football left. We've got to stay humble. We've got to stay hungry. We've got to get better.

There's so many opportunities for us to get better too. The opportunities in the red zone, we've got to make those plays. We've got to find a way to get them in. We're going to do that. We were able to do it last week. We've just got

to respond this week.

We knew it was going to be tough. We knew they were going to respond and make plays, but we got to make those. We're going to do that.

That's the great thing. That's the good news is there's so much more out there, but to get a huge win at home against the Ravens was really, really massive.

Q. How much does it impact the offense to have Boswell, the way he's performing?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think that, when you have so many great players -- obviously, Boz is -- man, he's always been one of the best in the game, and he showed that again tonight, and he showed that again today, just how clutch he is in so many crucial moments.

When you really think about it, championship games, championship moments, they come down to crucial kicks like that a lot, and when you've got a guy that you can trust and know that he's going to have no fear, we just believe in him. He works at it. There's no surprise. It's not shocking because he works at it every day, and he loves it, and he's a great teammate, he's a great leader. He's composed. He's confident. He's everything you want him to be.

He's got quarterback in him. He's got grit. He's got guts. I think that's a huge thing to have a guy like that kicking the ball for us.

Q. What do you guys have to clean up in the red zone?

RUSSELL WILSON: We had a few opportunities. George almost came down with that one. That would have been big. We had a couple other opportunities that we just didn't capitalize on. We've just got to make the play. When you can search and talk about plays all we want. We've got great plays. Obviously we showed that last week and all the weeks before that. The biggest thing is we've just got to make the play this week.

We'll play cleaner. I tried to give Darnell a shot down there in the red zone. Obviously we needed a play, we needed a touchdown. I was trying to throw it up to the big man, and they made a play unfortunately. I think GP almost had that one. He makes those all the time.

I think we have so much confidence in those guys. We're going to keep going. We're going to keep going after it. We'll play better. I'll play better down there too, and we'll just play cleaner. That's the biggest thing.

Man, it's just at the end of the day, when you're playing these kind of championship-type games, not everything's going to go your way. As you saw on their end too, they've got a lot of great players, and it didn't go their way and vice versa. I think we were able to stay the course and make plays when we needed to.

Q. Were you just trying to alley-oop it there to Darnell?

RUSSELL WILSON: Yeah, I was just trying to alley-oop to the big boy. Unfortunately, that didn't work out for us. That can happen. Just wanted to give him a chance and unfortunately didn't make the play. I have confidence in him again.

I think the biggest thing is we were able to respond. I think Payton Wilson's play right after that, picking Lamar, that was a heck of a play by him. I told him in the locker room, shout out to NC State, he made a great play there.

That's how we respond. When things go well, when things don't go well. Last week we made some big plays when we needed to, and this week the defense made some big plays when we needed it. It's all together. That's the best part about this team -- the confidence, the love, the passion, the joy, man, wearing the black and gold, we're just having fun, and we love winning.

We've got to go and get this one this week and we've got great confidence in who we are and what we can do, and we've got to stay the course.

Q. How important is it not only tactically but also just keeping Justin engaged to have him do packages like that? How important is it not just tactically but just keeping him engaged?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think the big thing about our quarterback room is we work every day, man. We love this game. I believe that Justin Fields is a franchise quarterback. He's done it. He's a great player. He's a great teammate. He's a hard worker. We just love doing this thing together, man.

I think Kyle, he's been in the games before. All three of us have played some big time football. We've been having experience. To be able to lead this team and to really lead the quarterback room too, it's a big part of just my joy of this season is just to be able to just play with great guys, man, just love this game.

It's all of us together. We're doing it. We're having fun doing it. Obviously Justin was able to pick up the big first down twice there. Once there and he had another big run.

That slide rule -- I hate that slide rule -- but he almost had that there. I think just think that we're all doing this together, and we're having fun while doing it and got so much confidence in him.

Q. Traditionally you get 24 hours to savor a win. Can you afford 24 hours this week?

RUSSELL WILSON: No, we don't have 24 hours. We have about 2 hours. We have about 2 hours to just enjoy this and embrace it.

What a great atmosphere today. You think about it, those terrible towels flying around. It's a joy playing here. It's fun. It's a blast. This city's special, and these fans are special, these teammates are special, these coaches are special. Everybody that helps us too, the things you don't get to see, from the training room to the equipment room to the strength staff, just everybody involved, to the cafeteria, that's a huge, collective, organizational win. It means a lot.

Obviously this division is one of the best in football. My opinion, it's the best. We're doing some great things, and we've just got to stay the course and keep getting better.

Q. How does this team compare with the very good Seahawks team that you played on?

RUSSELL WILSON: I think that obviously I've been fortunate enough to win a world championship before. I think that on those championship teams, a Super Bowl team, we just had so much great talent.

The thing about talent is that you also have to have the work ethic and the drive and the will to win and the ability to win close games, the ability to win on offense in a big key moment, to take the lead.

Like last week we hit the bomb to Mike Williams, that was huge to take the lead. The defense to be able to make a stop. The defense making a huge, huge stop against a really, really good offense and a two-point conversion to contain the lead, keep the lead to 18-16. To have a big time kicker in Boz -- those are the type of championship moments you have to have.

The best part is nobody blinked. Coach mentioned that too, don't blink. We didn't blink. We stayed focused. We stayed in the moment.

We haven't done anything yet, though. We haven't done anything yet. We've got a lot more to go. We've got a lot more football to play. That's the part that we embrace. That's the challenge that we enjoy.

We're just going to stay the course. We're going to keep believing in each other. We're going to celebrate this, like I said, for two hours and move on and know that we've got a tough rivalry football game coming up again in Cleveland. So we've got to be ready to go for that one, and we know it's going to be a tough fight.

Once again, just what a great atmosphere. Those fans, they mean everything to us. They meant everything to us last week in Washington. Obviously to travel on the road like that and then to play at home in a great historic location obviously here in Acrisure Stadium, it's a special feeling.

As a guy that's played in every stadium, been in every tough moment, challenges, games, tough games, to have that feeling of togetherness from the organization to the crowd to the players, it's a special thing.

So we were just so connected, and that was a special game.

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