

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, December 8, 2024
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Mike Tomlin

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers 27, Browns 14

MIKE TOMLIN: First I just want to say congratulations to the Hall of Honor honorees. Dick LeBeau, Willie Parker, Jason Gilden, Casey Hampton. I had an opportunity and blessing to work with three of the four men. They're so deserving of the honor.

I'm glad we were able to do our part in terms of making this a really good weekend for that. They're deserving of that. Just wanted to tip the cap to those guys.

Appreciative of the efforts in-game. It didn't start off the way we would like in terms of fluidity. We weren't converting third downs early on. But the guys found traction.

I appreciate the defense providing some short fields and splash in order to get us going as a team. It is a team game in that way.

Obviously the special teams with the splash play down the stretch to get us out of the stadium. That's what teams do, they make plays in all three phases. They uplift one another. When a certain component doesn't roll in as smoothly as you like. Thankful for the win. AFC North football. We will take it and keep moving.

On the injury front, we have a bunch of bumps and bruises associated with play. I think the only thing that's really worth mentioning at this point is Larry Ogunjobi went out with a groin in the first half. Second quarter he wasn't able to return. I'll have an update for you on Tuesday regarding some of the other ones.

GP was listed as questionable. We didn't feel like he was going to be able to play the type of number of snaps we thought would be worth putting him a uniform for, to be quite honest with you. We didn't want a small problem to become a big problem.

We put a helmet on Scottie Miller. As you can see, most of

the time when you put the helmet on healthy guys, they take care of the rest. Scottie made some plays for us. Thankful for that. That is another example of the team component of this game.

You can waste a lot of time worrying about the guys that are unavailable to you. We choose to focus our energies on the guys that are available to us, their preparedness, ultimately their play.

Tip of the cap to Scottie Miller stepping up and making some big plays for us.

I'll pause and open it up for questions.

Q. Big catch by Mike Williams. Without George, what did you find out about your passing game and receivers?

MIKE TOMLIN: It's what we've been kind of discovering or rediscovering throughout every component of this process. You guys were asking us about our lack of 'number two' and team development.

The guys made plays where we throw the ball to make plays. The strength of the pack is the pack. We got a bunch of guys that want to be the reasons why we're successful.

When given an opportunity, I think they continually prove that, whether Scottie or Mike or Calvin or Van. We believe in our group. I know I've said that to you guys repeatedly. Maybe you'll start believing me.

Q. What led to the offense's better fluidity in the second half?

MIKE TOMLIN: I think just settling down, getting a feel for maybe how they were playing us. Sometimes it's that component of it. Man, Jim Schwartz has been around a long time. He's a savvy coordinator. He did some nice things schematically.

Q. Do you think they changed at all with George not out there, how they played you?



MIKE TOMLIN: You'd have to ask them that.

Q. (Question about young players stepping up.)

MIKE TOMLIN: They're capable people. I don't want to absorb any of the credit that they deserve, man. I haven't made a football play in a long, long time.

Most of those guys you mentioned made plays today. They're deserving of the credit, they work hard, they prepare themselves, they're not intimidated by the environment, although they lack experience. I think that's the key ingredient.

Q. Specifically, what were your points of emphasis operationally to stop the long drives you had been giving up on defense?

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that we've been giving up a whole bunch of long drives. I'd disagree with you there.

Q. What would you say the defense and the interception that they had as a turning point for the offense?

MIKE TOMLIN: You know, sometimes when you're struggling a little bit to gain some traction, the short field will get you going. Man, I can't say enough about that play. He is a young guy that's evolving and evolving in a big way. I just think that play is an example of it.

Q. The value of Russell's running ability today?

MIKE TOMLIN: We don't want to make a living doing so, man. But we're also willing to take what the defense gives us. He's a sharp guy. We trust his decision making, not only in terms of whether to give or to keep, but to keep himself safe in terms of getting down. I thought he did a nice job of doing all those things.

Q. At this stage in the season, a couple mistakes, miss field goals... At this point in December, how crucial is it for you to be able to capitalize when things like that arise?

MIKE TOMLIN: It's complementary football is what you're talking about, what we focus on. We got to build off of positivity. That's what good teams do this time of year. Somebody makes a play, the other side of the ball backs it up, so forth. That's what we're trying to do, we're trying to play complimentary football, whether it's putting the fire out or building upon the good.

I just like the trajectory of our group in that regard. But it's needed. As the road gets narrow, you got to play really

good complementary football in an effort to keep rolling.

Q. Your thoughts on the continued pressure that you put on Winston from Cam Heyward? I can't remember the other one.

MIKE TOMLIN: We got to ride the wave that that four-man rush provides. Man, we put a lot of time in terms of developing that group and acquiring talent in that space. We're not bashful about that.

Our bigs set the pace for us. Then our littles obviously close the door. I'm just appreciative of those efforts. Good to have Alex Highsmith back in the fold. Just thankful for the consistent pressure they were able to put on them today.

Q. What can you say about Russ' handling of the game today?

MIKE TOMLIN: Russ has been in this thing a while. He's not going to shrink in the face of adversity. He's just seen too much. I thought he was steady. Equally as important, I thought he kept the group steady until we found our footing.

Q. To your earlier comment about George, do you expect him to be available next week?

MIKE TOMLIN: We can talk about that on Tuesday. It's premature at this point. I would be speculating. I don't want to mislead anyone.

Q. (No microphone.)

MIKE TOMLIN: Like I said, man, we just try to make a conscious effort to focus on the guys that are available to us. We respect them as professionals and play-makers.

With the efforts, they make that philosophical approach real. They affirm it continually, so I'm thankful for that.

Thanks, guys.

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