

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Patrick Mahomes

Visitors Postgame Press Conference

Chiefs 29, Steelers 10

Q. Can you put in words what it means to secure the No. 1 seed in the Playoffs?

PATRICK MAHOMES: It showed the toughness of the game. I think we got better as obviously the game went on.

The guys, they're mentally tough, they're physically tough. We played some really good football teams, some hard-fought battles. The guys came away with three wins.

Getting the No. 1 seed is important. It's like winning a Playoff game. I was happy to get that done.

Q. Are you peaking at the right time?

PATRICK MAHOMES: That's what you want to do. Obviously we feel like we can continue to get better and better. But obviously we're playing, especially offensively, our best football at the end of the year. Getting guys healthy.

We're excited. We're going to keep working. This isn't the end. This is just the beginning. We'll continue to work to get even better as we go into the Playoffs.

Q. Not the first time you had that first-round Playoff bye. Do you feel you needed it?

PATRICK MAHOMES: It's going to be nice getting guys healthy. This is the earliest bye I've ever had in general. To kind of have had this grind of whatever it is, I think we had a bye on like week six, it is like almost 10 weeks of football, grinding this short schedule at the very end of the year.

We had some guys banged up. To get them back healthy now. We'll see how week 18 goes, who plays, who doesn't play. That's up to coach.



Having this break, getting back healthy, getting ourselves ready to go for the Playoffs, it was super important, especially with the guys we had banged up.

Q. You have a bye in the first round. Do you feel it's necessary that you play some next week?

PATRICK MAHOMES: That's completely up to coach. I'll prepare regardless, either way. Denver, I mean, it's probably going to be a Playoff team regardless. I'm going to prepare for them like I'm going to start. If coach wants me to go out there and play, I'll go out there and play. If he doesn't, I'll sit back.

Coach Reid knows what he's doing and he's done it for a long time.

Q. Can you take us through the flip to Samaje?

PATRICK MAHOMES: I was running. I get in that position sometimes where I fake that pitch. He got thrown down. I was going to run.

I saw him. I was like if I can just pitch it to him, if he gets up, it will be right to him. Pretty funny. He made a heck of a play, being on your back, coming around, making that catch.

He's been a great player for us the entire year. Pass protecting, running the football, catching the football. He's been a big addition to this offense.

Q. Was he on the ground when you threw it?

PATRICK MAHOMES: He was on the ground still, I just knew if I got it high enough, he was wide open. It was the only chance. It was either that or take the hit. I was like, I'll just give him a chance to make the play, and he made it.

Q. The deep shot to Justin, how much of that opens up because of Xavier?

PATRICK MAHOMES: 100%. The play was actually called to those two guys. Trav made a great blocking the nickel across the formation. The offensive line protected well, I stepped up. I was looking at Xavier and Hollywood.

You could feel the safety push. I was giving a peek out to (indiscernible) wide. He stacked his corner.

I put it out there, let him make a play. I'm happy for him. This is home for him. To be able to make a couple plays, get a touchdown, it's always special to get a touchdown in your home stay.

Q. Two good pass game, is it coincidence in the last two weeks that it coincided with Hollywood coming back?

PATRICK MAHOMES: We built up the perfect spot. We've gotten better and better. Before Hollywood got here, Xavier started playing better, being more confident. I got a better chemistry with him. Other guys stepped up, started making plays. You throw Hollywood in there, it kind of sets everybody perfectly in their roles.

You saw that today. I don't know the exact stats. Seemed like we spread the ball around really well. Guys made plays. When you have that many weapons out there, it's hard for the defense to account for. Hollywood has made a huge impact on this offense.

Q. What did it mean to you to have Travis break those records today?

PATRICK MAHOMES: I was extremely excited. I've been trying to get him a touchdown the last few weeks. I wanted to do it at Arrowhead. That play that Xavier almost caught last week where I was trying to throw it to him, it didn't happen. Happy we got it done in the regular season. Now we can just play football.

He's done so much for this organization on and off the field. For him to have the career that he's had has been special. I know at the end of the day he wants to win the ring more than anything. It's awesome he can have that accomplishment.

Q. What is it like having Andy show up in the full Santa gear?

PATRICK MAHOMES: I believe my first year maybe when I was not starting he might have done it.

He fits the role perfectly. He's getting kind of skinny, though. He's getting skinny for the Santa. It's good for his health. He'll be a skinny Santa from now on (smiling).

Q. You mentioned during the week the contrast and vibes that you had last year after this game. Did that enter your mind at all?

PATRICK MAHOMES: Not really honestly. I know we wanted to win just 'cause we wanted to have this break. Whenever you hit the long break, even if you're playing week 18, you don't want to sit on that loss, all those days off of a loss.

That's a good Playoff football team. Great environment. Getting that win, getting off your feet a little bit, but preparing another good football team coming up, then try to build that momentum into the Playoffs.

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