

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

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Zac Taylor

Visitors Postgame Press Conference

Bengals 19, Steelers 17

ZAC TAYLOR: Guys just believed. This is one we had to have. These guys came with the right attitude. They've had the right attitude. They've stuck together. I think this is an appropriate end to this game. What we've done the last five games, these guys are just -- probably one of the lowest moments we've had, sitting there staring at that record we had with the expectations we had, and the choice the guys made was just stick with the process, man, stick with what we've doing, believe in each other, and everybody gave the most. We won five in a row and put ourselves in a position to cross our fingers tomorrow and cheer like a lot of fans.

Winning in. That was our approach today. That's all we can control. Win the game, as if this was to get us in the playoffs, and then tomorrow is going to be out of our control.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: They played well all game long. The first touchdown drive at the end of the game they made a great throw and catch on 3rd and long. They had the two penalties that our guys were competing. I was happy that we were going to compete. So I can live with all that.

Our defense played really well all game long and felt confident they could get that done.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: Not quite. I know what a playoff win feels like. This was what we needed, though. Our guys came in with the right attitude. Shout out Jay for all the stats of how hard -- five road primetime games, AFC North records in primetime. Jay always supplies it for me, and I give it to the team, so I'm just kind of the middle man in that situation. But tried to give them everything that had been hard, everything that stacks against us because that's what this team responds to, and they responded the right way.



Q. What does it say about the culture that you were able to turn things around?

ZAC TAYLOR: It says a lot. We work really hard on that. We focus on Bryning the right guys that when the times are the toughest they're going to respond the right way. That's coaches, that's players. That's all we saw from this team when it got really tough. So I'm really proud of how this team has stuck together, how everyone has given their best, and we were able to win five in a row, and we'll see what happens.

Q. Was there something (indiscernible)?

ZAC TAYLOR: He can't see, so there's got to be a call -- there's just got to be communication that happens across the board. The way it shook out, there's really nothing he could have done differently there.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: Defense responded the right way and we were able to get some points going into halftime. Guess what, it proved to be the difference there, just that chain of events. All season long, these games did not go our way. It was those moments not just at the end of the game but at the end of the second quarter and the end of the third quarter where we didn't do enough to put ourselves in front with commanding the lead. That's one of those moments today that we capitalized on.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

ZAC TAYLOR: I mean, it's hard, and you've got to trust the locker room that they're handling everybody the right way. I know it because I see it in the meetings and I see it in practice. There was never a sense of doubt in my mind of how this team would respond at any moment in the season, whatever our record was. 4-8 is the run that stands out the most. But I didn't sit in my office worried at night how is this team going to respond. I knew how they'd respond because I'd seen it, and we all saw the results that had happened during the season. We all knew that it's kind of one of those years where some of those games didn't go our way, and those are things we certainly can



control. But I can't state enough of how proud I am of everybody that's involved in this Bengals organization and the way that they've stuck together, and we finished with a five in a row.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: I mean, we're proud of the way those guys played, man. They were tight in coverage. They really competed. They did a good job in the run game. I don't know how many yards they had going into that fourth quarter, but it probably wasn't a lot. These guys just responded and put them in some tough spots where they had to convert some 3rd downs, and our guys stepped up and made some plays, and just really proud of the effort by those guys.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: He stepped up, man, and I know he's got a lot of pain. I'm proud of him going in there and delivering and proud of Cody. Cody Ford is not a guy that we talk enough about. This guy has played left guard, he started at left tackle, he started at right tackle. Sometimes he does it with no practice during the week because it's a last-second switch, and we said this week, hey, you're going to start at right tackle against T.J. Watt, one of the best to ever do it, and he told me I'll do whatever you want. If you want me to play quarterback, I'll play quarterback. You've got to have guys like that.

Yeah, the Trey Hendricksons and the Joe Burrows and Ja'Marr, they're going to get a lot of credit, but you've got guys like Cody Ford who are willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done, our literal definition of a Bengal, and he's a guy that's unsung. He's not going to get a lot of praise. But for him to step up and Amarius to step up for those guys he needed to, and all those guys, Cordell, who's been in and out of the lineup and jumps back in there at left guard and Ted who's been so consistent all season long and Orlando been playing through everything he's playing for, holding down the left side, it's a group that you can't praise enough for what they've fought through.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: No, that was a coach's decision.

Q. Chase Brown, how close was he to playing tonight?

ZAC TAYLOR: He was hopefully. We didn't really push it until today. He did a couple warmup things and you could tell he couldn't go, and he didn't. He was trying to do everything he could. He wanted so badly to help the team,

but a high ankle coming off five, six days, that's tough. Deep down we knew it, but we wanted to give him a chance, but it just wasn't right for him to go.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: They're capable of everything. They're not going to want us in this tournament, I promise you.

Q. How much (indiscernible)?

ZAC TAYLOR: I'm rooting against the Broncos and rooting against the Dolphins. I think that's how I look at it.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: We've got to get to work. Coaching staff, we've got to prepare for Buffalo. At least we know who we'd be playing, so we'll get to work, and the players can get their bodies right over the next couple days, and we'll see how it goes.

Q. You've got a guy like Herbert (indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah, I'm glad you brought him up, Kalil, it's a lot of snaps going from minimal snaps to a ton of snaps, and you saw the way he stepped up at the end of the Denver game. Really proud of what he gave us tonight. He gave us some tough yardage, and it's a tough front to run against. He gave up a lot, and I know his yardage per reception is going to take a big hit tonight, but he was there where he needed to. He got the check-downs. They were pretty tight with a lot of those check-downs so they made that part difficult for us, but proud of the job Khalil did, and in protection I'll watch it all, but felt like he did a good job there, as well, which is big time for us.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: Not to my knowledge. It looked like a neck thing. So I know they took him in the tent because you've got to go through concussion protocol. Again, I've told you before. I don't ask questions I don't want the answer to, but he went back out there and looked pretty good.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: No, I can't give you the best answer right now. We didn't score like we needed to. We had to burn -- we got personnel, when Tee was down and we had a personnel issue where we sometimes just need to get it sorted out. We used some time-outs where I'd prefer not to but we had to just because we wanted to make sure we didn't waste a play, and at that point that was the most

important thing.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ZAC TAYLOR: I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I don't know.
We just had to keep it moving and get our personnel
because that became a challenge at that point.

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