

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Sunday, September 14, 2025

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Seattle Seahawks

Coach Mike Macdonald

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Seahawks - 31, Steelers - 17

MIKE MACDONALD: Just really proud of our football team. After coming off a loss, and you're disappointed in how you started the season, and just the resolve on our team -- all the things. You've got to come across the country, a 10:00 a.m. start.

This is a great atmosphere to play a football game. A tough atmosphere to play a football game. They've got great fans. It's a great atmosphere.

And then the game wasn't pretty early. There's a lot of things we've got to cleaned up operation-wise and taking care of the football and spotted them several points. I think probably added up to about 11 points, missed a field goal.

And our guys didn't flinch. We knew it was going to be really tough coming in here. We knew there would be times where our backs were against the wall, but our guys were awesome the whole game, and just fought to the very end. And we've got a couple of breaks there in the second half that went our way, and we took advantage of it.

Really proud of the team. Looking forward to the flight back. But once we get back, we'll be back to work and try to go 1-0 this week.

Q. What can you say about the job your defense, shorthanded in the secondary, faced (indiscernible) times?

MIKE MACDONALD: Our coaches deserve a lot of credit getting Derion ready to go and D Bell. It's hard to learn our system in two weeks, and D.K. I thought played a really good game. Obviously had the interception, which was a tremendous play, a game-changing play and the rest of the defense -- I think right now we're playing really, really hard. And I think the details came to life more this game. And so looking forward to watching the tape and trying to get

better.

Q. How about the way the guys up front played (indiscernible) and sacks the defensive line?

MIKE MACDONALD: You know me and sacks. It's rush and coverage working together. You need time to get to the quarterback. And those are team sacks, but our guys are playing really hard and playing together. And we should only get better from here on out.

Q. (Indiscernible)

MIKE MACDONALD: I wish I could say, we went over it Friday night. You have to talk rules. You've got to know the rules of the game and play by them better than everybody else. But I can't tell you when exactly we talked about it.

But it's a heck of a play by George, understanding the situation and then staying inbounds and recovering it, which actually Brian Ayers (phonetic) talked about it, sideline recoveries as a matter of fact. So Brian Ayers deserves a lot of credit, too. But George made heck of a play.

Q. And the kick from Jason, (indiscernible) bunch of short kicks already this season.

MIKE MACDONALD: It's great, it's tougher than it looks because the landing zone is it's easy to kick it short in the landing zone. So if you're going to kick it low you've got to be on your stuff and he's on his stuff now.

Q. Is it your understanding that when it went over that it didn't touch him, like it was a live ball situation with the kickoff?

MIKE MACDONALD: We were just going to pick it up. Any ball on the ground we're picking it up no matter the situation let it play out.

Q. What did you make of the way Sam played? And obviously the interceptions, but otherwise --

MIKE MACDONALD: Had some adversity early, but it's



not like I'm talking to him the whole game, I'm looking at him, the guy's stone cold out there and just keeps playing. When we finally close it out there at the end you saw the emotion, saw the excitement. He deserves it. He played a really good game.

Q. What did you think of (indiscernible) catch the touchdown, the catch?

MIKE MACDONALD: It was big. He's been doing it all camp. That's why we train the way we train. You're in a tough atmosphere, but we're executing like we do on an OTA number three. We're trying to have the same mentality. And he's done it consistently. So I'm happy for Tory.

Q. When you look at your offense, what (indiscernible) happened in the second half, all those things. Is that closer to the vision of what you'd like to see on offense?

MIKE MACDONALD: Yeah, marrying the run and the pass, staying on schedule, creating explosives. Jax had a great catch, that was a great throw and catch. And we're kind of like in a third-and-goal from the whatever yard line, that's tough. We're trying to bleed some clock, maybe pop a run, and we did. The guys blocked their tails off and Ken made a heck of a run.

Can't wait to watch the tape. I'm sure there's a lot of details that we need to get cleaned up. Again, let's use this now -- it went from what's the big difference between week one and week two? We need to make a big jump from week one to week two. I feel we did. We're not satisfied. We need to keep growing and keep getting better as a team.

Q. (Inaudible) what's the challenge?

MIKE MACDONALD: I thought our operations, the timing of the pass game was really good. I thought our protection plan was awesome. Situational football, I felt like the third down playing was awesome. The guys execute. I don't know what the numbers were on third down, but I felt it was better than last week.

Had some critical third downs especially on the first drive. To go down on the first drive, execute the third down, keep the drive going and then punch it in. Starting with a lead is really nice. We need to do that more often.

Q. How well did you spread the ball around on offense?

MIKE MACDONALD: That's kind of what I was trying to

get at last week. This offense is designed to get the ball to everybody. And I felt like it did that today. And we're on our way on that front.

Q. What was the mood at halftime? Because you guys dominated the game statistically, but it was 14-7?

MIKE MACDONALD: We didn't bat an eye. Our guys are awesome. We knew what we had to do. The defense going out there, I think -- did they get a field goal on that drive, on the drive coming out of the third quarter? I think they did. They caught that play on the sideline.

But our guys are great. We knew what we needed to do. We knew we needed to get a stop. We needed to attack the ball. We needed a takeaway on defense. We did those things.

Q. Seemed like understanding their play-action was (indiscernible) a lot more touchdown (indiscernible) what did you think of Clint's change (indiscernible)?

MIKE MACDONALD: Look, this is what we do. We're an under-center team and gun change-ups, and at some point you have to pass the ball. But we're committed to what we do and what we've done all camp and what we've built systematically.

I thought our game plan was great. I thought Clint called a great game, deserves a lot of credit.

Honestly, I'm most excited about where we're going. I've seen us execute throughout the offseason. I saw us be disappointed after last week, and I've seen us have resolve and bounce back and be determined about getting better and committed to this team.

It's easy to kind of lose hope after you get that initial feedback that it might not be working, but our guys are trusting the process and we're sticking to it.

Q. How big was the stop when they get to the 5?

MIKE MACDONALD: I'm really happy you asked that, because Riq had a tough week. And I thought he played a tremendous football game. And what people don't realize is we missed a ton of tackles. C.P. is going to have a field day on tomorrow with the tape. But Riq is the guy that chased him down from the backside. Talk about ultimate effort, committed to the process, having your teammates' back, playing with shocking effort, he does that, and he got hit down and we ended up leaving that drive with no points.

We defended a blade of grass and Riq was the guy that deserves a ton of credit on that front and helped us win the



football game. I'm really proud of Riq. He's done a great job this week.

Q. (Question about Jalen)?

MIKE MACDONALD: Jalen, he cramped, I think, in his leg. So I don't think it's anything serious. There's really no other injuries to report.

Q. Was that Riq's contact?

MIKE MACDONALD: I believe so, yeah.

Q. You mentioned the third down having more efficiency there. How did you see that after the catch impact this game compared to last, especially Cooper, seemed like he had a couple of times where he was--

MIKE MACDONALD: I said a couple times in the headsets, when he makes those plays, that's Cooper Kupp. Let's remind ourselves who this guy is.

I mean, the point after the catch is going to be a really important part of our offense. Timing is crucial. And you've got to take advantage of it when you give him those opportunities. I felt like the guys did a great job extending plays and moving the ball forward.

Q. The play made on the third down on the last touchdown drive, the pressure?

MIKE MACDONALD: It was a critical play in the game. But that's the Sam we know and love. That's the guy that shows up on tape. He's done it his whole career, and he's doing it for us. And really a heads-up play. A.J. understanding to uncover and getting the scramble drill, I thought that was a tremendous play. It really changed the tide of the game, frankly, because we went down and scored.

Q. Witherspoon, how did he do?

MIKE MACDONALD: You know Spoon as good as anybody. If it was physically possible for him to do it, he would have done it. We just couldn't get there. Probably most prudent decision not to have him go.

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