

Pittsburgh Steelers

Media Conference

Thursday, October 23, 2025

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Arthur Smith

Weekday Press Conference



That's the fun part about the NFL.

Q. To that point, they move him around a lot more than the average All-Pro rush specialist.

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, it seems for sure. I mean, going back to Dallas they did that a lot. You know, like I say, they're all different. Yeah, he lines up everywhere. You see him off the ball, over the center, guard, obviously outside on the tackle. He's got a unique skillset in that regard for sure.

Q. Arthur, since the Dublin game you guys have been one of the more efficient offenses in the league. What's the next step for this unit, whether it be sustaining drives or whatever --

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, there is always stuff to work on. Even if you're winning and you feel like this time of year you're rolling, you got to just really stay objective, stay neutral. There is always something. If it's opening drive, right? There is always something to work on. You just can't get complacent or think that, oh, we got it because we played well for a week or early part of the season.

That's why history will tell you this, you got to come in every day and look through things, improve. Because sometimes things may be rolling in some ways, but it may be hiding something else you know is going to get exposed if you don't fix it.

That's stuff we try to work on every day because you've got to be peaking at the right time. Obviously have enough wins banked to get into the tournament, but you really need to be playing your best football as you get close to end of the season.

Q. What do you think the impact of getting Calvin back potentially can be? We have seen some of the things that maybe he potentially could do.

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, that's another part of it. It's unfortunate sometimes with guys being out, injuries. But that's your job. You got to problem solve. So it's great when you get a guy back that's a productive player and a big part of our offense. So that's an added bonus for us for

Q. Art, other than keeping everyone happy, what are the positives of having such diversity in your offense that you had that you use all those different players every game, couple games in a row?

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, well I think it's a credit to those guys and, you know, eventually -- pretty good down of teams about who targeted and red zone or third down, like critical situations. So you make them hopefully have to defend everybody. Everybody is live on every play. Sometimes some offenses it's like what I call '90s basketball, isolation, and that works for some people.

I think with our guys we got a lot of guys with different skillsets and play multiple spots. It helps. We just got to continue to keep building off that.

But it's a credit to those guys.

Q. Is there anything about having TJ Watt that helps you prepare for a guy like (indiscernible)?

ARTHUR SMITH: I think with all these great rushers, and that's the NFL, I mean, feels like every week you got some premier guy. I always look about where teams invest money. If you really look at it that hasn't changed. Edge rushers, how you look at Green Bay, roster construction, how are they're built, a lot of early draft capital, certainly second contract and trade with Micah.

There is a reason those guys get paid the way they do because they can really affect the game and the game plan.

So then going back to your original question, I never put them -- none of them are the same players. There are certain things you try to do to neutralize them, but they all have different skillset, scheme-wise how they're playing, not just on third down but on early downs.

So Micah and Shawn Gary, those guys are great rushers and have good internal rush. So it's always a challenge.

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

sure.

Calvin, ever since I got here has played really good football; has made some big plays this season. So we're happy to have him back.

Q. How is the increased chemistry of Troy Fautanu and Mason McCormick to help you guys run the ball on the right side of the line. Both been praising each other for how they've grown together and work together.

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah that's what I want to see, consistency. You want that. I mean, some years like last year, you've got -- it's like musical chairs. You got to problem solve and you hope obviously to have the same guys for every game because that chemistry is real.

Every snap those guys get, the more you get comfortable working with somebody, that helps. You see that just becomes -- what happens, what I've seen a lot of times on lines and good lines is they build -- they almost create their own language. It's like they know how just by certain movements what the guy is thinking.

That's what you want and that's cool to watch that growth and development for all those guys, especially the young four guys we got.

Q. Have you noticed anything different in Aaron Rodgers' preparation this week?

ARTHUR SMITH: No, I haven't. Obviously be a better question for him. The thing I always say about Aaron, just every day in practice, whatever, his approach to the job is I'd argue that's why he's played at this level for 21 years, which is almost mathematically impossible. Then you talk about an outlier. It's hard enough to make the NFL, play quarterback, start, and then to do it for now 21 years is really unbelievable.

That's just his approach. There is nothing that's come up. Again, question probably for him.

Q. You guys were one for two I think on tush pushes. What do you see with that play, and is that something you think you can build on?

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, we had it up for a while. I mean, you know, it's just situations, something you work, and that's -- you know, I think how they're officiating that you see a little more. Ours was an obvious false start. That obviously hurt us.

You're seeing it now just how it's officiated sometimes.

You got to be very clean on that operation. Seeing more false starts called or alignment issues. Just got to get working all the time. If you got it in your back pocket doesn't mean you have to use it all the time. Got other schemes we been successful on in short yardage.

Certainly helps and those guys have executed it the time we ran it in Dublin pretty well.

Q. From your perspective, what impact is Aaron making on some of the younger guys on this offense? How do you see that kind of evolve?

ARTHUR SMITH: A lot of the veteran quarterbacks, I've kind of worked with couple guys that have had a lot of success in the league, and worked with them towards the latter part of our careers. They're all unique in their own way. They communicate and they've got enough reps.

Aaron, he's a great communicator. They're all different. Certain things that are subtle nuances on like a simple route, every quarterback I've had they see it a little differently. That's what is so important and why you need that chemistry and those reps.

Most important thing is they're on the same page. They're the ones out there on the field, and he's been great with all those guys, with the line. Guy loves football, just the small margins of the game and the little details. And that's what I appreciate as a coach. It's been fun to watch him.

Q. Aaron was talking yesterday about the similarities about how he took over from Favre and how Love took over for him. We are also seeing around the league a lot of quarterbacks being played right away. Have not had success and go on and have more later. Do you think the way Green Bay has done it is the gold standard and do you think there is something more to be said in the rest of league about having guys sit and wait and learn at that position?

ARTHUR SMITH: Sure. There is a great debate. That's the problem, really the biggest question every organization is trying to solve.

They've had it with a couple quarterbacks and they obviously picked the right one. You would argue the climate they came into, whether it's stability from the top, I think it matters, the whole building. You know, not changing schemes too many times. That can affect young quarterbacks. A lot goes into it.

And so when they really from Brett to Aaron to now Jordan, all these guys played at a high level and it's made that transition.



The other problem is if you don't have a guy like that you're trying to find that guy and there is instability, that can affect them. There are many reasons.

Certainly if you got to that point, you get a guy like that, succession planning or whatever you want to call it, they've done it that way.

There has been other teams that have been really battling. They've had a No. 1 pick, great quarterbacks come out, and that's part of the draft. No. 1 pick and there is not a guy to take, then, you know, the cycle kind of starts over and how you solve that problem.

So it's a great philosophical question. They've done a good job with it.

Q. Art, was that a flea flicker or not the other night?

ARTHUR SMITH: It was a package play and that's -- we package a lot of things. Ultimately, when two guys and the other nine are doing one thing, two guys don't, you got a miscommunication.

So it was packaged and alert to go to the flea flicker. Ultimately that's on me. I don't blame the guy that didn't get it. You look back and say, why did it happen? You know, we practice it. We've had it up for a couple weeks. So I go back and look at the small things, how we packaged it and communication at the line, and so that's what happens.

It was a run package with the flea flicker.

Q. You guys opened the 21 day window for Will Howard. What are some reasonable expectations for his development this season? How do you measure that development with him now coming back kind of mid-season after missing a lot of camp and the early part?

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, it goes back a little bit to the philosophical about developing quarterbacks. That's another part of it, too, you know, with the lack of reps, practice, whatever you want to talk about. I'm not getting into that debate.

Just the reality of it, how do you develop young guys without playing games? And so we put a lot of work into it. It was unfortunate what happened. Didn't get to play in the preseason. It's important for him to practice.

So different philosophies, if you sit a guy out the whole year, I think it's important to get those reps. We'll see how

the season unfolds, but Will has been incredible.

Did a lot of things behind the scenes and tried to expedite his growth, what we could do without him doing the physical work. You know, it's been like having another quality control around the building. We call him Coach Will. Now he's back to being a player.

Q. There has been a lot of talk about Micah Parsons progression to passer, rightfully so. This is a good run stopping team. What do you need to do Sunday to be successful to continue to run well?

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, every week is just schematically different challenge. We played a lot of good defenses. We played some good defenses and they're all different. It's like trying to compare who is better.

They're very discipline and it's a patient group. They have a young defense. If you really look at their roster construction, they drafted well. You know, majority of their guys are year five or less. Couple veterans playing really are two year guys, year seven, one guy year six.

They tackle really well. So in the zone coverage, not a lot of missed tackles. They take the air out; got good speed. Again, very disciplined on what they're doing.

So when you get in these kind of games those are the things that -- the small margins, and sometimes it's a matter of being patient. We'll get in that chess match on Sunday.

But any time, every week, but especially playing one of those top units, like you can't make a self-inflicted wounds and give them a big play because they got some explosive defensive players. But credit to them. We're excited about it. Just like we have been the last couple weeks.

So that's what we're looking forward to Sunday night.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports