

San Francisco 49ers Media Conference

Sunday, October 25, 2020
San Francisco, California, USA

Kyle Shanahan

Postgame Press Conference



San Francisco 49ers 33, New England Patriots 6

KYLE SHANAHAN: Injuries, we had Jeff Wilson with an ankle, did not return. Deebo Samuel, hamstring, did not return. Richie James with an ankle, did not return.

Go ahead.

Q. You couldn't have known to start the week off that Jeff Wilson was healthy enough to be your starter. When did you make that decision and why go with him at tailback?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, the plan was to rest Jed a little bit with how much he's gotten the last few weeks. We were going to go with Hasty or Jeff depending on their health. Jeff showed in practice he was healthy enough to go. Once he got cleared, it was a pretty easy decision.

Q. Can you explain how great your defense played today, what you saw in Fred Warner's interception to help set that tone.

KYLE SHANAHAN: It was a very impressive catch. Any time the ball is low like that, to get your fingers under it, not trap it, it's a hell of a deal. I thought we had a chance. Everyone ran off the field. Wasn't sure till I saw the scoreboard.

Very impressive play. D just played impressive the whole day. I thought special teams and offense did, too. It was an extremely physical game I thought by our team with all three of our phases. It was fun to watch.

Q. Over the last couple weeks, you had 37 rushing attempts. You talk about playing complementary football. Do you feel like you've reestablished the identity that you want the team to be?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Well, yeah. I mean, how it's been the last two weeks is how we obviously hope every week is. But when you play defense the way our guys have been

playing, we're running the ball like we have been, just how physical all our guys have been playing, every play it seems is like the last play for our guys.

I'm just very impressed with the character of our guys individually, which adds up collectively. Those guys play like it's their last play every down. When you can do that for an entire game, you play smart, don't turn it over, usually good things happen.

Q. With all the injuries you have on the defense, how impressed are you by all the backups that have come in and played to this level?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Extremely impressed. Both those safeties to come in and have the game they did. Jamar Taylor, who wasn't here a few weeks ago. He was one of the tough guys to not keep ahead of. Had a hell of a camp with us. Great guy. Plays so hard.

Told him he'd probably be back when we ended up having to let him go. He did have his opportunity. Since he came in, he played unbelievable. Today, two picks, I thought it was huge.

Q. Any initial indications on the severity of the injuries to Wilson, Deebo and Richie James?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Yeah. Jeff, word is high ankle sprain. That's what it looked like. I know he's hurting right now. Hopefully we'll get better news on that tomorrow. Not sounding great right now.

Deebo is a hamstring. You never know. Know it pulled on him on that run, which usually is some time. Hopefully the severity won't be too bad, he won't miss too much time.

Richie, I'm not sure what type of ankle injury it was. I didn't get any information on that. I know he wasn't able to go back in.

Q. You talked a little bit about maybe Jimmy had some extra energy going into this game. Given you're playing Belichick, did you have a little more umph in

this win? Hey, this is going to be fun in this game?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, going against a good defense is always a challenge. I mean, always enjoy the challenge going against someone like Bill, how good he is, how good their team is.

No, I just got too much respect for him. Any time you can play well against a team coached by him, it means a lot. But it wasn't that tough from my perspective. I mean, the way our guys ran the ball, how hard they played. We weren't running runs blocking for three yards, get six. The way our O-line was playing, everybody, it's a pretty easy game for me to just sit back and watch our guys.

Q. When did you decide to make Jeff Wilson the starter? Was there something to the idea that you wanted to gash them more inside than maybe outside given what happened against the Rams?

KYLE SHANAHAN: No. We decided once Raheem was out, we were hoping we could rest Jed some. Once we had the injuries, we knew on Monday if Jeff was healthy he was going to be starting that week. We weren't really sure of that until he got a lot more in practice on Thursday.

We knew we were going to go that direction. We were down to three left. We were able to rest Jed, only play him on third down, which is I think what helped him a lot going forward.

Q. Kyle Juszczyk, he had a couple of big blocks today. What did you see out of the fullback?

KYLE SHANAHAN: He made some huge blocks, like he always does. Kyle, he is the best fullback in the game. I know not every team uses one, some use tight ends pretty similarly. Kyle has been huge for our team since he's been here. One of the best leaders we have on the team, one of the best players.

Not only just his blocking, but that catch he made I want to say in the fourth or late third, I think the snap was a little off, Jimmy had to let it go. To make that diving catch was great. Also had a couple runs that really helped us, too.

Q. The secondary the last two weeks, you haven't gotten the same pass-rushes last year with all those guys out, it seems the coverage has been blanketing. Is that a credit to Saleh being able to mix and match that coverage?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Yeah, I mean, I think it's a credit to everyone. I think our corners have really stepped it up the last couple weeks when man coverage has been called. I

think Jamar Taylor has done a great job in the slot stepping up for K'Waun.

I think we played a lot of zone coverage today, too, which our guys do a good job staying on top. I think our linebackers are unbelievable with zone coverage, with how much ground they cover. That's why Fred gets those picks, cues the quarterback so well. They got a very good feel for that. Our coverage has been very tight. Hopefully we keep getting better as we go forward.

Q. Two injuries to wide receivers, does that make you tap the brakes on a Dante Pettis trade? Is that less likely now?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, I don't think it was real likely before. Everyone talks about it, especially with the deadline coming up. I'm not sure, I think it's one week or 10 days or something.

I mean, that's always a big-time around know. I know Dante got mentioned a few days ago. We'll see if there's anything that comes up that helps our team. If it doesn't, I know Dante can help or team being on it, too. We'll look into those injuries tomorrow and keep playing out all trade possibilities until the deadline is over.

Q. Without looking at the tape, it's hard to tell. Looked like Brandon Aiyuk was getting a lot of separation. How have you seen him progress in terms of getting separation since the start of the year?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I think he gets better each week. Number of times that we went to him, I thought he did a good job on. I know one time, third down, he ended up running a double move, could have been a walk-in touchdown possibly. He was like number two in progression. We had another guy open.

But I was impressed with him. We'll see on the tape what happens more. Really counted on him to break up the pass at the end of the second quarter to take a shot so Jimmy doesn't have to take that pick.

I love how hard he ran with the ball, competing in the run game. We're putting some pressure on him. He's taking it and trying to get better each week at it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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