

San Francisco 49ers Media Conference

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San Francisco, California, USA

Kyle Shanahan

Postgame Press Conference



49ers 34, Lions 31

KYLE SHANAHAN: (Stream started in progress) -- no other choice. It was nice we were starting out with the ball on the third, so it gave us some hope in that way. Also it being a 17-point game was encouraging. It looked like it should have been worse. Definitely how it felt. That is how the numbers looked.

But we were only down 17, which that's not too much. But you got to start playing a lot better in order for that not to be too much. Came out in the third quarter, we finished with a field goal. I definitely thought that wasn't enough, but then I think our D stopped them on a fourth down the next time, they we got a touchdown. The next drive I want to say was the turnover. Just like that, it was three drives. I think by the end of the third it was a tied game. All right, first quarter again, but it's the fourth, let's start.

Q. (No microphone.)

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, they had a safety sitting in the middle of the field. Brock did an awesome job recognizing it. We had Deebo on a crossing route. That safety cut it. Brock made the right read and just launched it.

The corner did an awesome job staying on top. The safety cuts, that means there's no one in the middle, but the corner was aware of it so he stayed on top. I was worried for it to be a pick when it's like that.

Brock makes the right read, but he launches it. BA did a hell after job going up for it, so it wasn't going to be a pick. Then he came down with the catch, which was huge. I was never able to see if he was down or not. They said he was. Great we punched it in later.

Q. What did that play do for you guys?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, anytime you get a big, explosive one like that, it makes it a lot easier. We felt we could go on drives, we just had to get it going. I think we

had four in the first half. I want to say we scored on two of them, had a pick on one, then punted on the other.

Credit to their defense. They mix things up, they play really hard. We thought if we could get it going, make it a game on both sides, it would be a matter of time before we could score some points.

The way their offense was going, their defense was doing a couple things to get us off the field. Once BA made that play, kind of unlocked it with such an explosive. Kind of unlocked the whole team. Right after getting that turnover... That was huge. Right after that, you could feel the whole momentum with our players, the stadium, on the sideline kind of flip. Felt it was on after that.

Q. What did they do so hard in the first half to stop the run?

KYLE SHANAHAN: We knew they were a good running team going in. It only takes a couple guys. We had a couple eight-man fronts. Definitely two I saw we got one guy out of a gap. When that happens, you get to that middle third player, that's 15 at the best.

They had a real good call on the reverse. That was probably the best look they got us in. We had a couple missed tackles, a couple guys out of gaps. It's hard to win like that.

But the guys tightened it up there in the second half and got it done.

Q. What adjustments did you want to make heading into the second half?

KYLE SHANAHAN: We just come up with eight plays to go over with the offense on how we're going to start it out and go with them. The defense goes. They all meet and break up. They talk about all their stuff from positions.

Then we just pulled them up before. Guys, it's only 17 points. Been a lot of football games where you're down 17 points or starting with the ball. That's plenty of time to



come back, plenty of points to come back. Regardless of any of that stuff, we're not going out like this. We got to be a lot more aggressive here in the second half in everything we do, offensively, defensively, special teams.

I thought we switched up a little bit more, tightened up on some things with some pressure, some man coverage. The guys didn't want today to be the last day. We put ourselves in a hole, but they played like it in the second half and we were able to get the ball to bounce the right way and made up for what we did in the first half.

Q. Brock scrambling, how big of an impact was that for you guys?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I thought it was the difference between winning and losing. He made some big plays with his legs, getting out of the pocket, moving the chains on some first downs, some explosives. He competed his ass off today. Wasn't easy of any of us. He kept grinding, was unbelievable there in the second half.

Q. You heard about how Kyle Shanahan always teams don't come back, Brock Purdy can't come back. Does that strike you now, that's over in your mind?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, that's up to you guys to decide. I never thought that when it started. I mean, coached a long time. Guys play a long time. Get some of those circumstances.

I've never felt like we didn't have a team who could come back or win a game like that. Just had to do it today when it mattered the most.

Q. What are your initial impressions, going to be going to the Super Bowl, playing the team that beat you there four years ago?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Haven't had a lot of time to think about that. I didn't watch any of their game. Wasn't sure who won until someone told me right before we went out.

But, I mean, they're a hell of a team. Got a hell of a coach, hell of a quarterback, hell of a defense. Haven't gotten to see them much this year because we haven't had a lot of crossover tape.

We already have a pretty good idea how it's going to look. They've been doing it a while. Since we met them in '19, seems like they've been there every year since. We have been trying really hard to get back to this moment. We have been close a number of times. This time we got it done. Spend these two weeks to prepare and make sure it's a hell of a game.

Q. What was your message after the game to the team?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Not a very good one. I was exhausted (smiling). Took everyone so long to get in. Then it was really hard to talk because everyone had their families and kids in there. I struggle to talk when I can't use all the words I want to use.

My message, I was just so proud of the guys. These last two weeks, we've had some talented teams, we do have a talented team right now, but just the character and the grit of the guys there. I mean, you could see it on their faces at halftime. I could see it on them all week.

Our guys got a lot of love for each other. Every year when the season's over, it's always a new team the next year regardless of how many people return. Our guys didn't want this to be the last day. We had to really fight for it to make that happen, but we pulled it off. Couldn't be more proud of the group.

Q. Brock isn't known for his legs. Any element to surprise how productive he was with that?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I think Brock has been scrambling and making plays ever since we got him in. All you got to do is go back to the first game versus Miami. Brock makes a lot of plays with his legs. Did it in college, too. Makes a lot of off-schedules. I thought it looked like how Brock looks every time he plays.

Q. Was Christian okay at the end of the game there?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Yeah, he said he got a little bit of a stinger when he went down there. That's what his words were. He had to come out for a play. I know Elijah went in there and scored. At the end I knew Christian was good to go back.

Q. How big was the a swing in momentum when you were able to stop them on that fourth and two?

KYLE SHANAHAN: It was huge. Both of them. To make it a three-score game, for us to be able to hold it to two scores, especially the way the game was going. I felt like we kind of blew it when we started out with the ball and didn't get a touchdown, got three points.

For us to hold them there, not to get any points. You stop them on fourth down, really look at that almost the same as a turnover. That was huge by us today.

I mean, you live and die with that stuff. It would have been

really hard to deal with it if they moved the chains on that fourth and two also, so... That's why everything comes down to certain plays. What happens in those plays you got to live with.

Q. (Question about the play to BA.)

KYLE SHANAHAN: That definitely is the read. When the middle third safety cuts the high cross, that's where the ball is supposed to go. Last time he did that was versus Arizona at home. I think it was week five or something. Did it again.

They cut, threw it to BA, but the corner was on top. BA went up, made a hell of a catch. That's almost exactly what happened today, too. When they cut, usually the middle is open. The corner was disciplined, stayed on top. Couldn't run by him. Brock read the defense, gave BA a shot, BA made it right.

Q. Were you shocked given the situation that he decided to go for it instead of opting for the field goals?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Not really. I think that's how they've done it most of the year. I think that's one of the reasons why they were here.

I mean, you win a lot of games making some of those decisions. You make some decisions and you lose 'em. I don't think it always comes down to that. There's lots of plays that happen in the game. That's a decision we all have to make.

Doesn't surprise me because he's made a lot of those decisions throughout the year that have won a lot of games for them also.

Q. What was the sense you got from your players? Calm when you were down 17?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I think we were just pissed off. I think guys were extremely pissed. That first half wasn't we were down by 17, it was the way we were down. They were kind of having their way in the run game. We weren't getting much in our game run either. We don't want to go out like that. We dug ourselves in a big hole.

Wasn't just talking about how to win this game. I was talking about how to start playing right. We got too much respect for our team. That would have been a real rough way to end it if we couldn't have played better with our group.

I was proud of the guys. They didn't really care about

anything but finding a way to win. You could see it on their faces, you could see it at halftime, you could see it in the third quarter, you could see it all the way to the end of the game.

Q. What are your thoughts on a Super Bowl rematch?

KYLE SHANAHAN: None. I'm excited that we're going there. Happy for the Chiefs, too. Going to have a lot of fun tonight probably with my family and everything. Come in a little bit slow motion tomorrow, figure out all the Super Bowl tickets, all the traveling and stuff. That takes a lot of time for the players and their families.

Coaches will start getting to go on Kansas City while they do all that. Probably give the guys a couple days off, then we'll get to our game plan and practice by Wednesday or Thursday.

Q. Fred Warner has been good all year. Extraordinary game tonight. What are your thoughts?

KYLE SHANAHAN: I mean, Fred played to me like an NFL defensive MVP. He's played at that level to me. He does every year. There's always a group of guys who deserve it. But Fred is always one of those guys.

You hope when you have players like that, they do it in these type of games. Fred did. That's one of the reasons we're still playing.

Q. Why do you anticipate being in slow motion tomorrow morning?

KYLE SHANAHAN: Because you guys won't let me get out of here (smiling).

No, I know guys are going to have some fun tonight. We do have two weeks. We're going to have a meeting with all the ticket guys and stuff. We'll put it off a little bit longer. Lots of families in there and stuff. Let guys sleep in a little bit for treatment, but we'll still get our work done.

All right, guys. Thanks.

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