

NFL International Series

Falcons vs Jets

Sunday, 10 October 2021

New York Jets

Robert Saleh

Postgame Press Conference

Falcons 27, Jets 20

Q. What is leading to the issue with starting so slow?

ROBERT SALEH: You know, I was just talking to the team about that. I'm going to work my tail off over this bye week and see if there's something that we can come up with. Study the tape. Look at all the decisions and execution and figure out what the answer is over this next week and come up with something because it's got to be better.

Q. The defense, did it have anything to do with the travel or the weekend?

ROBERT SALEH: I thought the plan for the week was awesome. I thought our performance staff did a really good job and our players did everything we asked of them in terms of preparing for this game. Obviously it's not easy coming off a 100-play game, not easy when you're -- when a drive should have been over on the first third down. And I disagree with the personal foul but we'll see the tape.

But you know, we've got to find a way to get off, and you know, I thought we came in with a good plan. Thought the guys were executing early, but you know, when you stack up plays and you're getting the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh play of the drive, it gets very hard. But credit to them, too. They executed.

Q. Last week seemed like a couple steps forward, and this week seemed like a couple steps back. What was going on today?

ROBERT SALEH: You know, it's a multitude of things. We weren't able to get going in the first half. A couple three and outs. Couldn't get into a rhythm. When we did get into a rhythm in the second half, obviously, again he shows that he's pretty good when he gets into a rhythm but again we have to start faster and I'm putting that on me to try to figure this out over the next week.

Q. The throws, looked like should be easy



completions to him, one to Crowder in the red zone. What did you see?

ROBERT SALEH: You always go back to your fundamentals. You have the screen play also that was pretty open. But you know, he's working on it daily, I promise you, and he's going to get better at it and he's very deliberate about it.

It's trusting it when bullets are flying. It's very easy to stand at the driving range and hit 300-yard drives. It's can you do it when you're on the tee box and there's water to your left and sand to your right and that's just something that he's got to work on that's something the coaches have to work on and everybody has to work on. And when he hits it, it's going to be pretty cool when it does. But obviously it comes back to eye placement, progression, footwork, everything we've been talking about over the last couple weeks.

Q. You guys got the win last week, but several times on the touchdown where the defense could have ended things. Today you guy had a chance to get the ball back in the offense hands, convert third and 13, third and two. Did you think that that's an issue here, aside from the start and the defense finishing?

ROBERT SALEH: Credit Matt Ryan and Arthur and the game plan that they had. They got us in a couple of beaters, and you know, the third and 13 is disappointing. Those are the ones where you've got win, and to be honest with you, they called quick in to concede fourth and they got us in the perfect call.

So it's credit to them but obviously it's like we talk about when it's the fourth quarter and game is on the line and somebody close the game whether it's a coach making the perfect call, player making a play, somebody on the team has to make a play and that's something that a young team will grow into.

Like I said, you first have to learn how not to lose and when you start to learn how to win, you have to learn how to close and those are examples of learning how to close and things that I think we'll get better at.

Q. On Friday when I asked you about Wrigley being out -- what happened early?

ROBERT SALEH: They did a good job of exploiting the middle of the field and using their size to their advantage. By the time we got into the locker room, made the

adjustments and from there it's a matter of executing it from a higher level. Trusting when you see. It's just little details. But again, credit to them, their execution was better in those moments, but we'll get it fixed.

Q. What was the thought going into that possession --

ROBERT SALEH: You know, we were hovering around, he's getting rid of the ball. He wasn't holding onto it. He wasn't hitching. And he was getting the ball where it needed to be. And because of his speed, there was multiple interception ops, I want to say about three of them, and those are what I talked about earlier, were a step off, and we're going to close that step event actually. And if teams want to pick up the pace in terms of when they release the football in timing of the play and they want to on rate on a quick five, plant-throw system to try to mitigate the D-Line then that's where those plays are going to end up in our favor. And it's just a matter of time before all that happens, I can tell you that much.

Q. Rushing the passer -- what's he supposed to do in that situation?

ROBERT SALEH: I think we'll see them, slow motion and all that. Looked like he had his head to the side. He's obviously full speed trying to get to a guy before he throws the ball, and when he lands, he's trying to roll up. You can see it go off, so as of now, I disagree with the call but we'll see when we get to the tape.

Q. That penalty, do you think that may have demoralized --

ROBERT SALEH: No, any time you get a third down conversion, it's hard, and now you're getting into a whole other set of plays. It's added reps. Especially when you feel like you won the down and you see that.

But it's not an excuse by any sense of the imagination. But it's a call when you're fighting your tail off and a call like that doesn't go your way, we've still got to find a way to get off the field.

Q. Seems like in the first half of games, there's a lot of short and intermediate throws, and the third quarter, you're trying to attack down the field. Is there a reason why there's more short passes early?

ROBERT SALEH: No Mike called and aggressive. There's some shots down the field, but you can only take what the defense is giving you which leads to check downs which leads to the intermediate stuff.

Credit to their defense. They play a lot of 2-high which does not warrant shots over 2-high safeties. But when they got a little bit more aggressive in nine coverage, the shot allowed you more. It's all based on what the

defense is willing to give you and, I thought we did a good job.

We just couldn't get momentum going and we couldn't convert on some third and shorts, and defensively we just couldn't get off the field. So there was no chance for anyone to get into a rhythm in the first half, and then the second half it started to pick up. Defense gets the stop and offense starts moving the ball, and too little, too late.

Q. Aside from the result, how has the whole London experience been and the atmosphere in the stadium today?

ROBERT SALEH: The fans were phenomenal for both sides. The experience is fantastic to come here and play in front of an international crowd. It's always great to be the only game on TV so your peers can watch you. It's an unfortunate the result, but the experience is always good.

Q. In general, seems like the third and longs have been a problem for you guys the last few games. How do you clean it that up and how demoralizing is that in the course of the game?

ROBERT SALEH: It's always tough, especially when you work your tail off on first and second down to create a third-and-advantageous situation and you don't win.

It comes back to execution and understanding the down and distance, understanding what they are trying to give you, understanding the situation that goes from me to the coordinator all the way down, and then from there it's a matter of executing and getting off the field best we can.

Aside from the third and 13 today, I felt like all of them are winnable reps. Just in terms of execution, they did a good job with their play call.

Q. 64 yards rushing, outside of the New England game, been struggling. Why is the offense not being able to do what it needs to do to have success rushing the ball?

ROBERT SALEH: Again, the full first half was basically mitigated just by -- just from time of possession and trying to get opportunities. The second half, I think that drive, you guys will have the numbers more than I would. I felt like we came and ran the ball all the way down after the kickoff return and scored a touchdown.

We can win the ball. It's just a matter of sustaining drives. If you're not sustaining drives, so you can't call more runs. If it's first one, down, second down pass, whatever it might be, third down and you're off the field, you can't call enough runs.

And so it's a matter of executing on first and second

down, obviously, getting yourself to third down, move the chains and you're racking up more plays and you're into a rhythm of a series. So you know, you always go back and look from an efficiency standpoint, how we were operating and whether or not we were handling the ball. I didn't look at totals but this system has always been built on opportunity to run and when you run and run and run eventually you're going to break one but it's something we have to be better at.

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