

NFL International Series

Vikings vs Saints

Sunday, 2 October 2022

Minnesota Vikings

Adam Thielen

Postgame Press Conference



Minnesota Vikings 28, New Orleans Saints 25

Q. How is the heart rate?

ADAM THIELEN: Man, I'm guess I used it. If you guys watched our games last year, I'm used to it. My heart was all right. I got my band on, so we'll see what it was really like.

Feels like every week is like that in this league. Feels good to be on the winning side.

Q. What's going through your head as that kick is spiraling towards the goal?

ADAM THIELEN: So hard from our angle if it's going wide right or wide left, but it knew it had the distance. You're just hoping it doesn't go in.

It's a long game already, but to go to overtime after a hard-fought battle would have been tough.

You're kind of just preparing to go to overtime. You're hoping it misses. When it hit the post, I thought it was still going in. Then hit it again, came short. So that was pretty cool.

Q. What happened halfway through the first quarter? Did you notice something that sputtered a little bit?

ADAM THIELEN: I think it's kind of a reoccurring theme the last few weeks, just us kind of hurting ourselves, kind of making some plays, having some penalties that are really costly to the drive and momentum.

I felt like we were getting first downs, then something would happen that kind of inhibited us from moving the ball and scoring a touchdown.

In this league, when you get down to the red zone, which we got down to the red zone quite a bit, you got to score touchdowns. You got to get seven points and take some pressure off our defense. We're going to go back to work.

Q. What can you do to minimize mistakes?

ADAM THIELEN: I think, again, any time we get the ball in a turnover, a short field, like, we have to go down and score touchdowns.

When our defense does a good job of getting turnovers, or special teams gets a turnover or first down for us, we as an offense need to do our part. It's complementary football, right? Not one phase can win a football game.

We got to go back and find a way. I'm obviously proud of the way we kept fighting and gave ourselves a chance to win. But there's a lot to clean up, which is a good thing.

Q. What are the feelings to be 3-1?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, no, I mean, again, when you're able to go and have a lot of things to correct after winning, it's a good thing. Being 3-1, we kind of break our season into four games. To be 3-1 through four games is definitely where we want to be.

I mean, I think when you look at the tape, there's a lot of things that we could correct. That's exciting when you do get those wins and have a lot to correct.

We have to correct it quickly because it's a tough league.

Q. What part of your growing path do you think you are?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, we're a long ways away. With the new system, new coaches, new staff, new organization, we're a long ways away.

Again, that's a good thing. Being 3-1 through four games, it's a really long season, but we got to have a little bit of a sense of urgency to kind of go correct 'em and not keep making the same mistakes and hurting ourselves kind of game after game.

We got to have some urgency.

Q. This is a fairly flag-heavy crew. A penalty-heavy game. Was there a sense that this was going to be somewhat likely heading into the game?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, I mean, we knew that they

threw a lot of flags. We have our officials review before each game. Honestly, it could have been a lot more. I think that's just kind of the mindset of this defense. It's very similar to what we saw with Detroit, is they kind of play smart, they play tough, physical football. They kind of know that they're not going to call on every play.

They got really good players, so it was obviously credit to those guys, they played really well on defense, really limited a lot of things that we were trying to do.

But again, in this league, you just have to expect not to get a flag. You kind of want that, you want the game to be clean and fast, not getting a lot of penalties. You kind of got to expect it and still find a way to win.

Q. You're pretty far away from the plays. The hit with the helmet a couple of times on the throws on Kirk.

ADAM THIELEN: I didn't see that. Obviously I'll look at the tape and see that.

Obviously those definitely have to be called because we got to protect our quarterbacks in this league. They're huge and very important to the success of this league and to these teams, having a good product on the field.

Got to protect those guys.

Q. The play with Lattimore, threw a couple flags there. In your mind are you thinking this is going to be pass interference?

ADAM THIELEN: Shoot, in my mind I thought I was going to score a touchdown. I felt like the ball was in the air. When a DB is looking at me, running after me, it's a great opportunity for me to go up and get the football.

He actually did a really good job of kind of subtly grabbing my arm and holding it down low. So credit to the ref for seeing that. Usually it's a tough really thing to see.

I was a little angry because I thought I could go up and get that football. That's what I like to do. I feel like it's something that I'm good at.

Obviously getting the PI going down there, then scoring, it is what it is.

Q. You seemed to pick up a knock earlier in the game, then towards the end two separate things, and how are you?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, this league's a little physical. I'm banged up a little bit, but I feel a lot better after a win.

We got a short week kind of just with the long travel, so

got to get back. Kind of like that every week: you're going to have some nicks and bruises. Obviously I was able to keep playing and feel good after play.

Q. The London experience, plenty of years now for the NFL, how are you finding it yourself?

ADAM THIELEN: I love it. This is my third time here. Hopefully we'll be back again next year. What an experience, what a fan base, what a stadium, just a great experience.

I'd love to experience it more, have my family experience it. So hopefully we'll be back next year.

Q. I hear the word 'respond' came up last night from Kevin. What does that kind of mean to you? How do you think you guys responded in that game?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, he kind of joked about it after the game, saying, You guys responded again. Gave him a little bit of a high heart rate.

Yeah, I think it's just one of those things where there's just no panic. It means if things aren't going great or we have a lull, obviously we don't want that, we want to be efficient, get first downs and score touchdowns, but there's no panic when that's not happening.

We know in this league they're going to scheme us up, they're going to do things to stop what we're really good at. You just have to respond, find a way, keep fighting, battling, getting in some tough first downs. You hope you make those big plays like Justin did down the field. You're kind of just waiting for something like that to happen.

Obviously we had a lot of confidence in the players in this room, the coaches, that we're just going to find a way.

Q. You're the only team to win in each of the three London venues. Does that mean anything to you?

ADAM THIELEN: Heck, yeah, that means a lot to me. I got to see all three stadiums. My first year I was on practice squad, so I didn't play. It always feels good to come over here and get a victory.

Again, what a great fan base, what a great venue. All three have been awesome. It's been cool to see the different ones.

I'm glad that we played in a different one because it is fun to see the different venues and just to get a victory.

Q. Do you think it's possible to play in other countries in the future, like Spain?

ADAM THIELEN: I think it's amazing. I hope they

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

continue to do that. I think there's a great opportunity to expand this game. I honestly believe it's the best game there is. I love football/soccer, but I just feel like American football, there's just something about it.

I mean, you saw it tonight or today. There's just something about it. It's physical, it's fun, it's exciting. There's a lot going on. There's a lot of excitement. It just keeps you on your toes.

Hopefully we can continue to bring it to other countries and continue to bring it to this country. I feel like every time I come over here, it's usually like four, five years apart that we kind of come over here, and I feel like the game has grown so much.

You're kind of expecting people to be like, Oh, do you even know anything about American football?

Yeah, absolutely, I grew up on American football. I played American football.

I think that's pretty cool.

Q. What is it like watching Justin on a day like today? Got to be kind of a treat when that guy can do special things like that.

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, I mean, I strongly believe he's the best receiver in this league. You just have an extra motivation to cheer for a guy that is not only a great football player, what he does on the football field is amazing, but he's an even better person. I'm not just saying that because he's my teammate. I love going to work with him every day. I get to spend a lot of time with him in the receiver room.

Those are the guys you cheer for a little bit more. You hope they have success because they deserve it because of how hard they work and the type of man he is.

Q. Can you give us the story behind the cleats?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, pretty cool to be able to rep Ted Lasso. Love the show. Saw that Jason was here at the game. Didn't get to meet him. Yeah, I love the show. Can't wait for season three to come out. Thought it would be a cool kind of tribute.

I used to do a different cleat each week that Mosh does for me. He kind of came up with the idea. I was pumped for it.

Q. A lot has been made about the travel schedule, the sleeping schedule, getting you to maintain your circadian rhythm throughout the weekend. Does it feel like noon right now to you?

ADAM THIELEN: No. I think I adjusted to the time here. We were able to get, like, two really normal nights of sleep in this time zone. I felt really good. That was the best I felt in a London game.

I don't know what we did differently. Maybe we did the same thing last year. But definitely felt normal out there. Didn't feel groggy or anything like that.

We'll see how it is going back now because I'm sure we'll have to readjust, but have six days to do that.

Q. (Question about fourth down.)

ADAM THIELEN: I don't think so. I don't really remember the situation.

No, I don't think I was saying that.

Q. How would you remark on Kirk's composure down the stretch?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, you know what the cool thing is, he's kind of been that same guy since he got here. Maybe before that. I wasn't playing with him. But since the moment we got here, he's kind of always been that guy that he's here, the whole game he's here. No too high, no too low. He's just going to continue to handle his business. Whether it's really good or really bad, he just goes to work and just keeps going to work, keeps going.

He's going to try to do his job to the best of his ability. He's going to prepare like no one there is. Those are the guys you go to battle for and with. Very thankful for him.

Q. When it comes to keeping your cool, how do you mediate those conversations when there is a lot of frustration?

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, I think it's an initial reaction. We don't as receivers see what's going on with the quarterback, if he's getting hit or moved out of the pocket or maybe his read is somewhere else. We just don't know those things.

We just go and we try to win. We're competitive, we want the ball. We want to score touchdowns, right? We want to help the team win.

I think it's just kind of initial reaction. Then you go to the sideline, talk about it calmly. You say what you saw, he says what he has seen, then you move forward.

Q. (No microphone.)

ADAM THIELEN: Yeah, it was pretty cool. Honestly, I had no idea that was happening. But I was on the sideline and I happened to be watching the punt. It was

pretty cool. Obviously for Jalen to get that catch, I think it was his first NFL catch, right?

Q. It was.

ADAM THIELEN: That the pretty cool. Now we have two guys in the receiver room that their first NFL catch was not from a quarterback. K.J. got his first catch from J.J. Now Jalen, Speedy we call him, got his first catch from a punter. Pretty cool.

Q. You're pretty good at throwing the ball yourself. You has a better arm, you and Ryan Wright?

ADAM THIELEN: I think I got a better arm than him. Not as much as A.J., but a better arm than him. He does it pretty good. I guess he was a quarterback in high school. I guess he threw a couple of those in college, fake punts. I guess he did a pretty good job.

Q. (No microphone.)

ADAM THIELEN: I did not see it, no. It didn't look good on the field obviously. Praying for him. Another just great person. Hopefully it's not serious and hopefully he's back quickly.

But obviously we love that guy and praying for him.

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