

NFL International Series

Colts vs Patriots

Sunday, 12 November 2023

Frankfurt am Main, Hesse, Germany

Deutsche Bank Park

Indianapolis Colts

Zaire Franklin

Postgame Press Conference



Colts 10, Patriots 6

Q. You often beat up on this team. You did the same thing today going out there and making your mark. How important is it for you to come back because you didn't make the game last week and you come back and you play this game and now you are heading into a bye so you can rest?

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Out to the trenches, for sure. I will just say I talked to a lot of guys, and that was my first game that I missed since high school, and just being out there and being dependable to my teammates and just being somebody that they can count on is honestly the reason I play the game.

So just last week not being able to go, man, it was a tough situation for me. I was just really trying to do everything I can to get out there.

Obviously my long-term health and all that stuff is most important, but it just felt great to be out there. After being out there, I just had to make sure that the other team knew who I was. Just out there trying to change the game and affect the game any way I could.

Q. (Indiscernible)

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: First of all, it was a false start, but I mean, it wasn't a good fake. Then if you spike the ball, you're not going to look at a receiver after that. You probably are just going to walk off.

So after he faked it and was looking at a receiver, I'm, like, oh, well, I'm thinking, first of all, false start. Then I'm like, oh, fake spike? Okay.

Then went and saw he was looking at No. 2 vertical. Took the responsibility. Rodney T had a play on the ball. Game over.

Q. (On false start)

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Everybody was. Two of them moved early. I don't know if he even gave a cadence. Everybody was doing their own thing, but it is what it is.

Q. Speaking of Rodney, I remember last year you talked to him kind of building him up after that play against the Texans. For him to come back and make this pick, what does this say about his ability to go from that moment and make this one happen?

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Man, it's crazy. With all the DBs, obviously -- first of all, Rod T is a great, great young player on this team. From his very first play out there in Kansas City his rookie year, just has always been reliable. Always been a guy that I can lean on even as a young player. Always goes about his work the right way.

But to be honest with those DBs, man, it's crazy. It's like blood in the water. Once they get that first interception of the year, it's just like, now they're getting greedy. It comes in bunches.

So definitely shout out to Rod T, shout out to Julian, man. I just knew once those guys got the first one of the season, after that now they're going for it.

Q. What's the mentality of the defense when things like that happen? Dayo had a great game as well, three sacks. Does the mentality just, lift and you all feel you're working together, and it's a unit?

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: We knew New England coming into the game had struggled in certain areas. We knew that they were extremely good in the red zone, so that was something we really emphasized this week.

But, yeah, you know, when you have the D-line hunting like that, man, in the back end, it kind of lets you know to be a little bit more like, look, the ball has to come out quick. He has to make legitimate decision because they can't block us up front.

So that's always a great feeling for everybody on the defense because you see Dayo get three sacks in the first half, the D-linemen, they're getting greedy, and the big dogs want to hunt. It was definitely a good performance by those boys.



Q. On the final drive were you surprised seeing the Patriots benching Mac and putting a Bailey into the game?

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Yes, to be honest. I mean, I had heard from the coaches that 4 is warming up. I didn't know if that was 10 being injured or they just decided they wanted to make a change.

To be honest, we've had our fair share of quarterback struggles here. So when it comes to stuff like that, I wasn't that surprised. But at the end of the day I know what it feels like as player to not have played an entire game and then have to go in in the most important time in the game. So that's just tough for him, tough situation, but thankfully he made a play that helped us.

Q. (Indiscernible) What does that mean to you, and then to obviously leave here with a win.

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Just coming out here and just the experience that I've had just being here in Germany. My uncle was stationed in Germany for two years in the Army, so my whole life he has been telling me how awesome Germany was, but in my mind I'm, like, man, I'm going to Italy or French Alps or something. You know what I mean?

I've really enjoyed my time here, and just coming out here is just amazing how far this game has really taken me in my life. It's just something that I never want to take for granted, something I'm always truly appreciative of.

It was just a great experience. I'm really thankful that we were able to come out here and do this not only for ourselves, but for the fans out here as well, and for the game of football at that too.

Then all that being said, an eight-hour trip to come back after a loss wasn't cool, so we had to get that win, for sure.

Q. With Rodney, I don't know if you remember the moment, but when the Hail Mary goes over, I know you went right up to him on the field. Just talk about leadership. Why is it important for you to build players up in moments like that? At that time he was just a rookie.

ZAIRE FRANKLIN: Man, in the league, man, even on the best of teams, we've always had a great locker room, great supportive unit, but when you make a play, when you come to the sideline, you can't get to the bench at all. Everybody is smacking you in the head. Everybody is congratulating you from the strength staff to everybody.

But when you make a bad play, it's like you got the cooties. Everybody leaving you alone. They spread like the Red Sea, and you know, you feel it, man.

I just always try to treat people how I want to be treated. At the same time I know what it feels like to be in those moments to miss a play that you know you should have made. He had an interception earlier that game. I mean, he had four last year, so for him to miss that, it just was uncharacteristic of him, and honestly it was just a prime example how the season went.

For him I just wanted to let him know I got his back regardless, whether he is making a game-winning pick this week or it's a tough play another week. I'm supporting him, and I got his back no matter what. I just always try to help support my guys regardless.

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