

Las Vegas Raiders Media Conference

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Coach Antonio Pierce

Press Conference



Raiders 20, Browns 16

Q. Antonio, you talked about what a great opportunity this was going to be for young players, DJ Glaze, Jackson Powers-Johnson, DJ Turner, Trey Tucker, Brock Bowers. Seems like you had a bunch of contributions from the younger players to get you guys to 2-2. If you could talk about those.

ANTONIO PIERCE: Hats off to our coaching staff getting those guys prepared and obviously credit to the players stepping up. We put 'em in a lot of different roles, I think you saw that today. When you have that many young guys, first and second-year players, guys that have strictly played special teams step up and have an impact on the game and help us win, that's a building block for us going forward.

Q. You said earlier this week that you saw your team display character this week, but to see them come back of the loss last week, fall into a 10-0 hole early and respond the way they did, what did that tell you about your team?

ANTONIO PIERCE: I knew what group I had. I don't want to go backwards but that wasn't the team that we're accustomed to seeing and has shown up over the last several games. It was a trying week, to be honest, a lot of hoopla stuff, probably started with me and my comments, and I apologized to them for that.

I don't want to be a distraction that way, but at the end of the day, we went to work each and every day. They came out throughout the week, and guys never flinched and blinked. We just talked about playing one play at a time, playing for one year. Adam Butler spoke to the team, did an hell of a job with that and got us going throughout the weekend.

Q. You talked about building a culture of winning. How much does this last week go toward that?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Two weeks ago after the Baltimore win, my words were trying to build that winning consistency, that winning stamina, each and every week, and hopefully not riding a roller coaster. But we are going to take this and enjoy this for 24 hours, because it's hard to get in the National Football League. Our home crowd was outstanding, especially late in the game they helped us out.

Q. Cleveland went three for three on that opening drive, didn't convert a third down the rest of the game. What did you see that helped flip that script and get your guys to respond in the way you needed them to?

ANTONIO PIERCE: I mean, I think obviously they executed. They went to a better player; right? No. 2 showed up on two or three of those, Cooper, and I think as the game plan on went on we did a good job of finding guys that are key players in those situations, but more importantly I think our rush and coverage added up and made the quarterback hold the ball a little bit, and we got some throws, errant throws that we wanted, and obviously one we took advantage of and got an interception.

Q. Back to the younger guys, Isaiah Pola-Mao with a sack and a big pass break-up late in that game, and also Jakorian, seems to keep showing up every week. If you could talk about those two players?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Isaiah, I mentioned earlier in the week, played over 250 snaps on defense and primary special teams, as we know. We were waiting to get him out there, and the opportunity came with Marcus Epps going down, and I thought he did an outstanding job all week, spending more time in the classroom, Gerald Alexander spending time with him, and then really Tre'veon, it's difficult when all of the sudden you have a new guy next to you, communicating. There is continuity that goes into that as well, but he came up huge and big. J.B. just -- listen, I've been saying it, steady Eddie, just keeps improving each and every week.

I think the best thing about him, as a corner you're going to get balls caught on you. You just gotta move on. Even tonight, ball caught on him, move on, and we need him on third down, and he makes a huge play, so hats off to those



two.

Q. Coach, talk about the running game. I know how much it means to you and it seemed today for the first time especially between the tackles you guys seemed to be grinding out yards.

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, a lot of pride in that group, and we talked about it has been not the start that we wanted the first three games running the football, but credit to these guys. Let's find the runs that work and let's keep chipping away at it. And at timed in games there is a 1-2-yard run and then what was it, 24-yarder, 17-yarder, 18-yarder, 12 and a 10. That hasn't shown up. I think our longest run might have been 9, without penalties.

But tremendous job by those guys. I thought Zamir backed up, almost took one. Alex Mattison really showed up today. These guys ran hard. I thought it was a more physical team as the game went on.

Q. Talk about your two rookie offensive linemen, please?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah. Didn't see that am coming, in the first four games. I said it last week I thought Jackson Powers did an outstanding job with his 20 plays with his energy, his effort, his physicality. I mean, it was getting to the point the referees were warning me about his play style, and that's what we're looking for.

And DJ is one of those guys, yes, there are going to be corrections but when you watch his body of work, he's consistent. I don't think there was a penalty on him tonight, I know Jackson had two, but for those guys to go out there against that defense, which is a very elite front 7 and play the way they did, hats off to them and our coaches.

Q. I know Charles Snowden has been in the league for a few years, but this is his first time getting extended running in the regular season. That final drive between the pass break-up and sacking Watson at the end, two pretty big plays for him. What have you seen in his overall growth?

ANTONIO PIERCE: It's interesting how certain guys' careers work, right? Here is a guy that gets drafted, practice squad. We pick him up last year, and to be honest you saw it in the spring. He gained some. He's making some flash plays. Didn't work out initially, we don't put I am him on the 50-man roster, injuries happen, and he gets pulled up and we've asked him to do a lot, from special teams, to playing linebacker, to playing D-End, that height, that length and more importantly that effort, I thought that was -- prime example that last play, full-blown, we need to

have it 4th and 3, game on the line, and he did everything he could.

Robbie and André Carter, all those hours we spent on the side working with players extra, longer, really came to fruition tonight.

Q. I know Jack Jones didn't play that first quarter. Is that just kind of that side of accountability that you have referenced in the past?

ANTONIO PIERCE: That was my decision. That's between me and Jack.

Q. Coach, talk about the esprit de corps this week compared to last? It seemed like the effort this week was pretty much right on?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Because last week was disappointing. And if there is one thing we can do, we can control our energy and passion and love for the game, which I always speak about, and that didn't show up last week, and that's on me. But man, this week they took the bull by the horns, and what I loved seeing, and I'm glad nothing happened from an official standpoint, but we make a play, you turn around, Raiders running right and left from the interception to those two touchdowns late in the game.

The way these guys gelled together, especially this week when there were a lot of people poking holes at our team and individuals, they stuck together.

Thank you guys.

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