

Indianapolis Colts Media Conference

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Coach Matt Eberflus

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Colts 24, Bears 17

MATT EBERFLUS: Good evening. Just to recap the week really quick. Just wanted to thank the Colts for being great hosts, for these joint practices. I thought they did a really nice job of organizing them, the practices themselves and also just for us to be able to take part in the initiative Kicking the Stigma and bringing some awareness to that during the course of the week and then also during pregame today, that was a good thing. Kalen Jackson heads that up. That's Jim Irsay's daughter, and she does a great job with that, so it's great to bring awareness to that.

In terms of the practice week, it was really good. There was a lot of good situations that we had. Like I said earlier, a lot of good one-on-one match-ups that we were able to evaluate guys in, and you put guys in -- there's some really good players on both sides, on our team of course and then also our their team where you see a match-up, and can that person function with that match-up.

That's what you see, that's real NFL ball, and that's what's good to see.

Then going into the game today, we had an opportunity to get a lot of young guys a lot of good work, and it was good to see. You saw a couple guys really step up and play really well, and that was good to see, as well.

Again, we're going to look at the tape, and we've got a big week ahead of us. We're going to do our in-season game week, so it's a good practice dress rehearsal for us to be able to get that done, in season Wednesday. We've got a bonus day on Monday, but we'll do it in season Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, but it's obviously bumped up a day because the game is on Saturday.

We're looking forward to that, and the guys are, too. We'll take a good look at what we're going to bring into the game in terms of scheme, but we will treat this week as a game plan week and we'll move on to stuff in practice that we would have run in the game.

Excited to see how they learn, how they execute with the menu that it's going to be like in the game, so we kind of pare it down like we're game planning for somebody, and we don't really have to have the situation where we have in training camp where we have all these different things coming at you so you can hone in. The younger players can hone in on the game plan themselves.

With that, I'll open it up to questions.

Q. To clarify, does that mean your starters will play?

MATT EBERFLUS: I haven't decided that. I'll decide that as the week goes. We're getting a lot of good competition against each other this week, a lot of good-on-good because our schemes are very similar. So we'll do some carded periods that are relative to Buffalo, but we're going to get a lot of periods against each other.

Q. Where does everything shift forward toward week 1? Is that after this coming week?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, after this week we've got the day off of course after the game for the players, and then we have a couple days in there we're going to do a little bit of light stuff in there, and then we'll end up cutting down the roster at that point, and then we'll have a couple good practices before the guys have that last weekend off.

We're getting down to the nitty-gritty here, so this week right now where our feet are is really important for us.

Q. Would you like to get better production out of Walker?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, I mean, we're going to look at the tape. We're going to look at the tape. The quarterback is always the center focus of everything, and certainly we'll look at each guy, how they performed tonight and all the way through camp.

Q. What went into the (indiscernible)?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, we just wanted to see him in



there with the line. Has a little bit more protection and see how he operated to give him his chance. Nate played solid in the second half, as well. It was good to see those guys. He certainly put his best foot forward tonight. You saw RoJo, he was really good tonight with his cutting and his reading of the holes, and I thought he really got north a bunch of times and put his pads down, so that was also good to see.

Q. Have you formed a solid approach to the preseason, not just the last couple years but throughout your time in the NFL, that you believe in, or do you think that is something that will be fluid going forward?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, that's a great question. I'm with the latter. I think it's fluid because you have to evaluate your team. It's just like when you're going through the season. You have a plan of hey, this is where the ebb and flow of the season is and you can see that based on the natural breaks that are there, but you also have to fill your team. What's going on with the team, what's the morale, what's the injuries, how you're doing the As of your football team relative to preseason. I think it's very fluid and you've got to be able to move with education, asking guys hey, what do you think, talking to the players, and then you just work through there.

Q. With Tyson, what stood out to you on that play?

MATT EBERFLUS: Well, I saw poise. I saw good protection by the line. I saw good route running by the receivers. I saw good running by the running back. I know that was in there, so that was helpful to move the ball, as well. And then I saw poise from him. Delivery was there, the accuracy looked pretty good, timing was nice, decision making was good. All the things it takes to score a touchdown, you saw it there.

Q. (Indiscernible) what have you seen in three and a half months here that's stood out to you?

MATT EBERFLUS: First of all, he's very smart. He can whip the plays, whip them off, and he knows it in and out. He can chunk in a lot of information, so that's very important as a quarterback to be able to process that. So I can see that in the classroom when I'm in there with the quarterbacks.

Then the functional intelligence, being able to get out there in the walk throughs and being able to do the process of it, and now he's got to put a good step forward in training camp and also today.

Q. With Jalen, what has (indiscernible)?

MATT EBERFLUS: He said that it was after the play, and he was working with a tackle, and I think he maybe swiped at him or something. I didn't see it. It must have been. They're not going to do that unless it was in the head or neck area.

Q. How will you decide who needs to play or who should play? Today it looked like a blanket decision across the board with the starters. Is it going to be like that again or a case-by-case basis?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, so we'll look at the whole camp to see where a guy is, see what kind of workloads he's put in, and then we'll also see how he's executing. It will be case by case, but when the one quarterback is in there we usually have the one line with him, so we always start there.

We'll see where it goes, and I think we're going to base a lot of it off of how this practice week goes, this game week goes, and then we'll see what the reps look like for the game.

Q. The second string quarterback position (indiscernible)?

MATT EBERFLUS: I think everything is open right now. I really do. I think if you have a closed mind, then if somebody is rising or executing or -- you always never put a ceiling on any player. There's never that. You always look for the best in every guy, and you'll see guys, all of a sudden they'll get into a game and man, they start rising up. This is just easy for them, and they can execute in that moment and in those moments.

Q. (Indiscernible).

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, we're going to put guys in there now. That's what we do. We missed some opportunities out there tonight, so Tyrique had that interception in the back of the end zone. He's got to bring his hands up together. We had another tipped ball; we've got to do a great job of getting underneath that one. We had a strip sack; I've got to look at the hustle, how we're hustling on the defensive line. We've got to be able to get that because I bet there was some loafing going on on the other three guys on the D-line.

We've got a lot of work to do.

Q. (Indiscernible) is there a coaching point for them?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, I coached them on really a couple things tonight but first was the penalty. I told them

hey, when you get to the sideline like that, if the guy -- he goes, well, my hand got caught in his shoulder pad or whatever it was, and that may have been the case, but you have to do whatever you've got to do to let go of that. If you throw a guy down like that, they're going to call that 10 out of 10 times, and that's going to hurt our team. That was a coaching point there.

Then really for the interception, you get that situation, your hands got to come up together. They can't come up like that, they've got to come up like this, so when the ball gets on you quick like that, you've got to get your hands in good position to catch it.

Q. I know you've talked about your comfort with the rookies and other players on the roster. Is it different at quarterback? Do you feel that same comfort if a rookie has earned that spot?

MATT EBERFLUS: I'm comfortable with any position. To me it's about execution. If you can execute, it doesn't matter if you're 28 or 23. It doesn't matter to me. I'm comfortable.

Q. (Indiscernible). The backup quarterback, how much do you feel he could be a resource for the starter?

MATT EBERFLUS: Yeah, certainly you definitely need that. That's always very helpful in the room. It's comforting to the starter. A guy has to know the offense, know the ins and outs of it. That's certainly an added plus.

Q. Walker is a guy you targeted in free agency (indiscernible) are you saying Bagent has a legitimate chance to win that job if that's not Walker's job?

MATT EBERFLUS: I would just say everything is open right now, and it's not just that position, it's every position. If the guy is in a competition, everybody can look at the roster and see who's in a competition. Those are all going to be open. I think if you close your mind off to that, you might be missing on something. You've got to let it play out is what we say as coaches, don't predetermine things, let things play out, and that's the way you do it as a coach, and you'll find that that's usually the best decision.

Q. (Indiscernible).

MATT EBERFLUS: No. No. He's in good shape.

Q. He's coming back?

MATT EBERFLUS: There's a couple guys we're hopeful. I'll find out more tomorrow when I talk to Dre as we get

back, but we're hopeful we get some guys back, guys that are the day-to-day guys that we've been talking about, the guys that have been out for a while, hopefully we're going to get them back.

Q. Who are you hopeful on?

MATT EBERFLUS: The guys that are day-to-day.

DraftScripts by ASAP Sports.

