

Indianapolis Colts Media Conference

Saturday, December 16, 2023
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gardner Minshew

Postgame Press Conference



Indianapolis - 30, Pittsburgh - 13

Q. How much have you worked with D.J.?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Shoot, man, we're both from Mississippi, like 30 minutes apart. So, man, I think it might have been after my first off-season we worked out together kind of for the first time back home. I haven't done much since.

He's the guy that literally every week in practice is scout team player of the week. He like tears it up. Even when he got here for preseason, he came in one game, had like five catches. He's super productive.

He's just one of those guys. He shows up and makes plays. Couldn't be more happy for him.

Q. He had the drop in the end zone. What was he like -- obviously you were confident going back to him the next throw.

GARDNER MINSHEW: He was down. I told him, man, we're coming right back to you. That doesn't change anything for me.

Man, I'm just so happy for him. Getting back in the end zone and scoring, that was awesome.

Q. How big were those scout team guys? Goodson, Sermon, Montgomery today?

GARDNER MINSHEW: They were huge. I'm happy for all of them. Getting an opportunity in this league is not an easy thing. They made the most of it today and helped us win. I don't think we'd win without them.

I think that's just a testament to how they work week in and week out. We've been seeing them in practice on scout team, whatever it is. We have a lot of confidence in them. So when it was time to roll, we were all ready for it.

Q. The Pitt -- where you're scrambling, kind of pulling, that kind of thing, what were you seeing on that play? How much did that matter for you guys?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Man, that was huge. That was a big third down. We kind of had the initial play flubbed up. Pitt was running across. There was nobody behind. I told him to go deep, man, and he made an awesome play. This guy got separation from his guy. Those are the kind of big plays we need from him.

Q. How did you guys get settled down just -- early on in the pocket, it was pretty muddy, took some sacks. Like honestly, a lot of quarterbacks kind of go get in the cycle with that against Pittsburgh. How did you guys get settled down and press for the pocket presence?

GARDNER MINSHEW: I thought our protection plan was really good. I think we did a good job of putting chips and thumps on him. On the other side, that was good. They had some internal pressure that was tough. Our guys rose up to the challenge. I have a ton of confidence in those guys and their ability to block it up.

Man, just super happy for our group. In pass protection, we talked about it all week, it's a full unit ordeal in pass protection this week, and I think everybody kind of rose to the challenge.

Q. How did this team go from one of the toughest losses of the season to playing one of the best games of the season?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Honestly, I think it was doubling down on our process of meetings, walk through, practice. We attacked that with a lot of urgency this week. I think everybody fed off that energy, felt that energy, and gave us a lot of confidence going into the game.

Q. A lot of the media was talking about how this is a must win, especially for the playoff picture. How much did you guys feel that pressure and really own that today in how big of a win this was?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Honestly, I kind of feel we've been on that for a little while now. We've needed to win these games, and we've done a great job down the stretch. We try to win one at a time. You can't look too far past it.

But I think everybody was very locked in. The urgency was there. The attention to detail was there. That's why we had a good game.

Q. It was one of your best games of the season personally. How do you assess your play today?

GARDNER MINSHEW: I don't know. I have to watch the tape. I was telling people in the locker room at this point it's winning games. That's all it is. However you've got to get that done, we're going to try to find a way.

So I grade myself on wins more than anything right now, so thumbs up.

Q. You guys lose Zack and Pitt on plays that get flagged, guy gets ejected. How does the team react when that play happens to your guy? How do you think you guys reacted today?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Any time you lose really good players like that, nobody is going to be able to step in and replace that. I think everybody has to be able to pick up their level of play. I think we got it from a lot of different areas today.

That's why with those guys in preparation, they don't get all the reps, they don't get all the looks, but they were able to get in and execute. Hat's off to the guys that came in and were able to fill in.

Q. Does the team get mad at all when you have hits like that take out your player?

GARDNER MINSHEW: Yeah, it's never ideal. You don't want that. I don't think there was any malicious intent or anything. That's sometimes how the game goes. I wish I wouldn't have put Pitt in that position honestly.

So you always try to do your best to protect your guys, but there's sometimes where unfortunate things just happen in the game.

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