

Indianapolis Colts Media Conference

Saturday, January 6, 2024
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Head Coach DeMeco Ryans

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Texans-23, Colts-19

Q. How do you feel about the win?

DEMECO RYANS: It feels awesome. All glory, honor, praise goes to God. He's just blessed up throughout this entire season. Our team has been humbled and worked, fought right behind the scenes. I think it means a lot to our guys to get the spotlight today and just to come with a gritty win, really gritty win.

It wasn't our best performance, but it was gritty. It was tough, and it was a special performance. Our guys stood up, made the plays when we needed to make plays. C.J. and Nico, they stole the show. Awesome job. Two of our best playmakers.

Nico, we needed him most today, and he showed up big-time for us and made a ton of big plays. It's the reason why we won this game.

Q. What were your thoughts on that first touchdown after Indy kicked that opening field goal, first play?

DEMECO RYANS: Awesome throw, awesome catch. Something we have been working. When Bobby called it, I was like, Oh, here it is.

Just credit to Nico and C.J. for also great ball placement and putting that ball exactly where it needed to be, and Nico going up and making that catch. I have been telling Nico, hey, he has been catching a lot of deep ones, but he has been stumbling and falling, not getting in the end zone. This time stayed up and got in the end zone. Biggest play of the year for him.

Q. What were you thinking after the game?

DEMECO RYANS: During that moment I was just thankful, really thankful to be in this position, thankful for our guys

and the way they fought, everything that we've been through throughout the entire year. Just taking it all in. Been through a lot of you ups and downs.

For us to grind through the season and find a way to get an opportunity in the playoffs, it's a special moment, one I'll always remember. It was a moment just of gratitude.

Q. Probably nothing surprises you at this point, but Are you still surprised by C.J. Stroud?

DEMECO RYANS: C.J., he doesn't surprise me. We've talked about it earlier in the week with C.J. just being special in these big-time moments. When we need him most to step up and make plays, he has done it time after time throughout the entire year.

It's not surprising anyone. That's who he is. He is one of the best passers in this league, and he shows it consistently game in and game out.

Q. You said the other guys talked about we didn't come this far just to get this far. How satisfying was it to get the win today?

DEMECO RYANS: That's what's special about it. We didn't come this far just to get this far. Guys they wanted it. Our guys wanted this opportunity, and they went out and had the determination to go and make it happen.

It wasn't easy. It was a tough team. Indy is a really good football team, well-coached team. They played an unbelievable game.

To go up against a really tough opponent and come out with a win, it's special, and it says a lot about our group.

Q. C.J. and Nico, what was it about that dynamic duo that kind of carried the offense to the win?

DEMECO RYANS: They were in sync. A lot of guys missing. We're missing Robert. We're missing Noah. We're missing Tank. We're missing a ton of receivers.

We know Nico is our go-to guy, our playmaker. For them



to step up and make plays when we need it most, that's a special connection. They were in sync all game. They were in sync.

For Nico to have over 195 yards, that's big-time. I tell them all the time, he is a big-time playmaker, and he continues to show it week after week. He's out there, he's a problem. He's a tough out for a lot of teams. Happy that he's on our side.

Q. During the ups and the downs, the way this team just continues to fight and never give up. During this game, could you just see that from your players and in their eyes coming on and off the field?

DEMECO RYANS: I saw it in our guys in pregame. I felt our energy in pregame. I felt it last night in our team meeting. I felt like our guys had the mindset that we will not be denied.

We knew it would be tough. It didn't matter how long it took, but I just knew and they knew they had that quiet confidence about them, and I felt that last night in our team meeting. I felt it throughout the entire game.

Nobody ever wavered. Nobody ever blinked. They knew we would come away with the win.

Q. How important was the defense today? Thoughts on Blake Cashman and Christian Harris?

DEMECO RYANS: Defense stood up, and guys did an outstanding job on third down. To hold the team to one conversion on third down, that's winning football. We needed to make plays, we made plays.

Christian and Blake, they both made a lot of tackles, ran around sideline-to-sideline, made a lot of plays. It was just overall everybody. In the passing game our secondary did a great job at keeping the ball in front of them. Just overall the guys they grinded it out.

It wasn't our best performance in the running game. We let a few get loose there. Tackling wasn't great. We needed to make a play there on four for one to come up with a play, a stop for the game there. It was huge.

Q. What's next for you guys?

DEMECO RYANS: What's next? Enjoy this. We enjoy this moment for sure, enjoy tonight, and get to sit back and watch football tomorrow, see where we'll be going, who we'll be playing, who will be at home.

There's a lot of things that can happen that we know. We

get to sit back and watch now. We get to breathe and not be in the last-second situations anymore. We get to sit back and watch the other teams play.

Q. How have you guys been able to get the win despite the last seven games have been determined?

By the last drive?

DEMECO RYANS: Experience now. We're an experienced team in these moments. In the final drives of games we have the experience. Probably too much for my liking, but it's just win, and I was happy about the way this performance happened today, and it's a microcosm of our entire season.

No matter what happened, we found a way to win, and that's what we need moving forward. It doesn't matter how pretty or ugly. It's just win, and that's what we've been doing. Our guys have the experience. No matter how the game looks, find a way to win, and that's what it will take moving forward.

Q. What was the difference in the run defense during the fourth quarter?

DEMECO RYANS: We had to play better technique. Switched up some things there schematically, and we just had to play better technique. The biggest thing in the run game was tackling. We were in position, but tackling, we have to be much better there.

Q. Last few years this franchise has been through a lot. Third coach in three years. They hired you, a rookie head coach. What does it mean for you to give that franchise and that ownership this moment?

DEMECO RYANS: It means everything to me to provide this opportunity for our organization, to see the smiles on everyone's faces. Not just the players, but all of our support staff, the owners, Cal and Hannah. Them entrusting us. To see the smiles on Nick's face. Everybody.

I'm happy to be a part of it. I'm happy to see everyone smiling. I'm happy, excited about this moment, excited about this opportunity that we have in front of us.

It's a proud moment for our organization, so I'm just happy to be a part of it and happy to be along for the ride.

Q. Are you thinking about the playoffs tonight?

DEMECO RYANS: We're just going to enjoy this moment right now. We'll worry about the playoffs next week. Once



we find out who we're playing, we'll worry about it.

I think right now it's just a time to reflect and take in just a moment of gratitude for us all. To be grateful for this opportunity that we have in front of us, to be proud of the season that we've had, to fight through a must-win game and finding a way to win. Thank God and take a breather and just enjoy this moment.

Q. As many fans as could make it here today, they made it out. They came out, as many as possible. What do you have to say to the fans back home that couldn't make it out but were at watch parties at home, through the ups and downs?

DEMECO RYANS: To our fans back home, I know you guys feel the same emotions I'm feeling. There's a lot of ups and downs through this game, but man, I know our fans are partying, and they're excited, and we're happy to give them that excitement.

We're happy to put smiles on our fans' faces. They deserve it. They deserve it. We're happy that they're proud of their team and for us to be in position to go to the playoffs and give our fans something to cheer about even more.

We're thankful for their support, their continued support. Thanks for all our fans who made it here. We had fans that showed up here at Indy. We're thankful for the overwhelming support, the excitement that we have all around the town.

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