

PATRIOTS HEAD COACH JEROD MAYO

POSTGAME VIDEO CONFERENCE

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Patriots 23, Bills 16

JM: Just what I told the players in there, just proud of the way that they came out and competed today. Obviously there were some guys that hadn't played as much football the rest of the season that really showed up today.

Just there in the locker room, pretty emotional, but at the same time, these guys have been turning the page, ignoring the noise, and just coming to work every day, and I'm very appreciative of that.

Told them after the first win of the season, coaches are nothing without the players, and I just told them that again, and I just appreciate all the effort. Also told them, look, today it's all about the game. We'll have enough time here tomorrow and the next couple of days to address all the other things.

At some point in time here, I'll have my normal meeting with the Krafts and we'll see where it goes from there. I'll open it up.

Q. With that said, you get the win. How strange was this week for you, for your team? You had a couple issues with players and the fans and things like that and also some booing today as you guys scored. What was this week like? What was the day like for you guys and your football team?

JM: For me, the day was fine. I felt like the players were locked in all week, even amongst all that noise. Appreciate them for that.

Q. What would you say to fans that are upset that today's win prevented you guys from getting the No. 1 overall pick?

JM: Look, anytime we step foot -- I've said this over the last couple of weeks, as a player, as a coach, we always want to go out there and win.

Q. We didn't see Jahlani Tavai play the first quarter. Was that disciplinary for his comments?

JM: We went into the game with a plan and went out there

and executed.

Q. What went into the decision to sit Drake Maye after the first series?

JM: It was my decision, coach's decision.

Q. What were some of the factors for Jahlani's case and Drake's that led you to those decisions?

JM: Yeah, all those things are internal, and I'd rather keep it that way.

Q. What did you see from Joe today? It seemed like he provided a spark the minute he stepped foot in that game. How have you seen him develop this season to culminate in this moment?

JM: Yeah, he's done a tremendous job in practice as the show team quarterback. Done a tremendous job doing that, and I'm glad to see the way he played out today. He did a good job operating in the huddle. Obviously started off on fire. But it was good to see.

Q. You mentioned a couple of times this year that you guys knew you were going to take some lumps this year. You knew this was a multiyear process. Do you expect to be back next year? Do you feel like you deserve to be back next year?

JM: For me it's all about just this game, to go back to the start. It's all about this game, and we'll talk about that tomorrow.

Q. I think some people speculate based on how you guys handled the game today and played to win that there was some conversation had with ownership prior to the game. Did they at any point this week tell you how they wanted you to handle this one?

JM: Not at all. Just goes back to anytime we step foot on the field, we want to win.

Q. Did you have any conversation with the front office about the approach?

JM: No, I'm the head coach of the football team, and anytime we step foot on the field, we want to win.



Q. Is there any significance to not wearing the pin today? We've seen you with the pin for most of the season.

JM: No, no significance at all. I had a big coat on. It was kind of the same thing last week in Buffalo. Nothing about that. I apologize for not having it visible, but you can make a story about it if you want to.

Q. How do you reconcile if you're going to go in the game to play the game to win, not playing your No. 1 quarterback for most of it?

JM: I think I've said all year, we need to see as the season goes on what we actually have, and it was good to get Joe out there.

Q. Isn't that different than trying to do everything you can to win, though?

JM: We won the game, and Joe was our quarterback.

Q. How proud are you of your coaching staff, of your players and everybody in this organization for just going through the year, and what was it like, I think AVP and Joe Milton did kind of a handshake after his touchdown pass. What was that like as far as seeing that through and sum up the year as far as what you guys have been through as a group?

JM: It was great to see that handshake in a real game. We've seen it a lot in practice, and it all came together today, so it was great to see.

I would say as far as the staff is concerned, just being able to push forward and be consistent, that's all you can really ask.

Q. We saw Austin Hooper a lot more today since Hunter was out and we saw him get a catch that resulted in an extra incentive bonus. Was that a goal going into the game, that you wanted to get him that bonus in this final game of the year? I'm curious if that was a factor at all.

JM: I'm not going to get into that. When you don't have Hunter, who's had a great year, Hooper -- look, any other team, Hooper is probably a No. 1, I should say three-quarters of the team. Very good player, and happy for him.

Q. How would you best summarize this year, and did you learn maybe that the team is a little bit further away than you were anticipating?

JM: I'm not going to get into that. Like I said, tomorrow we'll have a lot of time to talk about those things, but tonight, it's all about these guys going out there and winning a football game.

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