



# CLEVELAND BROWNS TRANSCRIPT

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*Washington Commanders Head Coach Ron Rivera  
Cleveland Browns vs. Washington Commanders  
Preseason Week 2  
8-11-23*

**On QB Sam Howell:**

“Very encouraged. A lot of good things. I thought he threw some really good balls. I thought his decision-making was what you want. He looked to have command of things. It was good to see him get into a rhythm. Again, a good positive start for our guys.”

**On whether having a third drive was anticipated:**

“Well, he was kind of listening to what E.B. (OC Eric Bieniemy) had to say and he wanted to get at least one more opportunity. He felt good enough about what he had seen originally, but he just wanted to get a little bit more rhythm, so we went back out there. The biggest thing, more than anything else, though, is that he got into a really good rhythm and then we had a penalty. That really kind of offset everything. I’m glad E.B. wanted to keep him out there and we went with it.”

**On the starting offensive line:**

“I thought they did some good things. A couple things that got a little bit out of hand. We just have to be a little bit better, be careful and be alert to the penalties. I can’t wait to see the tape and break down exactly what we can do and what we can do to get better.”

**On the decision to give the starting defense only one drive:**

“Because it was a long one and they went four and out at the right time, so I figured ‘you know what, let’s go from there.’ Quite honestly, it was (DC) Jack (Del Rio)’s suggestion and I agreed with Jack.”

**On the goal line stand:**

“The thing that needed to be corrected is that on two of the long runs on the outside to the right side of our defense, the biggest problem, more than anything else, is that we played behind the ball. We didn’t get a good edge set and when we decided to run through, we ran behind and not in front. Bad decisions on the guys that were supposed to fit those creases.”

**On what he saw from DE Chase Young with limited snaps:**

“I mean again, we want to bring him back gradually. We want to make sure we’re smart with him and just be careful.”

**On whether DE Chase Young had any sort of injury heading off the field:**

“He had a little bit of a stinger so when he came to the sidelines, we just said we saw a really good start so let’s just be really careful with him. The doctors were fine with that, so we just pulled him out and left him out.”

**On whether the team came away healthy after this game:**

“For the most part it looks like it. We had a couple guys bump each other, but they both got cleared. (DT) Phidarian (Mathis) went back in to play. For the most part, we’ll see tomorrow morning when everybody shows up.”

**On the younger tight ends:**

“I thought (TE) Cole (Turner) did a really nice job. Cole showed his savviness as a route runner. [He] made a couple of big plays for us when we needed to have them made. He showed up, he really did. I thought (TE) John Bates had a pretty good day. Even though it was a penalty, I would have liked to see him catch that. I thought it was a really nice thrown ball. Nicely thrown and should have been caught. Again, for the most part, I thought the young guys did a really nice job.”

**On this being Bieniemy’s first game and how the whole operation went:**

“I thought the operation was outstanding. I loved the rhythm they got into. I thought his play calling was really good. I love his positivity when he’s talking to the quarterback. He would call a play and tell them ‘hey this should work, let’s go get it.’ I just love the way he does that. It instills confidence in our guys when they’re calling plays.”

**On the plays or sequences where the rhythm stood out:**



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“Well I thought the very first one coming out. We start marching down there and we have a chance for a big throw. Unfortunately, like I said, we missed it. We dropped the ball, but there was also a penalty. Now you’re at second and twenty. That puts you off kilter, but I thought [Bieniemy] handled the rhythm really well. I thought they mixed it nicely. [Bieniemy] found a little something with the run game so we went back to the run a couple of times repeatedly and then came back with a really nice play action that I thought really kind of offset a couple things for us and got them off balance.”

**On WR Jahan Dotson’s touchdown:**

“It was a pretty-well thrown ball, but because Jahan is so athletic in his ability just to make that kind of catch, and then he just reverses his field. That was pretty sharp.”

**On the message to the team after the game and if anyone got a game ball:**

“The message for the most part to the guys was more than anything else, there’s a lot to learn from. We made some mistakes. We did some really good things, but when we get a chance to watch the film, we’re going to be honest with ourselves and talk about things that we have to get corrected and the things we can better at and praise them for some of the good plays they had.”

**On whether he saw the new owners during the game or had a chance to talk with them after:**

“No, I had seen that they were on the field after the game. We did hand Mr. (Josh) Harris a game ball. It was a preseason game and we told him a win’s a win and you can always keep this one. We gave it to him and the guys were pretty fired up and looking forward to the opportunity to give him one for real.”

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