

Atlanta Falcons vs. Cleveland Browns

Postgame Quotes

Oct. 2, 2022

HEAD COACH KEVIN STEFANSKI

OPENING STATEMENT: "Obviously, it's very disappointing to come down here and not come away with the victory and that's the frustrating part. I need to own a large part of that. We must come away with points in the red zone, especially early and 1-for-3 in the red zone is not good enough. It's a lot of things you wish you could take back. We're a two-an-two football team with an AFC opponent coming to our place next week, so we must quickly learn from this one and be better next time."

On the decision to go for it on fourth-and-goal on the opening drive:

"I felt comfortable with the play call, trying to get seven points down there as opposed to three. I understand the question, but I felt good about the play."

On whether he went for it early on because he knew the offense would have to score a lot today:

"We wanted to score sevens in the red zone, we really felt like we could. We tried to run it on the third down but got knocked back, which was unfortunate, and we didn't come away with points and that falls on me."

On the reason for Atlanta's success on the ground:

"They did a nice job. They wore us down, and we got out of gas a couple of times and made us pay, but obviously, we had to find a way to get off the field."

On the other red zone trip that ended in a field goal due to a holding penalty:

"You wish you could do something different because of the result, but I felt good about the plays. You're not thinking you're coming away with a holding penalty, you're thinking you're going to 3rd-and-1. Again, no one's fault but mine."

On the emotions facing adversity throughout the week and not coming away with a win:

"It's frustrating because these guys put so much into these games and give so much during the week, and you put a lot into it. So, it makes coming away with a loss very disappointing and frustrating. We just have to learn from it."

On whether he'll consider kicking field goals in the red zone moving forward:

"I think I always try to do what's best for the team. There are always opportunities to get better as a coach and a player. I'm not going to be results-based. I'm going always to fall back on our process and try to put our guys in a position to succeed."

On whether he's more frustrated with the results in the red zone than his play calls:

"I'm frustrated by all of it and that I didn't put our guys in a position to succeed."

On how the team responded to adversity this week:

"We talked about how guys have to step up. That's just the National Football League. Guys that are unavailable for whatever the reason, we just ask guys to step up."

On several players stepping up today offensively:

"Yeah, I thought those guys did a nice job, and they had some opportunities. I always try to get Amari the ball and I didn't do it enough. Credit to them they did a nice job."

On whether the Falcons were trying to take WR Amari Cooper away:

"Of course. Yes. There were a couple of opportunities. We just didn't connect."

On using WR Donovan Peoples-Jones as a punt returner this week and whether he plans to do so moving forward:

"We'll see. You always look at the roster week to week and it adjusts and changes. So, we'll see"

On LB Jacob Phillips' performance, particularly running the huddle:

"I have to look at it to give you a good answer, but for the most part, Jacob ran the huddle well. Was running sideline to sideline, but again, that's the name of the NFL. You just have to step up."

On the long pass to Falcons WR Olamide Zaccheaus on Atlanta's final drive:

"I'd have to look at it to give you a specific answer. Obviously, we're not designing it to have a guy wide open, but we just have to make sure we get them in good position and make a good play when the ball comes our way."

On QB Jacoby Brissett's performance today:

"He did some good things. He wants plays back like I want play calls back and the frustrating part of this game is when you come up short. We'll look at it and grow from it."

On whether he regrets calling the screen pass to TE David Njoku that resulted in a fumble:

"The screen got good yardage and fumbled pretty far down the field. It would have been a good gain. I think any play that doesn't work, you always look back and ask what you could have done differently, and I also want to give credit to them. They're going to make their plays."

On how close DE Jadeveon Clowney was to playing on Sunday:

"It was close, I wanted to give him some time with the ankle, but it wasn't quite ready today."

On whether he feels good about DE Myles Garrett and DE Jadeveon Clowney playing next week:

"I'll wait to see until we get back in the building."

QUARTERBACK JACOBY BRISSETT

On the sting of losing a close game:

"We just didn't do enough. We knew it was going to be a 60-minute football game. We just didn't make enough plays down the stretch in those critical situations and we've just got to look at the film and get better from here."

On tracing the loss back to the first half:

"It's a bunch of plays that we can go through and point at and say "this was that". We still had a chance at the end. That's really what it comes down to, me making the wrong decision on something. We've got to learn from it just like we've done from every [game] and then find ways to get better, do things that we did good in this game and go from there."

On what they were doing to Amari Cooper:

"It's just what this defense is, it keeps you on your toes. Obviously, they saw what Coop's been doing last couple of weeks. I thought they did a good job, they did enough to win. They scored one more point than us so they won and we're gonna come back and watch the film and self-scout and see how we can alleviate some of that and get back."

On whether he was referring to a specific bad decision:

"A lot."

On whether there is one play he would like to have back:

"I want a couple back."

On whether he was trying to get to the 40-yard line:

“We were trying to definitely give us a chance.”

On the sequence of events on the last drive:

“It’s kind of hard to replay. I only remember the last play and it was a pick, so yeah bad decision.”

On whether he likes the aggression of the offense on fourth downs:

“[Joshua] Dobbs was just saying it’s like hindsight is 20/20, we’ve been going for a lot of fourth downs, we’ve been getting it. Obviously, we’re behind an aggressive play and we live with the results and we go to the next play. We respect Kev [Head Coach Kevin Stefanski] for giving us that trust and this team because it’s not just about offense, it’s about the defense and the special teams in that sense. They trust us to go for it and we’ve just got to convert it and we will.”

On how he feels he and the team responded to the adversity of the week:

“I thought the guys came and out and played hard, played physical. We knew it was going to be a physical matchup versus this team. That’s their motto, playing physical football and we knew it was going to be a 60-minute game and obviously, we came up short. A lot of guys had to step up and make plays and I’m sure we’ll go back in [watch] film and we’re gonna see those guys made plays and we’re gonna see where we can fix things. We’ve got another one coming up and we’ve got to get ready for that one.”

On where the team goes from here:

“One day at a time. We’re going home from here. We’re gonna go back and watch the film and get a good week of preparation. Whoever we play next, take it one day at a time. That’s the mindset we always talk about, and this doesn’t change our plan. Our plan is one week at a time. For us to look at the remainder of the schedule and say this that and the third, that’s just not who we are, and we won’t do that. We just gotta go learn from this one and then get ready for next week.”

On why his final throw was a bad decision:

“It was a bad decision because he picked it. I tried to give my guy a chance and it just wasn’t enough.”

RB KAREEM HUNT

On the loss and frustration from the game:

“You know it’s frustrating, but they did a good job. They found a way to win, we didn’t.”

On the Falcons use of RB Tyler Allgeier and RB Caleb Huntley:

“Those guys did a good job. They were running downhill, finding lanes, and making plays.”

On adversity of losing Myles Garrett and how the team tried to rally:

“Man, we knew it was going to be tough on the defensive side of the ball. It was tough for everybody. We’ve got to find a way to win.”

On offensive aggressiveness and decision to go for it on 4th-and-goal on the opening drive:

“I’m cool with the decision to go for it. We’ve definitely got to put points on the board and make it work.”

On the upcoming schedule and how to get it back on track:

“We’ve just got to take it week by week. We know we can play with the best of the best and we’re going to bounce back and find a way to get over this loss.”

WR AMARI COOPER

On what the Falcons did defensively to limit his production this week:

“I’m not really sure, its just the zone. They had a zone, it didn’t really present a threat to us, it just gave other people in the offense opportunities.”

On WR Donovan Peoples-Jones’ elevated play:

“I can’t take credit. I mean, he’s just an extremely well-prepared player and he works hard. He does that on his own. And he is always ready for when the opportunities come his way, and as you can see when they do come his way he can make plays.”

On the fourth-and-goal in the first quarter and the Browns aggressiveness on offense:

“You know sometimes the analytics say it’s the right thing to do and obviously when the coach goes for it like that, it shows his confidence in us. Unfortunately, we weren’t able to capitalize on some of that aggression.”

On the loss to the Falcons and whether this loss is more frustrating:

“I mean yeah because it’s the loss that happened this game, it’s the most current one. Obviously, every time you lose it’s very frustrating. You know we came in here expecting to win. We didn’t come here expecting to lose, so it hurts a lot.”

On upcoming schedule and how to get it back on track:

“Yeah, I mean just play to your potential. You go out there, practice hard, and try to execute on gameday and that’s all you can really do.”

DENZEL WARD

On the facemask penalty:

“I have to look at that play again, we were in cover three, and once I got my eyes on it, I just see the ball coming towards me and was trying to get it down. I was trying to go for the ball and I ended up getting my hands too high and got the face mask.”

On not being able to finish the game in the fourth quarter:

“Yea it’s very frustrating, our goal coming in is to win the game and when it’s so close, we just got to find a way to eliminate those big plays and try to find a way to get a win coming into an away game.”

On working together to get good plays:

“It’s a team sport, and we have to play together, and all be on the same page, and not just one side, not just the secondary, not just the defensive line is going to win the game. We’ve got to all play together and find a way to do our job and win the game. We still have a lot of football games to play, we’ve just got to take it one game at a time and see where we are at the end of the year.”

DT TAVEN BRYAN

On what he does to stay ready and know his assignment:

“I think it begins with practice habits, coaches always say you practice how you play and it came to life out there in many instances and as far as things we wanted to execute and it became- it came to life because of how we practice it and also film study obviously we got to get that film a little more, we’re going to be in more situations, study more guys, and know when we’re lined up against different guys, so just as far as practice habits and our film study habits.”

On whether he felt the Falcons did anything different in the second half:

“You know being out there and seeing them stick to the run and really run the ball probably about 95% of those plays, they were running it, and it wasn’t nothing that we haven’t seen before just something we should have adjusted to in different ways. I know you can’t put it on the coaches because we’re the ones out there executing the plays so really nothing too different that we didn’t see, not as far as getting worn out but just executing our calls.”

RB NICK CHUBB

On how it felt to play in his home state:

"It felt great to get back home, end of the day I got a lot of family and friends here, so it's great for them to come watch me play. A lot happened and at the end of the day I'm here to get a win and that didn't happen, still disappointed from that aspect."

On whether the loss was more disappointing due to family being there:

"No, it happens every now and then, it's really not that big of a deal."

On how the team is equipped to handle staying focused:

"I mean it is what it is, and today we're 'this and that,' you can't really get into it, but at the end we're a team that's who we are that's our identity for now, but we need to focus on things we got to get better at and keep going."