UPMC Rooney Sports Complex
3400 South Water Street Pittsburgh, PA 15203
(412) 432-7820
@Steelers | @SteelersPRDept www.Steelers.com | www.NFLOMG.com

Todd Monken
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
Acrisure Stadium ▪ November 01, 2026

Opening statement: Well, we certainly earned that. We didn't start fast, turned the ball over a couple times early, then going three-and-out. Really never got the run game going, couldn't stop the run early. They got a touchdown right before the half, went three-and-out twice to start the second half. 10 penalties, didn't play with poise. However many sacks. So, didn't coach well enough, didn't play well enough. That's what's going to happen when you play a good team, a well-coached team; and you don't play your best, you don't give yourself a chance. That's what we did. And that's going to happen. And we earned that one, and we've earned being 5-3. There's no doubt about it. We were certainly capable to have a lot better than that. And we didn't. It's a good learning lesson for this young team, that it's week to week, and the bottom line is in this League is you speak with your play, and we didn't play well enough today. We'll come back tomorrow. We'll look at it tomorrow, and we'll come back, fight like hell to get it fixed, coaching and playing.

You guys were determined to fix at least shore up the run defense. What happened today, attacking sort of the same way, or what happened?
Oh, I mean, without watching the tape, they got us with a couple of scheme runs. It's part of it. One of them was a 50-yard run or something on third-and-13, a trap play. So, they hit us on some schemed-up runs that we know we're going to get from teams. Good call by them on third-and-13, but we certainly have to be better against the run. And that was just one piece of the humble pie we've got to eat. And I'm not – listen, I'm not happy about it. I'm really not, just in general. But I'm happy that it's just one, and I'm happy that we'll be able to wash this and fight like hell to fix it. But we certainly have a lot of things that we can fix, which certainly that's a part of it.

I heard your pregame interview, you said you had a great week of practice. You certainly knew what was coming here.
Yeah.

Is it safe to say that you're shocked at what happened today?
Well, I'm never shocked in the NFL. I'm never shocked in the NFL when you're going against the best in the world. I'm sure there's things they're going to say they could have done better. I'm not worried about them. We certainly did not play well enough. We didn't start fast enough. Our defense did a great job after the turnover. They missed a field goal, and we had a great field position and we turned it over. That's just the way it is, I mean, against a really good team. And they're a good football team. And if you don't play well, it's going to look like that, and we did not, coaching or playing. I'm not just saying playing well. And we did have a great week of practice. We had great weeks of practice leading up to Jacksonville. Our guys like to

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL
Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
MacKaiya Cherry, Communications Manager	cherrym@steelers.nfl.com
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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

practice. This is nothing to do with that. We've had really, what is it, 5-3 now, we've had eight great weeks of practice. We had a great training camp. We had a great offseason. We've got guys that like to practice. We just didn't play well today. That's what's going to happen, and you got to own it, and you got to eat it and fight like hell to fix it.

You had talked about the emotions of trying to find the balance of being overly emotional and playing this game. Did you feel like maybe that was something that wasn't quite as in check as you wanted it to be with your guys today?
I mean, first off, the two turnovers early don't have anything to do with that. When we got a stop after we turned it over and they missed a field goal, that had nothing to do with it. Sure, as the game wore on, it got a little chippy, and it was the first game. And we didn't do a good enough job in all areas. That was just one piece of it, right? Our poise was a piece of it. The penalties were a piece of it. Our lost yardage plays, sacks, ability to run the football. Obviously, we got behind. That's going to have a hand in that. But, yeah, there wasn't really any one area, other than our fight, other than our guys. They continued to fight. All the way to the end, our guys like to play football and they'll continue to battle and fight. We got too far behind today. We did it to ourselves. And, again, give them credit. That's a good football team. They earned it. They've earned being 6-2. We've earned being 5-3.

What did you see from the protection standpoint? Deshaun [Watson] was sacked early before you were in catch-up mode.
Like I said, the other games where we've ended up with too many sacks is certainly got to call it better. Certainly got to scheme it better, got to protect better. Gotta work to get our guys open. He can certainly work to progress. And we're all part of that. Till I actually get a chance – you see it on the tablet – to look at it. And they got good pass rushers. They did a good job of working the edges and blitzing us. So, that's all part of it. They do a good job. They're certainly aggressive, certainly capable of getting after the quarterback. They did, and we certainly didn't do a good enough job in the other areas, getting the ball out. That's what happens. And that's too many obviously.

Late in the second half when they were kind of teeing off on Deshaun [Watson], at any point did you think about just getting him out of there?
No. Did not. I want to see him play. I want to see him continue to play and battle. And he did. There's some things that we need to clean up in coaching. There's things that come up in the game and you're like, man, I could have done better as a coach. Who are you if you don't say that? Who you are as a man if you just say, no. It starts with me. Everything starts with me. And we can certainly be better how we do it offensively and then how we get our team prepared as a total team in terms of our poise, in terms of how we handle things better. And that's something we can certainly learn from, all of us coaching and playing.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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You mentioned the run games, a couple of run game stuff was schematic things. What is it about the way you guys play defense that lends itself maybe to some of those schematic opportunities?
Well, I think when you're in the attack style front, I think as you work – you're going to get scheme runs. You are going to get your trap plays, your ram plays. You're going to get the edge plays, try to pin and get to the edge. And there's certain things you've got to do to combat that with your ability to move the front, with your ability to pressure off edges, with your ability to get over blocks. Until I see the film, that's hard to really say. They've got really good backs, really good coaches. But everything that – whether it was the week before or this week – certainly we've got to figure out how we're going to stop the run better. Right? I mean obviously. Figure out how we're not going to have as many sacks as we had today. And I'm saying it, like, I'm not joking about it, but I'm sick that we have that, right? Whatever that is. And we're going to fight like hell to get it fixed.

What's the explanation for the missed tackles?
They got good backs, and there was a lot of space. And that's usually what happens. When they've got good backs that are capable of making you miss or breaking arm tackles and there's space, and there was a lot of space there. I mean, that's one thing that I did see. There was space. And it's not that our guys weren't running the ball, because you saw that. I mean, our guys were running the ball. They play hard. But there's a lot of space. And when there's a lot of space with those backs, those two backs that run hard downhill and you're going to have that, and that's what we got today.

You mentioned poise a couple of times. Do you think the youth of your team in this environment was a factor in that?
I think that's just an excuse. Do we have a young team? Of course, we have a young team. Does that exonerate ourselves from two turnovers the first two drives and keeping our poise and playing at a high level? No, of course not. Otherwise, what were the other five wins? Right? What, are we going to take the ones that we win and say it's not the youth and then when we lose it's the youth? It's bullshit. That's a fricking excuse. At the end of the day, we didn't play good enough today, coaching and playing. And we're going to fight like hell to get better. That's all you can do. That is what we are going to do, and that's all I've ever known. And that's one. Again, I'm not brushing it to the side, because that's a big one. That's a divisional game.
But we got a lot of football ahead of us, and like I said, we've earned being 5-2; and we earned this one today.

Tennessee was able to pop a few good runs against you guys. How many, if any, similarities do you see between where you guys need to fix last weekend?
You're going to see the similarities each week until you get it fixed. It's not just defense. It's offense. It's everywhere. You're going to see the same stuff, until you get it fixed, right? Until we get our protection fixed and until we do certain things better on offense, which again, that's the NFL. It's week to week, and we certainly didn't put our best foot forward in a lot of areas today, coaching and playing. We're going to get a bus, we're going on get on the bus; we're going to get back, we're going to look at that tape, and we're going to own it, and we're going to fight like hell to fix it. You're going to get tired of me saying that as long as I'm the head coach here. And it's going to happen. We didn't play well enough, and that's what's going to happen.

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How much stock did you put into a team playing with their hair on fire when they get fired up by some of the things that Jared [Verse] said heading into this game? Is that just part of it or how do you feel that plays out?
I can't speak for them. I can't speak for their players, their coaches. I can only say that our guys fight. OK. They compete. But certainly, as we all know, ultimately, whether it's me or our team, it's not what you say; it's what you do and how you play. And that's in life. That's not a Jared Verse thing. That's everything. It's what we do, not what we say, and we did not do the things today that give you a chance to win. And when that happens, the scoreboard is going to look like that, and then you got to eat it.

Talked about Carson [Schwesinger] playing through the ankle. Do you think that's affecting him out there?
Oh, I don't know. I think he's a tough SOB, man. He just likes to play. There was a couple weeks ago, I didn't think he'd play. He played. He's down. It's the other ankle. I just know he loves to play football, man. He's an absolute stud, absolute warrior. And we get a lot of those guys like that. We just do. We just got a lot of things to clean. We just have to clean a lot of little things up to be better.

At what point generally within reason do the coaching staff and the medical staff have to step in and save a player from themselves?
Well, the NFL has put in a number of, what would you say, protocols for that from upstairs, which I think has been great for protection of the players. And our medical staff is always trying to protect our players. I've never once seen that to be the case where our medical staff has not tried to protect players. And I'm not saying you're saying that. I'm just saying, in general, it still is then eventually up to the player to say they can play. Mike Hall came back when we played Pittsburgh, right, and had a hell of a game and then couldn't play for three more weeks. And then we tell him what a warrior is and what a great job he does coming back. That's what you want out of your players. You want your players to fight to come back, and then it's up to the medical staff to give them the information. That's what you do. And our guys, I mean, if you play football in the National Football League, you're tough. You've been tough your whole life. You've put the pads on. You've practiced over the course of your career, and you're a tough SOB. And when that happens, most of those guys are going to want to come back and play with their brothers.

Andre Szmyt hit those two field goals. What did you see from his poise in this type of environment?
He's been – I mean, what was it up until he missed? How many had he make in a row? 24, 25 in a row? He's human. Right? Like, OK, missed an extra point. A field goal here or there, what are you going to go? Guys are going to miss a free throw. Guys are going to strike out. What, are you going to panic over – what, do you think, he's going to make 50 in a row? 75 in a row? No, it's going to happen. And what do you do? You support your players and say, you know what, you're one of the best kickers in the NFL. You're elite. You're one of the best 32 in the world. Go back to work. That's all we did. Just go back to work. We got your back, man.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
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What have you seen about your team that leads you to believe you'll be able to rally from a loss like this and get ready to go at it again?

Happened Week 1. Hell, I didn't like it. It's what you do in the NFL. It's what you do in life, right? I'm not worried one bit. I'm disappointed. I'm frustrated I didn't see it coming. But that's what happens. We didn't play well enough. But to think our guys – I mean, we earned 5-3. And we earned the three losses that we have, but we've earned the five wins that we have. So, what are we going to do? Just work, look at the tape, own it and come back tomorrow and flush it, and then get back to work on Wednesday. Who are the Saints? That's what's next. That's what'll be next. Who are the New Orleans Saints? What do they do that we need to get ready for after their bye week?

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QB Deshaun Watson
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
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Did they throw anything different at you guys looks-wise than what you had seen? I know they typically do what they do, but was there anything different in terms of schematically that they did?
Yeah. They definitely did that. They schemed us up well, did a good job of creating pressure one-on-ones and getting us to hesitate on decision-making and stuff like that. So, you got to give them credit. They did a good job scheming us up.

Can you just address being sacked eight times in the game? What was going on with that?
Yeah, just tough. Just got to get rid of the ball, try to find completions as much as I possibly can, try to find my check-downs. So just really just try to get the ball out of my hands and don't try to be a hero and try to make the play, extend the play as much as possible. Just understanding the game in the situation.

You've had so much success escaping trouble this year. What did they do to not allow you to get out of there?
Just really just protect the lanes. They did a good job rushing the field, having me step up. There was always somebody there in that rush lane. Again, they schemed us up well of the lane and did a good job of sitting in the pockets and not allowing me to get out of the lanes and escape zones.

After that first series, how hard was it to collect everybody and get everybody poised and really reboot after that? Did the offense ever recover from that first series?
I mean, we tried to. It just depends on how the flow of the game is going. We tried to do our best of creating drives and sustaining plays. And, again, you've got to give Pittsburgh credit of getting us off the field and not allowing us to get points up there on the board.

What was the challenge in regrouping after you had to leave the game for three plays?
You're talking about as far as --?

Was it hard to regroup from that?
No. They were doing NFL protocol, checking for concussion. You know, the brain is one of the most important things in the body outside of the heart and the lungs. But they had to do their job and had to do their evaluation. And we did that, and then I was able to go back in.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

When you get off to these slow starts, are you like -- is what you're seeing with the defense not matching up with the prep or is it just execution?
We just got to adjust. You just got to be able to sustain plays. Stack plays. Got to get more first downs and you got to continue to keep moving, being ahead of the chains. When we get behind the sticks, it's hard to sustain drives and get points early. We just got to watch the film, watch the tape and see how we can find ways to create better drives and put those together to get points early on in the games.

Is what you're seeing in the game early on matching what you're seeing on film?
I mean, again, it just depends. Like they're going to always have different adjustments, different looks. They're going to do what they do. I can't remember who said it, but they're going to scheme it up differently. So, it's different looks. You've got to figure it out post-snap rather than pre-snap. That's the biggest thing.

You sound like you were kind of putting a lot of the sacks on yourself. Did you feel like a lot of them were really kind of your fault for not getting the ball out?
I'm always putting the sacks on me. I'm never going to tend to try to put it on the guys up front. They have enough on their plate. As a quarterback, I'm the one that's controlling the ball. So, if I can find check-downs and throw it away as much as possible, that's what I need to do. Again, sometimes I was trying to make big plays, trying to extend plays, because that's what I do also. But I have to know the time and situation and where we're at on the field to at least get us back to where we were, where we started instead of five, six, seven yards behind the line of scrimmage. So, yeah, of course, I'm always going to take responsibility for those.

They were stacked in the box more this time around, sort of tried to dare you guys to pass the ball more. Is that what you saw?
It was more just kind of -- I think they were just, not so much just stacking the box, but just adding an extra layer. They blitzed a lot more this time than they did that Thursday night, and that was to control the run game, throw off the run-blocking points and the landmarks for the O-line and try to close up the gaps for the running backs. Again, they did a good job of doing that and we got to find ways to build success and correct that.

As a veteran on this team, you've got a lot of rookies here. Obviously disappointing, had everything in front of you going into this game. How do you kind of regroup these guys and help them to realize you still have the entire division in front of you and the entire other half of the season?
It's part of the NFL. It's only Week 8. We have, what? Nine more weeks? 10 more weeks? Again, there's going to be games. There's going to be more opportunities for us to be able to stack, and there's going to be teams that win, some teams that lose. Again, it's a week-to-week league. You can't just fall on just one loss. Of course, this was a big one. This was an opportunity for us to be able to really take control of that. But it didn't go our way. So, get back to the drawing board, watch the tape, correct the mistakes, and then we got a big one next week on the road in New Orleans that can put us back exactly where we want to be.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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How are you feeling physically?
I feel good. Just bumps and bruises from the game. Just continuing to do my rehab, treatment throughout the week and make sure I'm ready for the next week.

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Mike McCarthy
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What do you like more, the way you are heading into the bye or the way you're trending going into the bye?
Definitely, you got to say 'trending' [with] winning four in a row. I think we are exactly what our record says we are. I think we've really focused on improving in certain areas. I think we're doing that. I think our run defense has really set the bar really high these last two weeks. I just thought the way they started the game was real impressive. We wanted to run the ball, so that was a focal point today. I feel like we accomplished that. We still have things to work on. The complementary formula of football style that we're playing is what we're looking for. I think we improved today as a football team. Ultimately, you want to win and improve. I think we definitely took a step today. I thought the guys, really coming back from France, you could see midweek, not even midweek, probably later in the week, they were still a little run down. I thought they did a hell of a job getting ready to go and kept the game about winning football. We understood it was a division game. Didn't pay no mind to anything else but just getting ready to play. I thought our men did a really nice job with that.

What led to or keyed the run game that we saw today?
What led to it? I mean, it starts up front obviously. We got two dynamic backs. Jaylen [Warren] is on fire. You can't get him the ball enough. Rico [Dowdle], he's playing well, too. I think those two are hitting their stride. It's important for those two men to touch the ball each and every week.

Thoughts on the defense keeping the Browns out of end zone in the red zone?
Yeah, definitely. I think when you get into division games, the bigger the game, the importance on making those critical plays. I thought our defense really highlighted that today. The fourth down stops, keeping them out of the end zone, the turnovers early giving us the field position. When you're taking care of the ball, getting the takeaways, running the football, winning the time of possession. Offensively, we definitely feel like we should have scored more points today. That goes without being said. It gives us things to keep working on. But we took a step in the right direction today. It was important for us to come out of this stretch 6-2. That's where we are.

On Pat [Freiermuth]'s touchdown before the half, Aaron [Rodgers] said he wasn't coming off the field. Any consideration to kick it there? What does scoring a touchdown momentum-wise do?
A great call there by Aaron. Two-minute drill. Obviously going to the Nittany package there. He did a great job orchestrating that, getting the clock, giving us time to get that play off.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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Five seconds left, no timeouts. If you don't get in, nothing happens. Does it say something about your faith in the group to call that call and have them execute?
Definitely. Frankly, actually, Aaron [Rodgers] called that play, the Nittany. Obviously, everybody agreed with it. But the whole mechanics leading up to that, I think that just shows the confidence they have and obviously, Aaron's experience of handling those situations. But yes, it's a group we have a tremendous amount of faith in. Zach Frazier, I think, is a special player, unique player. Who wouldn't want to run behind him?

What does it say about the team that players in the locker room are talking about how the defense still could have been better, Aaron [Rodgers] says the offense could have been better, yet you're top of the division?
I think that's the reality of it. That's why you got to keep it about the main thing. It's about winning games and self-improvement. We're at a point now in the season where everybody has an understanding of how we're going to do things, what we need to do. You're getting in and out of game plans each and every week. I think we've talked about this before in here. I think training camp really, in my view, extends into September. October was really where you've got to get going. Then the real football really picks up here in November. I think we're in a good spot right now.

The red zone possession where you guys came up short close to the goal line, was that your call or Aaron [Rodgers]' call?
That series there, I wish I could have those three plays back. Definitely, those are things that you go back and you look at. But yes, I wish I had that sequence back.

What was your message to the team coming into this game?
Coming into the game? I mean, just really it's all about getting the sixth win, keeping it about football. It's a division game. I think really the second time you play a division opponent, there's not a whole lot to talk about. I think they obviously had more to talk about the game than we did. We didn't really acknowledge it. Frankly, I was more into the players just making sure -- you spend the amount of time on the plane that we did in the last four, five days, you got to do everything you can to make sure they're ready to play. I think we were clearly ready to play today. I thought our guys did a great job keeping it about beating Cleveland, doing the things that we needed to do to beat Cleveland, play the way we want to play schematically. We're chasing a play style and a standard of play style and continue to get the production from that play style. It's the padded work, the things that you need to work on, you start getting into maintain mode here in November, December. We want to get our level as high as we can so we're competing each and every week to win.

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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

How much stock do you put into getting a win before the bye?
Stock? It definitely feels better. Yeah, I mean, you say 'stock'. I don't know really what to apply the stock to. Yeah, it feels great. It's important. But this bye was going to happen regardless. It's not like you're going to change direction. And our team needs a bye. I don't think I've ever been in a season where your team didn't need a bye week. I think this will be really good for us. I look for us to come off this bye really healthy. Then we got a big three-game stretch. I'm already looking forward to this three-game stretch, two on the road, come home play a Friday game here after Thanksgiving. This is a big three-game stretch where we got to get this next sequence done. This will give us what we need. Let the guys get home, rest, recovery and most importantly reboot. Family time, fill their space up with all the things that we all appreciate, and they'll be ready to go. It's a good locker room. These guys like each other. You can see what's building here. Obviously winning and the fuel from winning adds to it and the confidence grows. It's a great time for a bye.

What is the strength of this offensive line that you saw, would be so effective in using traps?
Well, I think it's like anything: we're a first-year staff, we're going through some things. You worry about volume. You really hone to the fundamentals. I think at the end of the day that's what football, winning football, comes down to. The trap is something that we haven't done a lot of. I think everybody was excited to get the traps called today. Obviously, it was a good scheme versus their defense and so forth. The first one was huge. It looked like a rocket ship the way it opened up. We did a little more pattern schemes and things. We're starting to get more through our menus. That speaks to the players and the coaches. Today I thought we had a good mix there.

What are your thoughts on Patrick Queen's play?
I love the way Patrick is playing. I just think the whole communication and some of the things we've done, I think, when we've upped the pressure. I think just the intensity of that front seven, it looks the way it's supposed to look. He deserves a lot of credit for that.

In the mini-bye, you were up front about the self-scout, the reset. Obviously, you haven't lost since.
I'm not going to use the words I used because it would cause a little bit of a, you know, scurry. Maybe it was my accent (smiling).

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

STAFF MEMBER	EMAIL
Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
MacKaiya Cherry, Communications Manager	cherrym@steelers.nfl.com
Claire DeMeo, Communications Coordinator/Social Media	demeoc@steelers.nfl.com
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UPMC Rooney Sports Complex
3400 South Water Street Pittsburgh, PA 15203
(412) 432-7820
@Steelers | @SteelersPRDept www.Steelers.com | www.NFLOMG.com

QB Aaron Rodgers
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
Acrisure Stadium ▪ November 1, 2026

How complete a game was that for you guys in general and the offense in particular?
Not very complete. Defense played excellent. Special teams did fine. But offense should have had a lot more points, yeah.

As you look back at the two goal-line opportunities there, what happened on those?
There were a couple of other opportunities. Yeah, we didn't execute down there on the goal line.

What does it say that you don't play your best but win?
We'd like to play our best and still win. We also like to win, so...

We're 6-2 going into the bye, first in the division. We're right where we want to be.

Did you have a good feeling about the potential coming into this game or was that just a matter of they happened to be open (tight ends)?
They happened to be open. We always feel good about our tight ends and backs, try to get them the ball in space, especially when there's going to be some man match coverage, where we like the matchups inside.

Anything left to be surprised about what Jaylen (Warren) does?
No. I mean, he's put himself in all the conversations. He's playing incredible. To be able to call a trap on third and 20, get a first down, is pretty wild. Don't expect that. Can't remember the last time that happened when I was out there.

Love having him on our team. Fantastic teammate. He's making a lot of plays.

Overall, what was the key to the run-game success?
The guys up front. I thought we controlled the line of scrimmage. When we played up there in Cleveland, we had a bunch of sacks. We didn't run it super efficiently. But I feel like from the first go we had a good mindset, we protected well, we opened up some holes. Jaylen and Rico ran well.

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What kind of attitude do your guards bring?
A lot of attitude, a lot of trash talking. Good trash talking. Love being out there with those guys. Thought they played really well. I felt like both the tackles played well. They always seem to play well.

Definitely love those boys up front. They dominated the line of scrimmage.

Was Mason's (McCormick) takedown a moment you guys rallied around?
No. I mean, I didn't even see it, so... It was on an extra point, wasn't it?

Yes.
I didn't see it.

Did you think about kicking it? How much does a touchdown in that situation going into halftime momentum-wise mean?
Yeah, it's huge. I wasn't coming off the field. We were going to go for that. Yeah, we feel good about that. We got to get that. Guys did a good job.

You talked about the fact that these four games, going to be a crucial time for you guys. You found different ways to win all four. How big is that for you?
Yeah, winning is the most important thing. 2-1 in division now after the split with Cleveland, home and home. I'm not sure what happened in the Bengals game. Either way that game next week, or two weeks, is going to be really important.

But yeah, right where we want to be.

What does it do to have two running backs?
Yeah, those guys are both playing really well. Give us a lot of flexibility. Had them on the field for a number of plays today, as well, which is good.

Yeah, they're dynamic players. We got to hold onto the football. A couple a little loose with it. But I love playing with those guys.

How do you feel this offensive line is playing?
Playing well. Playing really well. I think we had good balance today running and throwing. But I felt like they controlled the line of scrimmage well. There were a lot of movement on defense. But I felt like we got their doubles, got up on the second level, then the receivers blocked well on the edge. The line is playing with a lot of confidence.

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DT Cameron Heyward
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
Acrisure Stadium ▪ November 1, 2026

Do you like where you are right now?
6-2, taking care of the run. Taking care of the ball for the most part. I think we're just growing each week. Every week it's something different. We're building on what we've done the previous week, whether it's pressure, sacks, running the ball on offense. It's not just one person; it's a group of individuals doing the job for the team.

Do you guys feel like today was the most complete game you played as a team this season?
For the season, I would say yes. I thought we controlled both lines of scrimmage. Especially when you get 200 yards rushing, then on defense you hold 'em to, what, 30-something yards. That's something we preach around here. That's something we always want to do. When we do that, it's going to lead to a win most of the time.

What does it say about the defense when you have so many different guys making splash plays in a game?
It says that we can execute at a high level. Obviously, there are going to be broken plays. When multiple guys can add to the party, it leads to this can be sustainable, this is something that multiple guys can be a part of.

We got to continue to keep doing it from here on out.

What did you see in the film from the previous game against Cleveland that you wanted to do better? How did that come together today?
Better extension. Better control of gaps. Then just throwing darts at Deshaun (Watson). He's electric back there. You have got to have multiple guys getting after him. I thought we controlled the B gaps a lot better this time. We were able to flush 'em out and make 'em go.

Can't say enough good things about everybody on the D-line. Our outside linebackers obviously. You can't just go one on one with them. Inside you got Keeanu (Benton), (Kevin) Jobity played well today. It's a group effort. We got to continue to keep doing it.

Is Cleveland and how they play… one of those darts?
Yeah. That's something that we've started to pick up in the last couple weeks. You've had Jaylen get these sacks. Queen being part of it, too, is definitely big.

Did you get to talk to Jared (Verse) at all?
I didn't. Can't say I was looking for him. There were a lot of people, Buckeyes, I wanted to see. Yeah, it's just a game.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
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Was it motivating for you guys as a group?
Not motivated by that. We were motivated because we wanted to get this damn win before we got to the bye, so...

Bigger fish to fry.

Do you get the same vibe or feeling watching Jaylen (Warren) as you did when you were with the Buckeyes that keep you guys on the bench?
I've been blessed to play with a lot of great running backs. Jaylen is not short of that. He's every bit as advertised. Having Rico, as well, they do a great job of being a 1-2 punch. When they're able to sustain drives, it means we're on the sideline and we can put our feet up.

The AFC North is more about walking than talking. Is that your mentality as a team?
Every single time. AFC North is built on I don't think you can ever win a game by just talking about it, you have got to go out there and execute. You got to stop running. You have got to make sure you run the ball. That's what it's always been about in the AFC North.

Some of the guys said the defense is not yet good enough, to your potential. What else needs to be done?
I think we can get more turnovers. We still left some sacks on the table. When we clean those up, we'll be even more dominant. There were a couple times we got off the field early, got the ball back to our offense. We'll take this into the bye and grow from it.

Talk about the attitude and the mindset of this defense? You haven't given up a touchdown in seven quarters. What was the attitude and mindset as far as keeping them out of the end zone?
As a defense, we just try to be as stingy as possible. When we want to win games, it's about keeping them out of the end zone. We take a lot of pride in that. We understand that it's not going to be as easy, it could be tougher in the future. We're always going to make it extremely hard to get in our end zone.

Q. (No microphone.)
We didn't blink. We always talk about controlling sudden change. We took the field and were able to get off pretty quickly.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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RB Jaylen Warren
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
Acrisure Stadium ▪ November 1, 2026

Talk about what it means to be able to get this win today going into a bye week.
It means a lot, obviously. Divisional win. 6-2 before the bye. We knew what it was going to be, what it was going to take. We came out and executed.

What has been working so well for you?
Just playing with the boys I play with. I wouldn't want to be part of any other team. We all built that camaraderie during camp. We've all been with each other, we see eye-to-eye every week. It ain't like I'm just out there playing football; I'm playing football with my brothers.

Do you consider yourself an explosive back? Big plays. Any secret to that?
Just keep your legs moving. That's pretty much it, yeah (smiling).

Can you take us through what you saw on the 51-yard run?
It was a trap play. When I got in open space, I like to pick the guy closest to me or I like to hit the sideline. I did that. Was hitting the sideline, seeing his momentum pushing him that way. I don't know what receiver it was over there. Seen him changing up direction, so I just cut up, made the safety miss. Was running, running out of gas, then I was finding the next dude to try to make a cut. I try to make cuts into my blockers so I can get a blocker on the way down. That's basically what it is. I don't know what it looks like, I don't know what I was doing (smiling).

Since you last saw these guys, it felt like you have leaned into your identity as a team, ran the ball better, stopping the run, getting after the passer. Are those the three phases of the Steelers you want to be?
For sure, we like that.

Was there an emphasis on that from the moment you lost to the Browns that you heightened over this last month?
Not much. We saw little things. Obviously, you need to adjust to whatever it was we lost that Thursday night game. Got in the film room. I think that's what makes us great, is we look past adversity. We run to the smoke. We don't run away from it.

Is it nice to play a lopsided game?
What do you mean 'lopsided'?

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

You won easily, 27-6.
Usually it's a close game. Yeah, it was nice, yeah. I know my parents and my grandparents didn't have as much of a heart attack as they told me (smiling).

Coming into the game this team was last in the NFL with scoring rushing TDs. Today you had three. Was there a special emphasis in that area?
Yeah, it was good to see that, especially the shaky start of the year. Like I said, that's my brother. Seeing him being successful makes all of us happy. That's what makes us great.

Did you see what Jared Verse was saying this week? Was that motivating for you at all?
Yeah, but we didn't really pay attention to it. Some walk, some talk.

I asked you about changes you've made in your career. You said you focus more on recovery, taking care of your body. How much has that paid dividends for you?
I would say it is definitely paying off. I feel the difference, yeah. Coming in, I mean, I'm in year five, I know what to do, what not to do, things to stay away from, things that help my body.

Did you think your big tight end was going to score on the sideline?
I thought he did score. I went up to him afterwards. I was like, I thought you scored that. He said,"You want to give it to me?"

How does Rico [Dowdle] being in there for more opportunities help you, having him in there?
Yeah, yeah, I don't think there's a change of pace. Either of us can go in and ball as y'all seen. Rico, great back. Very complementary.

Seems like you were doing some more quick-hitting runs and stuff like trap. Was that a focus this week?
Yeah, it was. We knew what kind of front they play and how they play it. So, took advantage of that.

Did this feel like the most complete game you have played as a team in all three phases?
100%. Score shows it all.

When you came out at the beginning of the season and were installing this offense, it didn't look like it was going to be as run heavy as you were today. Do you feel there was a turning point over the course of the season or was it little by little this is how you proved your own identity?
Yeah, maybe. We spend a lot of time with each other in the film room. We know what it takes. Every team is going to play us differently. Whatever adjustments [it took], we were willing to make. We got unselfish players. Everyone is bought in.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
Michael Bertsch, Assistant Director of Communications	bertschm@steelers.nfl.com
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Claire DeMeo, Communications Coordinator/Social Media	demeoc@steelers.nfl.com
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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

You lost to this team. Had the self-scouting. You haven't lost since. Was that even more of a turning point for you coming together?
Yeah, 100%. We didn't look at it as -- nobody took it personal. We took it and grew from it. I think it's showing throughout the course of the season since then.

What is the impact of Riley [Nowakowski] coming in? He played a lot today.
He's been great. He's willing to put his head, take somebody's head off. You couldn't ask more from him. That's what you want from your fullback. He's willing. That's Riley for you.

You said in the summer that one of your goals was individually to rush for 1,000 yards. What did you potentially see from your role in the summer that made you think you could have that kind of production and how rewarding is it to be such a big player for this team?
I just trusted my teammates. Like I said, the camaraderie built, the brotherhood we have over here speaks volumes. Whether it's 1,000 [yards], as long as we win, I don't really care about that.

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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Cecelia Cagni, Director of Corporate Communications	cagnic@steelers.nfl.com

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LB T.J. Watt
Cleveland Browns vs. Pittsburgh Steelers
Acrisure Stadium ▪ November 1, 2026

Is it nice to play a lopsided game and get two stops down there on the goal line?
Yeah. I mean, the amount of times we've sat in here and talked about how at halftime and we weren't able keep our feet on the gas are countless. To be able to have that tenacity throughout the second half and continue to push, have those splash plays, bow up when it matters, is very important. It's huge to show that we have it in us.

What did you like about what you did from a pressure package that was perhaps absent in the first half against Cleveland on that Thursday night?
I mean, we always have a lot of good packages, a lot of good schematics. I think it just comes down to execution. Anytime you can make them one dimensional as we had to make them today and you stop the screens, there's really not much else for them to do. We were able to pin our ears back and get after them.

Did bringing [Patrick] Queen help?
[Patrick Queen] has been rushing really well. I mean, that's something, you throw on the tape and PQ has always been a phenomenal picker on the inside, phenomenal rusher. Getting to the quarterback and being able to finish against a quarterback like that, he's hard to get down, too. Awesome plays by PQ.

You like where you are heading into the bye? What do you like?
I like that we've won games in many different ways. We've come from behind, we've been able to hold leads. We've played games we haven't looked great. We've played games we've looked great. We just need to continue to grow and build off this performance. It's awesome to see [Kevin] Jobity... It's just continuing to be young guys. I think [Derrick Harmon] is coming back soon too, hopefully. I think this bye week comes at a great time for us.

There was a lot of talk on the other side, rumblings about this game. You, all week, kind of said "We're going to let our play do the talking." How do you feel that happened, especially with the fact you had eight sacks today?
I mean, I don't care, honestly. We didn't discuss it one second, what they were saying about us. We just want to go about our business. We have a lot of mature guys who have done it here and done it other places and had a lot of success and a lot of young guys who want to continue to grow and be great. We're just focused about what's in the building right now.

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As a football player, what do you appreciate about Jaylen Warren?
He's a bowling ball with teeth, man. You can't get him down. Jaylen is just funny, man. He's the guy that's out there in December, when we're practicing and it's like 12 degrees, he's in a T-shirt and shorts. You're like, "What the heck?" That's just who he is. He's a hard tackle. He's a great locker room guy. Very selfless. But man, he loves football and you can see it in the way that he plays.

This defense, in the last seven quarters, haven't given up a touchdown. What do you have to say about the effectiveness of the defense?
I don't know. I just say there's more work to be done. You want to continue to play great football. We have so many great guys that can make plays, as you saw today. I mean, the distribution of the splashes is going about the whole defense. I think we just need to continue to play good. Obviously, we're playing good. We're having a lot of fun. We can't take the foot off the gas one second here. Get our bodies back for the bye week and come back blazing.

It's been one month since you lost to those guys. You haven't host since. Coach talked about the self scout. Was that a week of big transition? Looks like a turning point. Can you think back to how you felt after that loss?
Yeah, obviously it sucks. You never want to lose, especially a rival game like that in the division. Obviously, self-reflection took place. We just have so much talent. We have everything we need. We just need to continue to play for each other and play together. I think the trust, like I talked about this week in the press conference on Friday or Saturday, whenever it was, is huge. When you have this many new people, especially in the staff, and players, you need to build that trust over time. I think that trust is being there from the game plan to execution to halftime adjustments, to everything along those lines.

The Steelers have always been run the ball, stop the run, get after the passer. Are you leaning into what your identity has been?
That sounds great. But we need to continue to go. Our identity is still being formed as the season goes. A lot of football left.

You have the most sacks ever of anybody against the Browns. What does that mean to you?
Means I've been playing a long time (smiling).

PITTSBURGH STEELERS COMMUNICATION STAFF CONTACTS

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Burt Lauten, Senior Director of Communications	lautenb@steelers.nfl.com
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