



Cleveland Browns Head Coach Todd Monken
Cleveland Browns vs. Buffalo Bills
Preseason Week 2
8-22-26

Opening statement:

"I'm proud of the way we started the game. Second week in a row, I felt like we started well on both sides of the ball. We didn't do a great job finishing our third drive, ended up with a turnover, a little behind, and certainly could have made the catch. We didn't finish at the half, and then it got away from us in the second half. Bottom line, it doesn't matter who takes the field for us. It's about the expectations we have of ourselves, their names on the back, and the expectations of us as an organization for how we're going to play. That wasn't good enough in the second half, and it never will be. It wasn't good enough last week in the second half either, and that's coaching and playing. We're in this together. I love our guys, and I love the way we work, but it leaves a bad taste in your mouth. We had a great Thursday and a really good first half in a lot of ways, guys making plays and throws, converting, our defense getting stops, but it was the same story in the second half. It got away from us again, that can't be us."

How did you think Shedeur (Sanders) performed today?

"There's a lot there to like. He plays with a certain amount of confidence, and he's gotten a lot better at getting rid of the ball. He obviously wants to make a play. I'll give you an example: on the third-and-13 or 14 we converted; he held onto the ball and let the receiver clear. There are going to be other times where that sweet spot is and he has to check it down, but he did a great job progressing, the red zone touchdown. I think he anticipated the tight end breaking out, the backer was matching it, and then JT (Jermaine Terry II) decided to break in a little behind. He certainly could have caught that. I'd have felt a lot better if we'd finished off that drive. Two of the first three drives, really. But I thought he did a lot of really good things. I'm really proud of him and how far he's come from the moment I got here to now. Very impressive."

You said on the pregame show that you'd probably have a decision on the starting quarterback early next week. Do you still believe that's the timeline for that decision?

"At some point I'm going to have to decide, right? I'm saying it kind of jokingly, at some point we've got to get that guy the reps, so I'm not going to paint myself into a corner. Optimally, you'd like to give one player all of the reps and you know who the one is, and we've done the best we could as a staff trying to work through this. Like at any position. This is just one part of it. It's just like Thursday was. We'll watch the tape tomorrow, because all I've had a chance to do is watch it like you guys did. I was looking at things live, and everybody had a hand in it. I already know, looking at it and watching, we had too many issues with us, that had nothing to do with them. We're playing some guys who just got with us, but alignment, assignment and communication, Browns hurting Browns, really. You're not going to have a chance when that happens. You're just not. Just getting lined up, and then at the end, it was like, really? That was some s***** football. I don't care who goes out there. If I could have taken a knee, I probably would have. I mean, what the s***. I don't know what to tell you. It doesn't matter. We work on cadence and operation, and we're going to continue to do it, because you can't be leading the offense when you're not leading the cadence. In the first half we did, we had a shot. We got them to jump offside, we wanted to take a shot and we jumped, and we had another time we could've tapped. We got them in the neutral zone. That's one thing Shedeur's going to continue to get better at. We had a chance on third-and-12 to take a shot, he has to see the flag down, we checked it down but didn't convert on third-and-eight. We were really good at cadence in the first half, but at the end there, it's not good enough."

Do you need another week before you name a starting quarterback?

"Again, I'll wait until I see it tomorrow. Again, I'm just going to wait until then, until I get a chance to watch the tape and talk to the staff."

Todd, you have three punters in camp. How would you assess the competition at that position?

"We've got Corey (Bojorquez), and we've got a couple of other guys we've been looking at, and there's nothing like playing in these games. I don't care if it's a punter or any other position. It's different, just is. That's why people ask, 'When does the quarterback have to go? When does the other guy have to go?' That's all part of it. You can practice with somebody, but when you get out there and have to stack plays and work through the ebb and flow of a game, there's a lot to it. There really is. It's the same with the punters. They kick the h*** out of it in practice, and then when you go on the field, it's just the way it is. We're assessing every position the same way, trying to get the best 53 we can. That's what we owe our team, our fans and our organization."

How do you feel Deshaun Watson played in his opportunities today?

"Well, I was disappointed for us collectively that we didn't play well offensively, I'll just put it that way. We had to get back on track a bunch. It happened in the first game. When you're behind the chains, it's hard. It's just hard. You can't force the defense into certain looks, put yourself behind the chains. I'll have to wait to see the tape, but I'm proud of the way he's worked to get to where he's at, and that's part of it. Right? I know you've asked him, hey, how it feels to get booed? It's a pretty easy question, it sucks. I don't want to get booed. It comes with the territory. You don't want to get booed? Let's play good football. Let's play good at quarterback, on offense and as a team, and then you won't have to worry about all that, because it can turn just like that. Win, play good football, and everybody will be fine. That's just part of it. I told him, 'You good? We're good.' That's part of what we do."

What did you see on the interception?

"There was a window there for him to get it there, but he was probably a little late seeing it, so by the time he got to it, I think he rushed it a bit with the backside. Again, it's hard because we haven't advanced the technology enough to get the full video. We have to look at pictures. You guys got me to vent there a little bit. But for God's sake, from what I could see, but he certainly could have checked it down at that point. Once he got rushed, he needed to work to check it down, and we would have been able to punt."

Mike Hall Jr. was working at defensive end. Can you give an update on Alex (Wright)? How much have you guys planned to work Mike Hall Jr. in there before what happened to Alex?

"First of all, I don't have any more information on Alex. But Mike Hall Jr. is an explosive player who loves playing football, and we're always trying to find ways to get our best four D-linemen on the field. That's part of why we looked at Mike on the edge. He's powerful, he can dip, he can get underneath tackles, and he's relentless. He's worked awfully hard to get back to where he's at, so I think it was a good idea by our defensive staff to get him some reps there. I can't speak to it. He only played the first quarter, and I'll have to watch the tape and see. But he's fun to watch as a player."

Do you have to make a decision on who starts the next preseason game by Thursday, or is that not necessary?

"I'm really not there yet. That wasn't our best foot forward here, the last four hours. So, I've got to see the film before I say anything, because right now, that's not fun. It's not fun to come off the field playing like that. It's not the time for me to go anywhere with any personnel with where I'm at now, because I'm frustrated with how we ended the second half. That can't be us. It is what it is. I don't care who takes the field. You represent the Browns, you represent yourself, and that wasn't good enough, coaching or playing."

Is there concern that you could be without Alex for an extended period?

"Just couldn't help it, could you? I get it. I don't know yet with Alex. We'll know a lot more once we get through the weekend."

Would you expect whoever you name as the starter to show improvement once he's getting all the reps?

"For sure. There has been - and had we not done this with either quarterback, I really am jacked with how we did it. Some other people might not see it that way, but in order to make an educated decision on both players, we needed to see them both practice and play. That's just part of it. I usually try as best I can to tell the truth, and it's not the easiest or most ideal, but it gives us the best opportunity to see who gives us, when we got to Jacksonville, the best

chance to win and score points. Because ultimately, that's what matters. There have been some really good moments with both of them in the first half of both games, and there have been some others that haven't been as good. We can do a better job as coaches playing around them."

You've talked about how the players on the field decide who starts and gets that position. Do you feel that, given how you've talked about both of them, that they have made this a tougher decision than you expected?

"I wouldn't put it that way. That's a great question. I wouldn't say they've made it tougher. To me, I don't think this is tough. We look at the film, we look at what we do schematically, we decide if we like what we're doing and whether it fits who we have, and then we work like heck to fix it. That's what we do with all of our players. That's why we gave both of them opportunities and let everybody compete. Dillon's (Gabriel) had reps, maybe not the same number, but that's what you do. We're here. That's the building of the Cleveland Browns. Getting both of those guys reps was the best way I thought we could go about it, and I still believe that. But we're at a point now where we're going to have to decide and get them the reps, because the more reps you get, the more you're going to improve. So, you're exactly right. At some point you have to say, 'This is where we're going, this is where we are starting,' and then see where we go from there. We'll really only know once we get our ones, the guys who are actually going to be playing in the game and collectively work together. We just got our O-line back together, and once we get our skill guys out there, and then we'll really see where we're at. We won't really know until we go up against Jacksonville. We got a little taste of that against the Bills' ones. They were missing some guys, we were too, but we were okay. We'll come back Monday, go to work Tuesday, figure out who's playing Thursday, and keep fighting."

How have you been handling the Dae'Quan Wright situation? It seemed like he is in the college transfer portal but out at practice, but then you saw him warming up after the rain delay today.

"Man, isn't this s*** crazy? I don't even know what to say. As far as I know, he's had a medical issue that wasn't allowing him to practice. That's a medical issue. It has nothing to do with me. He was cleared, so we dressed him just in case we had to have him, but when you don't rep, it's hard to put him on the field. JT was out there, so we didn't want Blake (Whiteheart) to get hurt, and he's only been with us a week. We had a number of things where Browns hurt Browns, which to the naked eye you won't see. And we had a number of things that way when you're putting in guys who haven't really been here, and some of it isn't good enough from us as coaches once they're out there. I don't know what to say. I wondered why Lane Kiffin reached out to me a week ago, now I know. I didn't call him back; I guess I should have."

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Cleveland Browns QB Shedeur Sanders
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How comfortable did you feel out there today, especially on those early drives?

"I would say I feel the same how I feel every day."

To start eight-for-eight on and get the touchdown to Luke Floriea – do you feel like you were able to find a rhythm pretty quickly?

"No, like, I feel like that every day. I'm being honest – just because I went eight-for-eight, I don't really keep track of that. In my mind, I get to that place every day in practice, so it just translates."

What were you most proud of today?

"I'd say getting the first completion was the biggest difference, and then it was just rolling from there. And operating within the huddle, the play clock and everything – being on time, not letting the play clock get too low to where it could be a hazard. I was just operating and being in control. That's it."

Todd said how impressed he's been by you, not just today, but since the start of the offseason program. Can you look back on how you've improved from then until now?

"I've improved every aspect of my life. I'd say I've improved my relationship with God – being able to come up here every day and talk to everybody, regardless of people's opinions or what they say online. Even those sitting in front of me today, I still approach and greet you all with kindness, because God gave me that. God gave me the wisdom to be able to not be emotionally affected by people, because I'm here for a bigger purpose."

As a football player specifically, how have you improved?

"I'll say football is an aspect of my life, but I'm God sent, honestly, and that's me being a football player."

There was a fourth-down play to Blake where you stood in the pocket. Todd mentioned you being comfortable waiting for him to come open. What did you see on that play? And what about the touchdown to Luke in the back of the end zone?

"I would say we had a play that we could have gotten to another play, and I liked the look, because it showed two different front side, it was zone backside, it was man. We talk about decisions, about not needing to be in the perfect place or trying to get too perfect – just go with your gut and how you feel. I stuck with the play, went through my progressions, and I kind of know how things are going to play out sometimes. I was able to find comfort in that because I know my guys are going to be on the field. And yeah, I like pressure situations. I like the two-minute drill. I like all these aspects you'd want your quarterback to handle – that's what makes me who I am. I grew up with pressure, so I like those moments. That's when I feel my best. Even thinking about the two-minute drill – we had a similar one last time we played the Bills, and we weren't really successful. They got me once then, I couldn't let that happen a second time. They did great job in their scheme the first time we played them last year. But I just feel like when it comes to being able to move the ball, I'm the guy who likes to move the ball, and likes to put it in the air."

Have you ever dealt with a game delay like today and what were you doing during it?

"I was just talking to God, honestly – that's all I was doing. Because it can get frustrating sometimes when you're ready and it's just not time yet. But God gave me the wisdom to be able to just, regardless be able to go out there and just be you. I think about that in every aspect of life. If it's something you want and it's not on your time, when you want things to happen, it on God's time, when it's supposed to happen. That's what I live by and that's what I think of. So I'm patient with everything in life, because nothing's really on my time."

We just talked to Deshaun and he's upset about the fan reaction, and you've talked about being mentally tough in that situation. When you're competing against a guy but your teammates also know you have that mental stability to come alongside him, how was that for you?

"Yeah, I mean, in general, I don't appreciate that at all. Regardless of competition, we're all human beings. I think we all need to understand that. In this room too, we're all humans. I don't do things to humans that I wouldn't want done to me. I don't like making people feel uncomfortable in different spaces, and that's why, even in daily things I do, I try

to make sure everybody's comfortable. Because I know sometimes just being who I am can make people uncomfortable. I'm aware of that. For all the fans, we appreciate you showing up, and however you feel about the situation with Deshaun and everything, I think it's more about a bigger purpose and it's respect. It's a respect thing that I feel should be there, because we're all out there trying to do our best and serve the franchise the best way possible. We're going out there to win games, doing everything we can. So I don't really appreciate that."

How has your relationship with Deshaun evolved from last year to this year through this competition?

"I'd say over time, everybody's more comfortable. Last year I was more trying to figure out what I had to do each day just to stay in the right mental space – that's where I was last year. But this year, I've been able to get comfortable, talk to all my teammates a lot more, and be myself. That's why when it's fourth-and-short and I feel comfortable out there, that's because I'm myself. Being able to have those relationships with everybody in the quarterback room is extremely important. That's even what the coaches said when they first got here. This quarterback room, everybody's got to be a unit, got to be a team, regardless of who's going out there, because you'd want that same respect if you were the one going out there. Our motto is really to treat everyone how you want to be treated, honestly, and not really play into the online games and all that other stuff."

With you guys waiting on a quarterback decision and controlling what you can control – after starting today, and however the decision comes in the next few days – how do you feel about the job you've done?

"I wake up and feel the same, honestly. I think if you do things based on the situation you're in and you're not doing everything to your max – you're not giving your all, that's on you. I don't just want to be the starter...now I've got to lock in a little more. That's why I told everybody in the pregame – I don't know if you all caught that, because there was some language in there, but I told them we did everything, so there's no point being nervous. There's no point feeling any different type of way. We put in the work, we did everything we could. And I don't live with regrets. Anything I've done, that's just who I am. I don't live with regrets. So, I sleep better at night knowing I did everything I can, and however things fall, they fall."

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Cleveland Browns QB Deshaun Watson
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What were your thoughts on the performance today?

"Yeah, it just didn't go our way. We didn't get completions and execute, I think that's the biggest thing."

What did you see on the interception?

"I don't know, I got hit, so I was asking guys on the sideline what happened. I haven't even seen the play actually, so I'm not even sure."

On that last fourth down, did it get tipped?

"Yeah, it got tipped."

We talked to you before the game about how you might respond to whatever reaction the crowd gave you. What was your reaction there?

"Man, I didn't have any reaction. I think the biggest thing is, I think you guys know, and I think the whole world knows, it has nothing to do with the performance. It's a little more personal than that. So, I think that's a disrespectful thing. I'm going to keep whatever I feel with me and my family internally on how I feel about that, and just move on."

But don't you think that winning and playing better would eliminate some of that bully?

"Last time I played on this field, I tore my Achilles, and that same fan base cheered when I got hurt. So, what does that have to do with anything about performance? When a person gets hurt, especially in their own city, and they cheer."

Does any of that make you regret coming here?

"No, I don't regret anything in my life. I think the Lord put me through situations for a reason, so I don't regret anything at all. But I had different thoughts on how it was going to be, but it is what it is. Sometimes the tables turn, and I'm patient enough because I'm a child of God, to wait for that time to change. So, I'm not tripping on it."

How about the quarterback competition? Do you feel like your whole body of work, how do you feel you've presented yourself in terms of trying to win this thing?

"I don't know. I mean, that's going to be Coach (Todd) Monken's decision. I just continue to try to win the day each and every day, and like I mentioned before, the organization, Jimmy and Dee (Haslam), AB (Andrew Berry) and Coach Monken, is going to make that decision for the organization."

Do you feel like you've won the job?

"I don't know. I don't even get my hopes up, honestly. I mean, yeah, I think I've done a good job to be able to lead this team and be a starter in this league. But, again, I don't know how other people feel internally, I haven't talked to Coach Monken about that or anybody else. So, again, I'm just kind of open with you guys on how this is going to play out. I just take it one day at a time, and whenever that time comes, it comes."

Coach Monken said he doesn't know when he's going to make it, but he wants to get somebody in place so they can start getting all the reps with the ones. How valuable would that be to be the guy moving forward?

"Yeah, I think it's very valuable for whoever the position goes to. You've got to build that trust, you've got to build that rhythm, you've got to know how guys operate. And not just for the quarterback, but for the whole team, for the whole offense, for the offensive line, being able to hear one cadence, one voice, walking in the huddle, being able to know how this person operates, when things break down, how this quarterback is going to operate. So yeah, I think it's going to be helpful for not just the quarterback, but for the whole offense and the whole team."

If you are named the starter, do you feel like some of those feelings that you talked about before will dissipate and that you can develop a really nice relationship with Browns fans, and you can put that stuff in the rearview mirror or will you always carry some of that stuff with you?

"I don't know. The only time I feel that energy is when I'm in the stadium or it's on social media. Like I mentioned before, when I'm in public, no one's mentioning anything. So, I think that's the only time those people who are

holding it in is trying to disrupt the energy. Because on social media, players can't respond back and in the stadium, players can't respond back. So, I get it, I understand it. It is what it is."

The quarterback job is toughening up. Can you defeat that negativity?

"I don't know. It's a mental battle every day. I feel like I get more love on road games than I do at home games. So, if it is my spot and he does make me the starter, maybe it's 17 away games, then. I don't know."

What about the fact that you guys do have your first two are on the road and your first six of nine are on the road. If you win the job, might that work in your favor?

"Again, I'm not sure. I don't know. I thought being away for two years and working myself back from two Achilles injuries and putting the time in, being around the facility, being around the city, doing charity work in the city, supporting the Cleveland Browns, hanging out with fans whenever I do see them, being honest, being the type of person I know I am, and the character would help, and I guess it hasn't. So, that's why I say it's more personal. It is what it is. People have their own opinions, and there's only so much you can do to change that. So, at the end of the day, I just have to continue to work on it and strive to be better mentally moving forward."

You've talked a lot about your mental health despite the backlash. In dark moments, like maybe today, what have you done to help you not fall into that dark place?

"Today wasn't really a dark hole, it wasn't something I didn't expect, I was just kind of neutral with it. But I lean on my mom, and ultimately, I lean on my wife. That's my biggest person of peace that I have. You might catch me during the games, in certain situations, looking up to her in the suite, just making sure that as long as she's there, I'll be good, I'm going to get through it. She's been there the whole time, through my situations the last five years, so she's the best person in the world that I can lean on for support. I'd say my wife and my mom, for sure."

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**Cleveland Browns Players
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Not many guys were with the team when (RB) Nick Chubb was here. He announced his retirement last night, how do you reflect on his career and what he was like as a teammate?

"Hate to see it end—not end like that—but his time with the Browns, how it ended. I always say there's supposed to be a statue of Nick Chubb outside this stadium. The definition of a great football player. The way we want to play this game, low maintenance but the hardest worker in the room. Just the type of respect that guys have for him, it doesn't come often. He is a legend, man, and I'm so excited for him in the next step of his life."

WR Luke Floriea

Scoring a touchdown at Huntington Bank Field, how did that feel? Dream come true?

"Yeah absolutely a dream come true. Growing up and coming to all these games is super cool, it almost felt surreal when the ball hit my hand."

You've had such a strong summer making plays with any quarterback that you're working with, how did you mentally prepare to translate that into these preseason games?

"I'm just kind of getting used to whenever my number is called, I want to go out there and put my best stuff on tape that I can, make as many plays as I can and help this team the best that I can."

Last year, you were having a strong camp too. Obviously the injury ended the momentum to come back this year, to be healthy and be able to be out there. What does that mean to you?

"It's a blessing to put the orange helmet on to go play with all these guys. It's really just a blessing. Every chance now, I don't really take for granted anymore and go out there and get everything I have."

WR Isaiah Bond

How do you think QB Shedeur (Sanders) did, getting that opportunity to start and everything?

"I think he did great today. I think you know just going out there every single week and executing the game"

Isaiah, year 2, full training camp, full preseason, how has that helped you so far this year?

"Yeah, it has definitely helped a lot. Being able to go over the offense, the extra reps, the walk throughs, it has really helped to just know it like the back of my hand."

How much has it helped, I know WR Denzel (Boston) only played a little bit and WR KC (Concepcion) didn't play at all, but just getting a variety of wide receivers where it seems you all have your own lane and things you are good at, where has that helped the offense?

"Yeah, it will definitely help the offense. It is going to put a stress on the defense to be able to guard all of those guys we have on our team."

We saw you got that sweep today and KC had one last week. That versatility, guys that can carry the ball, short throws, all that stuff, how much of a pain can you guys be to defenses given all that you do?

"Oh yeah, most definitely. It's the reason we have got this far in the NFL, we have great athleticism. So you know, just using our God-given talents and displaying it on Sundays."

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Buffalo Bills Head Coach Joe Brady
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What has it been like being around Bills DT Ed Oliver after the tragic loss he suffered?

"I'm a parent, right? And ever since I found out, it's really hard and I can't fathom what he's going through. There's really not words to describe it. As a coach, as a father, it's my job to be what he needs right now, and, and that's loving him, and giving him the privacy that he deserves. Whatever it looks like, no matter how someone might want to handle it, it's however he wants us to handle it, and go through it. And look, he's not here right now because of an injury and he's dealing with that. This wasn't the reason why he's not here, but it's unfortunate, the way that it came out, but I respect a lot of you guys and you might have known about it, and [the way you] handled it. That's part of journalism as well, but I appreciate your guys' hearts and understanding the human elements of it. It's hard. You know, it's hard when I see him and I can't imagine. I haven't had the words since, and I don't really have the words, but all I can do is just be there for him, whatever and in whatever way that he needs."

Onto the football game. What was your assessment of Bill QB Kyle Allen in the first half and how he operated the offense?

"It's hard to switch like that, right? And that's part of it. But that's also what comes with being the head coach – you have to kind of compartmentalize and be what your team needs, and when there's a lot of stuff that went on before the game and handling it. I was just so proud of the guys - just in general of our team, our quarterbacks. We've had rain since the first day of training camp. We knew we were going to play in these types of conditions and then a weather delay. They come in and it was like 'Hey boys we're going to start at 2:15' and they were like 'Let's go.' So everything that we kind of embody and talk about, it was great to kind of see it in action. Is there stuff for us to clean up? Absolutely. But I was more proud of the mindset and the mentality that they kind of took it on. It wasn't like 'Oh man, why is this happening?' It was cool to see them go through warmups, our warmups then at a different time and they were just on the sideline like 'Let's go play.' Quarterbacks didn't blink. It's raining during the national anthem. I still called passes early, like hey we have to throw the football in the rain and be able to operate. It's not practice. We'll see our quarterbacks and play efficient football and move on from there."

Allen's favorite target today seemed to be Bills WR Trent Sherfield, Sr. It's his second stint here. What have you seen from Trent since coming back?

"He's been making plays, and I think he has a comfort level understanding his role in the league. You see a guy go out and make plays like that, receive and then draw the penalty, and making tackles in the special teams. He's such a selfless football player, and (a storm siren went off in the room) we're already in shelter, so I don't think we have to worry about anything right now. Look, I love Trent, the personality that he has, the way that he goes about it. He's a leader in that room, and he wanted to be a part of Buffalo, and he'd do everything he can to continue to be a part of the Buffalo Bills."

Bills DC Jim Leonhard said that tackling was on his to-do list for this defense.

"It's hard for me to kind of get in-depth with the tackling without watching the tape and just seeing it out there, but there's some runs that are naturally going to bounce to your corners, and if your corners aren't making tackles, it becomes a liability. For the game plan, you're trying to get the fits and get that bounce out there. It was good to see those guys fly around. We have to be able to cover, and you have to be able to tackle, and they'll exploit the weaknesses in the league. And so it was good to see those guys. They didn't get a lot of opportunities for that. So I was definitely pleased by the emotion that they had in tackling."

Can you talk about Bills WR Ja'Mori Maclin's development?

"He was a guy that battled when he was in OTAs. When you're undrafted and you're battling injuries in OTAs, you better hope that you show something early to continue to stick around, right? Because you guys know how this league works. He showed us a lot, and when he was able to, he took advantage of the time when he was off, he stuck around in the offseason, and making sure that when his time would come, he was going to be ready. He has a lot of fun playing for all, very bright, and can play a lot of positions, and it was good to see him. There was a lot going on on that play like, is it a catch? Is that almost a fumble? Is that a drop and then it's a touchdown, right? So, we got the full experience right there, but a lot of fun to see him celebrate. It's really cool you see the sideline, right? Like how they feel after he scores a touchdown, right? And those are things that I'm really proud of."

Bill K Tyler Bass was from 45 last week, then comes out here today and has a clean make from about 52 yards. Can you talk about his progress?

"He's got the right mentality. He doesn't blink, right? Weather conditions out there. I'm learning the head coach position in terms of, hey, is the line going to change? What does it look like? And he was like, 'no, I'm good to go'. No decision bringing him out there and, he booted it. I think that's the growth. A lot of people always want to talk about the makes and the misses, but to me it's about, in a lot of these situations about how they handle when they're missing and how they kind of put the ball down the next one and he didn't blink and had a really clean game. It was a lot of fun to watch. I've got a lot of trust in him."

Going back to the joint practice, you said that you wanted to wait to see how that played out before making a decision on whether the stars would play. What did you see from them?

"It's hard. It hard. Starters got anywhere from 40 to 55 reps and it was a lot of really good football. I thought Coach Monken and the Browns did an incredible job of having their guys ready to play and understand what we were trying to get out of it. I thought our guys came with a mentality of, 'hey, we're going to talk a little bit, but it's not gonna get over the line', and we're just going to play clean football. We're going to be physical, and fly around. And I thought it was a really clean practice. And the intensity was there. Like, both the physicality and the rates - the speeds that we were running and I thought (Bills QB) Josh (Allen) was outstanding. I thought it was really good to see him play real crisp football against another team and look how it should look. And so I came away with what I wanted out of it. Obviously, some guys that played a lot of reps, would still go today, but you can't kind of sit everybody, but I was really pleased how the guys approached that joint practice."

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**Buffalo Bills Players
Cleveland Browns vs. Buffalo Bills
Preseason Week 2**

QB Kyle Allen

Through two preseason games, you are 24-of-28, what do you attribute your success to?

"We have a lot of guys doing a lot of great things. Receivers getting open for me. Just playing within the system. Being prepared and just spreading the ball around. It's been a good couple of first games for the offense all around now."

How important is it to get the ball in WR Keon Coleman's hands?

"It's great. Everyone's going to have their plays, it's just how you respond to them. I was glad to see him getting in the end zone, cut back, make some guys miss, in a huge situation. Two minutes before the half, just trying to get some points and to get in the end zone is awesome."

How important was it to rep that two-minute drill in live action?

"It's so different. It's treated a little differently during the games, you try and manufacture all the situations you can in practice, but it's really different in a game. The consequences of the plays are a lot higher. It's really fun to be able to do those. I had one last week where we didn't get to that field goal line, and then we ended up having to punt or whatever we did. I forget what we did, but this week it was great to be able to get down there, make a big play by J Mac (WR Ja'Mori Maclin). He ran a great route, and to be able to get in the end zone is awesome."

What's the difference in communication between you and Head Coach Joe Brady now that he's the head coach versus when he was an assistant?

"I think it's pretty similar. He's still calling the plays, so the communication's very similar. Since I've been here last time, the offense has changed a lot. It's been good to be able to get those reps and keep going through camp, and just seeing how he calls the games now after not being me not being here for three years. I think he's doing a great job and I think everyone around us is really doing great."

Do you and QB Josh Allen have conversations about letting the plays come to you more?

"I mean his game's a lot different than mine. It's tough to watch him play and be like, 'Oh, I'm going to do that,' because half of the things I'm not going to do. But I think as you get older in the league, you realize the more experience you get, the more games you play, the more you realize you just keep putting the ball in play and not force things, good things will come to you. That's something I learned from Alex Smith earlier in my career. I think in 2019, I played a bunch of games and I had some success, but I also threw a lot of picks because I was forcing a lot of things. Next year I was with him and he just gave me a lot of good insight on his career. The more he put the ball in play, and just took what was there, the more chances at the end of the game he had to win. So that was great advice from him."

K Tyler Bass

52-yarder you connect on, how good did that feel for you? How important was it?

"It feels good seeing all the hard work pay off. It was a good situation for us and I'm glad we were able to go out and execute."

Are you feeling better and better? Or are you kind of where you need to be?

"It's a constant growth. I'm going into my seventh year so I've got some games under my belt. It's just like a long lost friend. You get reacquainted to it." It feels good to be back and it's just constant growth."

What was it like during the rain delay for you?

"That was unique. We had to come in here and get our minds preoccupied and stay warm. Something that is good to happen now to get things working."

Now working with [punters] Mitch Wishnowsky and Tommy Doman, what has that been like and what has the process been between both of them?

"They've both been great. They've both been great people. They're selfless, they do everything they can just to try to help us all get better. Can't complain"

S Damar Hamlin

New defensive coordinator, new head coach, but they bring you back right away in free agency, and you're out there a lot right now. How do you think you're fitting into this new system and how does this system suit you?

"I think it suits us well. I think being able to learn the new system, I've accepted that challenge. It's been fun. We've all had to embrace it together. I think the entire process of that has drawn our entire room and team closer because we've all had to embrace the challenge. Obviously being back here is just a blessing in itself. I think it's a testament to the work I put in, the work that people see me put in day in day out when no one is watching. People know I take this process and this game seriously and how I push my work."

To be able to make a play today and help the team out, what was going through your head in that moment?

"I saw the tip and I was just like 'Don't drop this damn ball.' It'll be the easy ones that really throw you off a little bit. I was able to keep points off the board. Red zone takeaways are a very big deal. It was a drive where we could've been off the field a few times earlier. To be able to come up with a play on a drive where I didn't feel like I was getting into the flow of the game. A little bit of execution errors, so to be able to finish that drive was a testament to staying faithful out there. You have to defend every blade of grass every play."

Regarding the Browns quarterback battle, what were some key differences throughout the week in preparing for both Sheduer [Sanders] and Deshaun Watson.

"I just want to tip my hat to both of those guys. Deshaun, just being able to overcome everything he has been through to be still be performing at a high level after everything he dealt with, to be able to persevere after that. Somebody like me, I really resonate with that well. Being able to come back and still be yourself. Even outside of the quarterback battle it's a blessing to see. Sheduer, I was very impressed with him. He is very poised for a year-two quarterback. Obviously he has a lot of family experience in this league. For him to execute and be so poised, I was very impressed with his approach to the game and how he's not shaken by anything. I really like his game."

WR Mecole Hardman Jr.

You come back and have the punt return, I think it's late in the second half there, what did you think of that? How comfortable do you feel back there right now?

"I feel real comfortable actually, man. Being able to come in for a whole OTAs, a whole camp, get catches, and go back there and try to make something happen. I think the last couple games have been good, but just still waiting for that one to break."

You mentioned maybe not making a play that you felt like you should have made, but then to be able to get into the end zone on that late there in the second quarter, how good did that feel? And do you feel like that kind of made amends for it a little bit?

"Yeah, a little bit. Come back and make up for it and score. I think it's all about just trying to keep playing and keep making plays, and try to make plays at that, at least. But you still want to have those back because that's an aspect of my game that I want to improve on is to make those plays. So, you got to go back to the drawing board, it gets more pass over the middle, but it was good to make up for it though."

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