

TENNESSEE TITANS vs. CLEVELAND BROWNS
WEEK 7 POSTGAME QUOTES
Sunday, October 25, 2026

HEAD COACH ROBERT SALEH

We're evaluating Tommy (Townsend). I'll have more for you tomorrow.

Did they just miss the false start there?

I'll have to look at the tape. It looked like from live, I think they did, yeah.

They go 71-yard drive touchdown, 60-yard field goal in the fourth quarter. What were they doing to take your defense away?

They ran the ball really well. We didn't do a good enough job in the run game, didn't do a good enough job tackling, didn't do good enough covering, didn't do a good enough job coaching. Just not a good enough day on defense.

What do you feel like happened on that one sequence, where you couldn't punch it in? Not enough push?

Not enough push.

Any idea about challenging the second-and-one sneak? It looked like you might have jumped up over the line.

No. From our vantage point, it didn't look like something they would have turned over.

You talked about things you can do with a two-score lead. Looking forward to watching this team with a two-score lead, putting the game away with a run, pinning your ears back and rushing the passer. Just clearly didn't seem to do a lot.

No. We had an opportunity to make it 21-7. Obviously wasn't good enough.

What happened on offense? You opened up two straight drives, and you get the scores, but then you go a couple quarters without scoring. What happened to stall you guys?

Give them credit. It's the NFL. It's going to go in waves. Just defensively we played well in some parts and not good enough all the way across at some parts and not good enough on others. It was a grimy game; probably shouldn't have been. I feel like we should have probably boat-raced them in the first half and we left them hanging around. Battled in the second half and didn't make the play to win it.

It could be distributed across the board, the blame offensively, but how much of a quarterback problem do you feel you guys have?

I don't think it's a quarterback problem. You just hit the nail on the head, it's all the way across the board. He missed some throws. I'm not going to sugarcoat that. He missed some throws that he's got to make. He missed the throw on Belly (Daniel Bellinger) at the end, but he made up for it with an unbelievable throw to Elic (Ayomanor) while getting hit and still got us in the end zone to tie the game up. He made some good throws, and he made some plays that he's got to—he missed some plays that we all expect him to make. But overall there's enough to go around for everybody.

There's an awful lot of room between we should have boat-raced them to you lost. What's the space between that?

Well, you're first-and-goal and second-and-goal from the inch-yard line, you don't get in. You get a takeaway and you turn it over, and they go score to make it 14-14. There's your 14-point swing. We go from a spot where we feel like we're in full control, to tie game, to down three at halftime.

What can't guys execute in those situations?

I don't know about execution. They battled inside the goal, on second-and-goal. Give them credit, they battled their asses off. But as far as defensively, despite the fourth-and-goal stop, get the takeaway, we've got to be able to take care of it and try to put points on the board somehow. Again, despite the momentum shift, felt like we came out in the second half, we had it tied, and obviously didn't make the play in that two-minute drive.

How much did you feel like missed tackles were a problem?

Just all the way across. Like I said, defensively, uncharacteristically, especially in the run game, they broke a lot of tackles. It felt like we were a little off in our coverages with regards to ball outbreak and getting into some of these check-downs that went for a lot more yards than they needed to go. But something that definitely wasn't good enough.

Browns offense took 24 sacks the first six weeks. Why weren't you guys able to get those?

Again, our pass rush wasn't good enough. Pressure designs weren't good enough. Coverage wasn't good enough. It just wasn't good enough today.

How did KC Concepcion Jr. present such a problem?

Again, caught the ball in space. Did a poor job ball outbreak. Didn't have population to the football. Didn't do a good enough job tackling.

Were you satisfied, or what did you feel about the play calling on the fourth-and-goal where Tony got stuffed those last two play calls?

We've got to be able to push it in from the inch yard line. I don't give a s--- what the call is.

QUARTERBACK CAM WARD

What is the biggest culprit and biggest thing happenig to keep you guys from being consistent on offense?

I just think it comes down to just continuing to emphasize it, continue to have a next-play mentality. Because end of the day, we all know bad plays are going to happen. You can't, prevent it. It's football. Someone's going to—it's about one-on-ones—someone on the other team is going to win their one-on-one eventually. But it comes down to us executing each and every play that we're good at to a high level and I think that's where we can get more consistent.

For you personally, what can you do to become a more consistent quarterback?

Continue to work on my craft, continue to lead the guys my way, continue to be the same person I am each and every day in the building. And I think I continue to work each week, week in and week out, the process and the outcomes are going to become in our favor.

How frustrating or deflating was it not to be able to punch it in down there at the one-yard line in the second quarter?

Very frustrating, especially with the plan that we have. It's a very great goal line plan, but it all comes down to the players. Myself not getting in on the QB sneak, us being able to make a play in the scramble drill when I did, and we just got to punch it in at the end of the day.

Did you have any thought that you had gotten the ball over the line on that sneak?

I did, but I mean, that's not my decision. That's the ref's decision. But I should have gotten in the end zone. I would have made it an easy decision for them.

What did you see on the interception?

I just felt the backer push over a little bit, tried to put it more on Elic's (Ayomanor) body. The DB made a great play, but I know I got to throw him a better ball, Elic, and I know if you ask him, he's going to want to make that catch for me.

What was the emotional swing you drive down, tied the game, and then a minute later, game is over. Just how gutting was that?

Well, it just shows it's come down to a game of inches. I think if we don't have those two turnovers on offense, if we don't have a turnover on downs on the goal line, I think it's a completely different outcome. I think we're able to put up more than what we did today. So we just got to continue to watch the tape, continue to get better, and try to prevent those negative plays that we had a little bit and continue to try to generate some more explosives.

It seems like the trend for this team has been in certain games you start fast and end slow, and in others it's the opposite. What's the baseline that you're looking for to become more consistent?

I think the baseline is just playing simple, which we did today. I think Coach Dabs (Daboll) had a great game plan each and every week, especially this week, and he's allowing us to play at a faster rate. But at the end of the day, it all comes down to us executing the plays. We didn't do that at certain times, whether it's a penalty, whether it's a missed throw or a dropped ball, we all have our hand in it. So we just continue to refine everyone's mechanics, continue to get better each week and try to get on a run.

It seemed you had Daniel Bellinger there at the end. What caused you to miss him?

Caught him in the coverage I've been waiting for all game. They finally got to Tampa. I just got to put it on him. Got happy, seeing it a little bit too early, left it too much inside the hash. It was a great recognition by Belly (Daniel Bellinger), but we'll hit that eventually.

And then to be able to redeem yourself with the throw to Elic Ayomanor and then to Carnell Tate to the one-yard line, how good was that?

Just a next-play mentality, it's what we all have as an offense. And those guys know whether it's on me, it's on them, the ball's going to always be in our hands. At the end of the day as the

perimeter guys, we got to continue to show the trust that we have in each other and to Coach Daboll to continue put the ball in our hands.

Why were you guys able to be so successful in the run game with Tony Pollard?

I think we just did everything that we all wanted as far as the RPO game. They didn't give us a lot of RPOs, so it left us some light boxes. And Tony (Pollard) was able to find the creases. I think the O-line did an outstanding job in the run game, and that's just something that we got continued to build on.

50 points in the last six quarters, do you feel like you guys are getting something figured out?

We are for sure. We're figuring it out very fast what we're all good at. I think as we get into each and every week, the game plan is going to always structure to our strengths as players, and it's going to be able to help us.

Would you generally think if you got a game like that out of Tony Pollard, and that kind of running effort, that it would produce a win?

Anytime you run the ball, then you will be able to put yourself in a situation, but if you have turnovers at the end of the day, you're always going to put yourself behind the eight ball. I think that's what we've got to clean up.

It came down at the end, should it not have?

Yeah, it shouldn't, but that's the NFL. Bad plays are going to happen. We had a chance to go up 21-7, we didn't do it. We had the chance after a turnover by the defense to at least put up three on the board. We didn't. We had an interception, and then we had another chance to go down the field and at least get a field goal or at least get seven. So, it all comes down to turnovers that we have to stop. It comes down to us playing efficient football on early downs. Then just continue to get through our process, week in, week out and get better.

you've thrown a lot of those short and intermediate passes in a game and then you have a call that's a little more middle or deep and vertical, how comfortable are you when you make that throw? Is there a sense that you haven't done it in a minute? Is it hard to get comfortable to make that throw?

It's not really hard to get comfortable. It's more of taking what the defense gives you. I say it every week, they're not giving us the deep ball, but we have some fast guys on the perimeter, but when we get our chance, I have to throw and they have to make a play for it. But I think what we did well was just continue to get our ball to guys in space and then when they give us the intermediate and the deep game, we were hit a couple but it's a lot more than we missed out on.

Carnell Tate had a tough drop on third-and-six and then the fumble, what do you say to the young receiver to keep him going and keep him confident?

It doesn't matter, as long as you make up for it, that's the only thing that matters. You have to have a next-play mentality because at the end of the day it's not going to be his last drop, that's not going to be his last fumble and he knows that. He knows he's a reliable source for me. I don't care if he drops three in a row, he knows I'm coming back to him. So that's for every receiver. The biggest thing for us is to continue to get better. He's made a complete 180 since Week 1. I'm getting better in just being the quarterback of the offense with everything that (Brian) Daboll

wants done. I think Coach Dabs (Brian Daboll) is getting better just knowing what his players like. He always caters it to us. I think the more that we continue to lean on each other when times get rough and the times are good, the outcomes will be different.

What do you mean “get better” in terms of quarterback and the offense and everything? What do mean by that?

Just playing efficient, taking what the defense gives you, not trying to do too much. Then just continue to try to be good on first and second down. So, we're doing that good at times, and not at other times, too. And he's (Brian Daboll) helping me see the game the right way.

What's the mindset of you and the offense in a game like this where a play here or a play there that's different could change the outcome?

I think it's just our mindset, score the ball every chance we get. If we do that, we're going to win a lot of games, but it's hard to do that. We know that, but that's going always be our mindset. The more that we continue to lean on each other, the more we continue get better in the pass game and get better in the run game, I think we'll be an efficient offense.

Right tackle, jump on that pass play to Harold Fannin Jr.?

Y'all know.

CORNERBACK MARCUS HARRIS

Is it disappointing that the defense was handed a 17-17 tie, and a 24-24 tie, and couldn't hold onto it. Is that the most disappointing?

think just not coming out on top, is probably the most disappointing thing.

A 14-0 lead. How about that, if you guys haven't been in that position, for a long time, to go up 14. How are you feeling at that stage, and then how do you wind up feeling when it turns into another loss?

Obviously, it's feeling good (when we're) up, but we know it's a four-quarter game. We have to keep our foot on the gas, and then obviously, come out on top and finish the game.

What's it say about you guys, that you couldn't keep your foot on the gas, and couldn't turn that into a W?

We have to go to the drawing board, and we have to execute, and then come back and do our job.

The situation, I mean, the tackling, obviously, was not to you guys' standard. What do you think that was, and how does that stuff kind of crop up, in moments like this?

Maybe, just lacking details or something, but I think it's something that we can easily clean up. We know we're a good tackling team, and we just got to show it on camera.

Did you feel like you guys were in a good position for making the tackles? Or did you feel they had a really good scheme?

They had a good scheme, but we were in positions to make plays. You've got to execute, when the time comes, and make those plays that are coming at you.

LINEBACKER ANTHONY HILL JR.

I mean, how tough was their last drive, with the game on the line?

It was tough. We got to do a better job of executing, and it cost us a game.

I know not the way you wanted it, but the fumble you were able to force. How big was that play for yourself?

I ain't really too much thinking about that right now. I mean, we just lost, so I'm not really too worried about the fumbles. I mean it was a cool moment, but it would have been better if we had the win.

You take any positives away from how hard you guys fought today.

I mean, we play hard every game. It's going to come to a point where we have to flip the tide. We have to find ways to win the game.

The explosive plays. Almost 200 yards rushing, you guys gave up. What can be done to limit some of those?

Execution. It's going to come down to practice and just getting better.

TACKLE JC LATHAM

Being up 14 on the one-yard line, that's on the offensive line. That's on us. We got to punch that in there. Obviously, there are other plays that contribute, but you just got to look in the mirror, figure out where did you go wrong. What are you doing to give the team the best chance to succeed?

What kind of response did you expect after last week? And where did you guys come up short, maybe as a whole?

Gosh. I mean, you can talk a lot about everything. I mean like I just said, we didn't score on the one. I mean we turned it over. We didn't have enough efficient runs. We got a three-and-out when the defense got us the ball back. You can point out so many things just from an offensive standpoint. That's every game, win, lose, or draw. There's always things you can look at to get better at and it magnifies in a loss.

Can you give us any indication kind of what happened on the goal line stand where you guys got stuck?

We didn't punch it in there. O-line, we didn't do a good enough job punching it in there. It's simple as that.

Was there a breakdown or anything?

It wasn't a breakdown; it was us versus them. We are supposed to score with our man and we didn't do a good enough job with that. I didn't do a good enough with that job.

How frustrating is it you guys get 14 points right off the bat and then everything kind of shifts after that?

I mean, it's frustrating, but that's the NFL. You're not going to, this isn't college, you're not going to quit, you're not going to mope. Just last week, we were down 13-0, and we came back and won. You know what I mean? They were down 14-0 and came back. I wouldn't say it's necessarily frustrating as much as it is, it's just the league. If you have momentum, if you don't seize the opportunity, it doesn't matter what it is. You got to play a full four quarter football game.

But why do you think you weren't able to be consistent as far as moving the football?

That's something that you've got to look at the film and just assess. Myself, just look at a film and see where I could have done better at, first and foremost.

You guys come back, tie it late. How much does it gut you to lost like that?

Extremely, especially when we shouldn't have been that close of a game. I mean, we lost that game. And this game is about capitalizing off of your opponent's mistake and they capitalize off of it. So, we lost that game.

Tony Pollard had a big game today. How proud are you of not only him but about what you guys were able to do up front?

You can have a silver lining in that sense, but the most important stat is a win. So, I don't care if we have a thousand yards rushing the ball in one game. If we didn't win the game, it doesn't really matter.

RUNNING BACK TONY POLLARD

When you think about that fourth-and-one, third-and-one, what exactly seemed to happen on that play?

I feel like I got to be conscious of the situation and knowing that situation I can extend the ball. We have nothing to lose at that point. So I got to know the situation, know the risk that I can take on that play. Those are points that we should have had.

Just as far as the short yardage plays, things like that. This team hasn't really gotten those first downs on those plays, is it more of an attitude or just adjustments with the things that are going on offensively?

For the most part, those short yardage plays are an attitude thing. You just got to impose your will on the guy in front of you. That's an area we could have been better at today.

Why were you guys so successful with the run game today?

We just wanted to be physical coming out the gate, get some early runs in, lean on those guys, depend on our O-line to block those guys up front and that's what we did.

From an offensive standpoint score 14 early, but just couldn't really sustain a lot until late. Why was that?

I would probably say penalties, self-inflicted things like that. We had a few drives in between there that we were moving about pretty good. Headed into field goal range and one of them we got a penalty that killed a lot of the momentum. We just got to be better in those situations.

What was going right early on for you guys in the run game that kind of allowed you to establish that rhythm?

Just being physical, leaning on those guys up front, letting them do all the dirty work, letting them create the creases for me and just find it and hit it.

Was that part of the game plan going in? You had a big game against the Browns last year. Was there something to that going into this game that tried to reestablish that?

Yeah, looking at the tape from last year, seeing things that we did well against them, things that we can fix and just packing it up into a game plan for this week.

DEFENSIVE TACKLE JEFFERY SIMMONS

What was happening in the run game today? You guys usually shut down the run, but it seemed like they were able to run the ball well.

I mean, that's what it was. They (were) able to get to the edges, and we just got to do a better job. It takes all 11 to stop the run. I know sometimes we can just pinpoint, and there's people who really don't understand that it just takes all 11 on the football field to stop a run. So, we got to be better as a defense.

Up front, you guys had trouble getting to Deshaun (Watson). You had six sacks last week. What was the difference today up front?

The ball was getting out pretty fast. If you go watch it, you actually watching, the ball getting out fast. It's hard to sack the quarterback when the ball is getting out fast. And sometimes when you're third-and-short, it's third-and-four, the ball coming out fast, so not that many opportunities. Some of the opportunities that we did have, I feel like we tried to affect them. But man, the tale of the game was the ball was getting out pretty fast. And we're going to go back and watch it and see how many opportunities, true opportunities, that we did have. And the opportunities that we did have, we got to see why we're not winning. And that's pretty much what it is. I think they were doing a pretty good job of getting the ball out of his hand pretty fast.

On the last drive you guys had him back there and needed one stop. You've been in that position before. How tough is it?

The tougher part about the game—because we could have took the life out of the team in the first half. We came out rolling and I feel like, I wouldn't say we got relaxed, but it felt like we kept our foot on the gas the right way and we kind of let that team get back in it. Then on that last drive, I mean, I was rushing. I don't know exactly what happened, but the ball was out, another thing that, like I said, the ball was getting out of his hand. Of course, we got to look back at it, you never want to come into the locker room and point fingers, that's one thing we're not going to do, but at the same time it's take all 11. Everyone's got to do their job, especially in the critical situation of the game. I don't know what happened, but that was a big explosion and they got in field goal range and kicked the field goal. So we didn't do enough, especially when it really mattered.

The right tackle in that last play looked like he jumped a little bit. I don't know if you saw that, felt that, whatever.

I just feel like, like I said, we could have just took the life away from that team when we had a chance and that would have never mattered. I feel like there was a lot of opportunity in that game for us to actually do that. I'm not going to go off and say a false start, things happen until you get in the game. Referees make calls, they miss calls. If we're going to hang our hat on that then we got to look ourself in the mirror because like I said, I think there was plenty of opportunity in that game for us to go over and just take over the game and take the life away from them. We didn't do that.

Did it almost feel like the exact opposite of last week where the Colts kind of let you guys hang around and took advantage and then today you guys let the Browns hang around?

The Colts didn't let us do anything. We went out there and took it in the second half, and we took it from them. And that's why I just said we didn't do it today when we had a chance to actually take it, and just take the life from them, away from them. Especially in that first half, we didn't do that. And so, I feel like when we have those types of opportunities, we have to, especially with a team like that, they're the best team in their conference right now, I mean they're 5-2 right now. So, it's like when you got a team like that, Deshaun's (Watson) playing some good football and see where he ends up having the quarterback read and then he put it—so it just needs—like I said, when you have an opportunity to take the life from a team, especially in the NFL, you got to do that.

WIDE RECEIVER CARNELL TATE

How tough is it to come out on the short end of such a heart-breaker

It's tough, bro. Losing, especially losing, being part of the loss, especially from my mistake as an individual, it's tough.

Ball inside the one, a chance to go up by two touchdowns and they stop you. It seemed to give them new life, how critical do you think that was not being able to cash in?

Every play is important, especially the role they drafted me in to be in to be in this position I am now. So they're going to rely on me. So I got to go out there and make them plays. I can't cost—I can't turn the ball over and I can't drop the ball.

What do you emphasize with ball security after maybe fumbling the last couple of games after the catch?

Yeah, I just got to hold on to the ball. It's always a defender I don't see. So I just got to be more cautious whenever I catch the ball, just put it away right away.

What happened on that play?

The corner behind me, didn't see him. I saw the guy in front of me. Then the guy behind me just punched the ball out.

Offensively, on a day like today, kind of back and forth. How disappointed are you that you guys couldn't go toe-to-toe with them?

We were very disappointed, especially when we went up 14-0 really quick, and then things started to slow down for us right there. And then especially after my drop, my fumble, so things

like that can't happen. Those things like that stall the drives and` we have to put the defense back out there.

What else aside from the turnovers was kind of keeping you guys from being able to sustain drives.

We got to make plays as an individual, as an offense, we got to make plays and go block them.

SAFETY KEVIN WINSTON JR.

You guys usually shut down the run, but it seemed like they were able to run the ball well.

Yeah, we got to go back in the film room, get that fixed. Guys putting in the run and guys showing up in the run game. It's all over all of us. We got to go back and get that fixed tomorrow.

And as you guys go through these games, it was 17 unanswered points. How tough is it to keep from getting worn down when late in the game they had some long drives?

Yeah, we prepare for this all the time, moments like this. I don't think the problem was us getting worn down, it was just making sure we put out the fire, and we had to make sure we did that, and we didn't today. So now it's time to get back and make sure that we do that the next time.

(KC) Concepcion was all over the field. What was he doing so well to get open?

Yeah, he was in that slot position, and they were doing their—he got put in a great position to get open and he had a great game, so a bunch of respect to him, but we got to get back and make that doesn't happen in the future.

HEAD COACH TODD MONKEN

Unbelievable team win. Not perfect at all. We're going to have to figure out how to start faster, that's for damn sure. Felt a lot like last week. I told the team at 10-nothing or 14- nothing. There's something about this group. There's something about those guys that play the next play and continue to fight for each other. We had plenty of opportunities. The goal-line stand was great and then we turn it over again. And then we turn it over again and then Denzel (Ward) comes up with that pick. It was crazy because when we scored to make it 14-14, I hadn't counted the other touchdown. I'm like, 'It's tied?' I thought it was 21-14. Seriously, I was like, okay, crazy. And I realized, 'Oh yeah we stopped them down there.' Our guys just kept fighting. We weren't perfect we turned the ball over a couple of times. We had a few opportunities down the field on some big plays, but we ran the ball better. We were ahead of the sticks, all the measurables, other than turning it over, which we had been doing great at, we were significantly better at. Ran the ball better on first down. We were more efficient in the pass game, we were more efficient on third down. We converted all of our touchdown opportunities in the red zone. We won't get credit for it because we had one before the half and end-of-game that you'll go oh-for-two on and we didn't try. We didn't have the opportunity. So again, credit to our guys to keep battling and that was fun. It never looks the same but it feels the same, I can tell you that.

This was Deshaun Weston's fifth, fourth-quarter game-winning drive. Can you just talk about how he just keeps coming through again at the end despite how it might look before that?

I thought this, besides the turnover on the slant, where Denzel (Boston) got shut off. He's got to break face there. He's got to cross face. Quarterback's got to be able to trust that. But outside of that, that was — how many games are we now, seven? That was the most complete game. That was close to Pittsburgh in terms of where to go with the ball, being in control, with his composure. The way we operated was better, not perfect, but better on the road. But a real credit to him. That's all we're trying to do. He has something in him to be able to make plays when it counts, and we're trying to flatline our play earlier in the game to be more consistent. But you've got to have a shout out for our crowd. How about all the Browns fans, for God's sakes? It felt like our side of the stands were all Browns fans, am I wrong? It just felt like our side was all Browns fans. That was so cool. That was so cool. I mean, it's — that helped. That was critically important, in terms of getting us through the beginning of the game when we weren't playing nearly as well. That was awesome.

It seemed like what really got you going, you got comfortable throwing to KC (Concepcion Jr.) over the middle on some of those slant routes. How much did that sort of help him sort of find a rhythm?

Did a good job of getting the ball out. There were some plays down the field those guys connected on, but we ran the ball better. To me that's the biggest thing. It is so hard if you can't run the football, and we've been making it hard. Our guys, it feels like, even last week, started to come along a little bit. Obviously getting Quinshon (Judkins) back, no disrespect — and Sam (Dylan Sampson) — to the other guys who have played great for us, but having those guys back, having our guys playing together over the course of time. And it's week to week. Each team poses different challenges, run and pass, but the idea is you've got to fight like hell to solve it. That's what our job is.

The drive before the winning drive, the touchdown drive, you ran eight plays and you were going under center and just ran straight down the field. What caused you to go under center at that point?

Just happened to be at that time. Some of it was runs. We started off with the naked. I think the naked was the start of it. Oddly enough, the touchdown wasn't. But we're still working. We're still working with under center, gun, using 4's (Deshaun Weston) legs, getting the ball out. It felt like we had a pretty good mix of that today, and it showed up.

Do you go into this game knowing that KC Concepcion would have the game he did?

Absolutely not. I have no idea where the ball is going to go. That would be like asking me last week did we know we'd have 44 yards in the first half, and I would say, God, I hope not. Hope I make it to the second half and Jimmy (Haslam) doesn't come down from the box and say it's about time. That's all a part of it, right? I don't know going into the game. We've got good

players. I didn't know that we would rush for that amount. I don't know those things. I just know that you take every day for what it is and trying to put together a great game plan that features your players and what they can do and then have a great Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and a great walk Saturday. Then just let the chips fall where they may — and I'm being silly here. I wasn't trying to be any one way. I was not. KC's (Concepcion Jr.) a really good player, and Harold's (Fannin Jr.) a really good player, and when you get in a rhythm, it's like somebody asked last week about Harold or the guys, like when you're not stacking plays, no one's touching it. You're always in third down. You get in a rhythm like this, and it's easy. Man, you're getting first downs. You're feeling good on third down. You're running the ball. You've always got to get that first first down. So that's when other guys start to get involved, right? That's where you start to feel — it becomes a hell of a lot easier calling plays at that point when you can run it, get the ball out quickly. It's okay. Sometimes I just keep rambling. It's okay. It's easier that way, right? And we also had — we had two two-minute drives. Like no one takes that into consideration. Okay, you had two two-minute drives. Who catches all the balls in two minutes? Your skill guys, right? All your wideouts. All of a sudden, their touches go up and everyone's involved. Sometimes that happens and sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes you don't get the two-minute drives.

To that point, KC Concepcion had all the stats like in the first half. How much pressure is there to keep going that way?

Sadly he had that shot, the deep shot, where he had that — KC (Concepcion Jr.) is going to make that play more times than not, but we still used him to run the ball a little bit. He's hard to bring down. He is a weapon. We've got to continue, same with Harold (Fannin Jr.), same with Quinshon (Judkins). All those guys are hard to bring down. 12's (Denzel Boston) hard to bring down. We've got bulls, guys that are hard to bring down. We've just got to keep trying to find ways to get them the ball, especially in space. That will be a continual work in progress because every team is a little bit different.

What do you think led to Tony Pollard's success, three touchdowns?

He's a really good player. They've got a really good O-line. Brian Daboll is a really good coach, and they've got really good coaches over there. At times that's going to happen. That's part of it. Until we watch the tape, until we look at it, I don't know. I've been a big fan of his since he came out of college and what a career he's made for himself. Obviously, we're never going into games anticipating giving up that amount of rushing yards, but credit to them and their O-line and their coaching staff. They've got good coaches. They've got good players. It's the NFL. At times that's going to happen. You're going to have to score. You're not going to be able to fiddle around and be in the teens or get in the 10-10 points. You're going to have to score. That's what this league is made about. It's built on being able to score. We've got to be able to score and stop people when we need to.

Being able to run the ball, was it anything specifically that you do schematically?

Some. Different team, right? Some other teams we played, they were different. This was a four-down team. Now, we've been playing a lot of odd teams, bigger people teams. This is more like what we see every day. I'm not saying — that's not an excuse for the other weeks. I'm just saying that when you spend your whole offseason going against your defense and you spend training camp going against your defense, when you go good-on-good, a lot of your reps are four down. Not that they didn't go to some jam and some other looks, but when you're going up against teams that are odd, bigger, that's something we don't go against. That shouldn't exonerate ourselves from not running it well enough, because that's what our job is, right? Score points, however that is. Run or pass, I really don't care. Really what matters is points. If you want to be really good on offense, you have to be able to win doing both. You have to be able to run it when you want to run it, and you have to be able to throw it when you want to throw it. When you're able to do that, you're hard. You're hard to defend. How many times do you hear every defensive coordinator say you've got to make them one-dimensional. I'm with you. It's our job to not be one-dimensional.

You talked a little bit about how hard KC Concepcion is to bring down, but could you just maybe encapsulate how he's spinning and twisting and fighting and just his show that he put on today?

He's a real dude, man. He's a real dude. I mean, coming out in the Draft, everybody said that about him. When you visit with him and you're around him, like he's diligent, he's humble, he's competitive. He's got unbelievable fight. What I'm really impressed with is all the spinning and the twisting and the shirt pulling, he protects the football, but it's just like he covers it up, and that's not easy for a guy that when they expose the ball like that. That's not easy. Again, it's one week, and we're going to enjoy it tonight and get back on that hamster wheel tomorrow. We're going to figure out a way to go up to Pittsburgh and take another step.

QUARTERBACK DESHAUN WATSON

This was your first 300-yard passing game as a member of the Browns. Was there anything in particular about this matchup that had you thinking there might be something there?

No, we just had the same mentality that we have every week that if we execute, if we are all on the same page, if I get the ball out, get the guys catch-and-run opportunities, we pick up the protection, and figure out what coverages they are in, then we will have opportunities in the back end to be able to catch it. Then the run game was operating really, really well so that helped us in the passing game. Yeah, we did a good job overall. Left a lot of plays out there, a lot of opportunities to put up more points and plays, and yeah, we got to keep building.

Once again you showed what you can do in the two-minute drill in the end to come through in the clutch. Can you talk about your ability to continue to come through on game winning drives?

Yeah, we just again, being in this league for 10 years now, I understand that a lot of games will come down to that, if not every game. So, if we are close enough in it, we have those opportunities, we just got to lock in and that's where the pressure and the most important, you

got to really be on your p's and q's. I go really, really hard with my coaching staff each and every week in two-minute, before half and at the end of the game especially. That's something that we really watch tape on and focus on. So, again, guys were right in the position they needed to be in and getting the ball out and understanding the situation, and it gave us another opportunity to win the game.

Does being in those two-minute situations get easier knowing you've done it so many times before?

No, I wouldn't say that. It's never easy. Every game is different. Every situation is different. But it definitely builds confidence for sure.

When you develop chemistry like you had with KC Concepcion Jr. in the first half alone does it become natural that you're looking for him, or does it become forced? How do you walk that line?

No, you just got to walk the line. It depends on the play. It depends on the play, the concept, and then, within the play and the concept, it depends on what the defense is doing. There was one play that I was reading coverage, thought the coverage was going to be a little bit different, and I missed them all. I think there was one play, the one he had down the seam he dropped, that could have been six. They showed a coverage that, practice that usually is covered, but not forced it, but I gave him the ball and he wasn't really expecting it. So those are the things being a young receiver and still building that confidence and that chemistry with each other that will get better for sure.

This was the first game that you had Dylan Sampson available. How did that help things?

Yeah, I mean, you see the diversity he has, he can run the ball, catch it out the back field, and then he brings a versatile dynamic to the offense. You don't know what we're going to do, pass it or run it. So it's good to have D-Samp (Dylan Sampson) back, good to have Q (Quinshon Judkins) back, all the guys back, man. Jaleel (McLaughlin), when he needs to step in. So it was good to see us completely whole, and let's build from this.

Was there something you saw in the matchup or an adjustment that you made that helped get the run game going or was it as simple as those guys being a little fresh after a week or so off?

I mean, I think all of it, just being fresh, being able to execute the looks, and then just being all on the same page. Those guys up front, the O-line, did a heck of a job in the pass protection. But in the run game, too, just been locked in on our p's and q's and their points. They were working together. Dawand (Jones) did a good job coming in for Tytus (Howard) whenever he got banged up and had to step out and didn't miss a beat. So again, everyone being on the same pace from the o-line to the running backs, and the landmarks of where they want to run the ball was the biggest thing.

Do you think this is a preview of what you guys can do in terms of being an explosive offense when everybody's on the field and working together?

Yeah, I mean, most definitely. We haven't even reached our peak. We still have a lot more for good football to go and that's what we strive for, just trying to be perfect and each play be as best as possible. But it's hard to do in this league, so we try to stack as many plays. And again, we

left a lot of points and opportunities out there, but it showcased how explosive we can definitely be.

Could you feel the presence of the Browns fans ?

Oh yeah, most definitely. From pregame warmups we felt it. I mean, riding in, we see the busses out in front of the new stadium, they were all out there. So that gives us the juice and that energy coming into these games, and then once we run out, we hear the dog chants and the barks and everything. It's awesome to see it and feel it. This is something that the locker room really cherishes and appreciates whenever we come out for sure.

I was curious, what's the balance between like you're happy that the team has the resiliency to bounce back and to win these close these games, but also kind of wishing they weren't all this close?

We wish we had some blow out games. But again, it's hard to do in this league, man. So right now, I think we finished these games and we build this hope and this chemistry, and this feel where we know we can finish these games, and hopefully soon we can get some of those games where we can put them away. With a young team and a young staff and everyone new, it's actually good and can be beneficial for us in the long run that we have these type of games.

What did you say to KC Concepcion after his big drop and what did you make of his play today?

The biggest thing was that, 'I need that.' That was the first thing I said, 'Man I need that. KC you owe me one.' But, after that, 'Hey, on to the next one, on to the next play. I'm going to keep coming to you, the opportunities are gonna come,' and that's what we did. So we both understand there's some things where I might miss a throw and they might say the same thing to me. We've earned that respect. I told all the young guys, 'Hey man, just let me know if I need to be a little bit better also.' I think that's why we have that bond and that chemistry that we have.

You mentioned this is your 10th year in the league, right? So you got 5-2 right. How easy is it to ride the wave? And how important is that to ride a wave of success as opposed to maybe digging from behind all the time?

It's very important. You just got to ride the wave and you got to be present in the moment, honestly. It can switch. I was on a team where we started 0-4, we won nine-straight and made it to the playoffs. Then, you see teams also where they win six straight and be 6-1, and then obviously, the season turns upside down. So you just take it one week at a time, one game at a time. You can try to build off this, build off of this energy and this chemistry, but also understand that after Mondays, you got that 24 hour rule, it's on to the next opponent. We going to enjoy tonight, watch the film in the morning, then tomorrow afternoon, it's on to Pittsburgh and we have a big divisional rival on the road.

Todd Monken gave some perspective on the interception. What's your perspective on that, and how do you kind of use that as a teachable moment between you guys with a young receiver?

Yeah, he came and talked to me after the play, and then after the game in the locker room he came over and told me, too. He understood that, you kind of put the quarterback in the bad spot. On a slant route, you can't go underneath him and try to go around, even if the guy played hard, you just got to force a flat and then just probably knock it away and he played it well. But, it's a

teaching moment for a young receiver and we're not going to charge it against him. I'm not gonna be pissed off about it. It happens, it is what it is. We got the W, but it's definitely a good teaching moment that, 'Hey man, on the slant, he plays heavy inside, you just got to be able to down and release him and try to come flat as much as possible. There's no dip underneath to try to go around in this league. It's too hard, it's too hard to do.'

DEFENSIVE TACKLE MALIEK COLLINS

How do you think you did today?

I feel like I had a slow start and I've tried to pick up a little bit over the past couple of weeks.

What's it like when you agree to that contract, but then you've got to go play a game the next day? e like, Is there like a, 'Man, you've got to stay healthy.

I haven't done an in-season extension before. So, I'm used to, whether it's OTAs or whether it is free agency, so it's kind of weird. You know, you wake up, I started a little slow today, but I'm happy to put that behind me and move forward now.

How long was this in the works?

In my mind or with the team?

With the team.

I called every week, I called every week. I mean they just wanted to make sure I was healthy. So, I showed that I was healthy over the past couple weeks, showed that I was back being me, and they had the faith in me, they extended me, here two more years.

I know that you can't foresee the future, but I mean, do you kind of hope that this is the last team you play for? Maybe there's another extension down the road?

For sure, for sure. I love the city of Cleveland and I love playing for the Browns. Man, I want to be up there one day banging that guitar too. So, I'm going to keep balling. I don't know, man, you never know, I might keep playing, you never know.

At this point, is there an expectation from you guys on the sideline? Like in the last minute, two minutes, the offense is just going to go do its job?

Well, the expectation is to not let them score so it won't be that close. Especially starting that slow, but we got to rally back like that. I mean, we've been emphasizing start fast and it's been the opposite, so we will still continue to work on that and not letting them get the ball running like that to start the game off. That put us behind the ball a little bit.

Why was Tony Pollard so successful?

Well, I missed a couple tackles on that first drive. I'll point the thumb first. I don't know, got to watch the tape and see.

He had a big game against you last year too.

I wasn't there. I am not claiming that. I am not claiming that. That's my old teammate too, I was with him in Dallas.

WIDE RECEIVER KC CONCEPCION JR

Was there anything about this matchup which made you feel you could play the way you did today?

To be honest, I enter every week expecting to have a game like this. This week was my breakout game. I just can't wait to keep stacking weeks.

Can you just talk about, I'm sure this is who you are, but Browns fans, haven't really seen it firsthand, just the twisting, the fighting, the chest bumping, just the kind of show that you put on out there on the field and on the sidelines?

I've been this way all my life. I play this game with so much heart, so much effort. I'm finally glad that Browns fans and the Browns community was finally able to see what I can bring to this team.

Christian Jones was talking on Friday about the game slowing down and seeing what defenses are doing coverage wise and be able to adjust as the next step for you. How much today did it feel different than even last week or three weeks ago in terms of just how much you're recognizing things?

I stayed in the film room seeing how they disguise coverages. I would say after the Jacksonville game, it started slowing down for me a little bit more. I started seeing coverages before they happened. I started watching film and tuning into little keys that would like help me out, to like see if they're in zone, or if they're in man, and if they are in zone, are they playing cover three, are they playing cover two, cover four. So yeah.

You had your breakout game and Deshaun (Watson) today, threw for 300 yards for the first time since being with the Browns, and you were obviously a big part of that. How have you guys' chemistry continued getting better as the season goes on?

Me and Deshaun (Watson), our chemistry, it's still growing. We've been able to talk more, whenever he sees something, he comes up to me, he tells me if I see the coverage play out this way, this is what he is expecting me to do.

How determined were you after that drop and what kind of happened on that? How determined after that were you to say, 'I'm going to do whatever I can to put this game away?

I've been working so hard on my drops. I let that one get away from me, man. It would have been my first one on the season. But I felt like I did a great job not dwelling on the play, not being too focused on a drop and moving on. And on the end around, I finally got my number called again, and I made a play.

What's the energy like, obviously they go down they score but the way you guys have been able to operate in these last two-minutes? Is there almost an anticipation and energy kind of like caged animal just let us out?

Like I've been saying, Coach Monk (Todd Monken) has put us in these situations in practice time, after the time, after time, after time again. So whenever we get into the game and whenever we get into these situations, we already have the confidence to go down there and set up a game winning drive.

CORNERBACK DENZEL WARD

What happened to your hand?

I dislocated my finger; I had to get five stitches before the game. That's really why I was so upset. I was like nah, I'm going to catch the ball. That has been my whole goal this season, I am just trying to intercept the ball and catch the ball, but you know, God blessed me and was able to get an interception.

What happened to your hand?

In practice, I don't even want to explain it. It came out though, it came out of the glove and just had to get it stitched back up.

Denzel, the goal-line stand in the second quarter seemed so important for you guys as a defense. How much of a turning point was that do you think?

Oh man, it was huge. It was a huge stop for the defense and for the team and it gave us the opportunity to win the game at the end. Just holding them to those points and put our offense back out there on the field.

They had some success early against you guys, it seemed like the hurry up stuff was really working for them. Was it as simple as that?

Yeah, they did. I mean, that's the NFL. They did well early on and got some plays off, but you know, you have to play a full game, and we were able to do that and finish it off and get the win.

Denzel, at this point, do you expect, when you guys get the ball, like, 'we're going to do this'? Has it just become the expectation?

Yeah, definitely. I mean, like I said, we've been in that situation week to week and that's our expectation. We practice it and the goal is to go out there and win every time and that's what we were able to do.

How much confidence did you guys have in (Deshaun) Watson at the end of the game when you know he's got to go down the field?

Yeah, a lot of confidence. A lot of confidence in the entire offense. They've been going through everything very well once it comes down to the end of the games, their process, and being able to draw down the field and put points on the board.

To see KC (Concepcion Jr.) have that kind of a first half that he had, even on the defensive side, that's got to give you guys a lift, I would think.

Oh yeah, definitely. Those guys all making plays and KC came up big for us today making all those plays down the field and ball in his hands, he's been able to do some special things.

I mean, I know you guys get a win, but just with the slower start than you want, with the defense, where the opposing team has scored on you guys in their first drive, going back to the field, how much concern is there over that? I mean I know guys keep talking about it, that we need to start faster?

Yeah, we got to do, like you said, a better job of starting faster and eliminating points early on and put us in a better position towards the end of the game. But yeah, we have to continue to watch the film and clean up the mistakes and stuff that we make early on and get it going.

Denzel, mentally, what's the balance of like, 'I'm glad that we have the resiliency to bounce back and to close these close games', but at the same time being like, 'I wish it wouldn't come down to the last second.' What's the balance there?

You got to give the fans something to watch and enjoy, you know. It boosts the NFL ratings, so I know they are loving that. But no, we definitely just got to continue to fight early on, to eliminate the mistakes and just put us in better position towards the end of the game to where we don't have to be a last second drive.

Was it more of the mistakes that you guys made or scheme that they came out with on those first two drives?

Yeah, a little bit of both. I mean, they did well and (there's) some things that we could have done better at. I have to watch the film and look at it back and find ways to fix it.

For the defense as a whole, what unique challenges did (Tony) Pollard give you guys today? I know he had his second-best NFL day, but I mean just the fact that he was so relentless in the first half especially?

Yeah, just a really good back. Able to come out of the backfield, whether it's passing or running the ball. So just did well and did his thing.