

DALLAS COWBOYS VS. CINCINNATI BENGALS POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS
CINCINNATI BENGALS HEAD COACH ZAC TAYLOR

On what's been behind the slow starts the last two games, specifically.

I think last week was probably turnovers. This week it was more first-and-10 efficiency. We had some false starts. We had a sack on first-and-10 play action. We had a screen that went for negative yards. We had a run that went for negative yards. We were backed up, there. It's pretty easy in the first half to point to what the inefficiency was. It was our first downs, so now we're not on schedule anymore and they did a good job of pinning our ears back, which is something we can't let them do. They really excelled in that area. I thought we settled down better in the second half and we were a lot more efficient

On how uncomfortable Joe Burrow looked in the pocket, especially in the first quarter.

I didn't think Joe looked uncomfortable.

On if he was getting pressured too much.

I think we've given up too many sacks, absolutely.

What kind of caught you off guard with the fourth downs. Should you have called time out and kind of gathered your team?

I still think we were in good shape. We kind of jumped up on the call. They ran a mesh concept and we jumped up underneath.

What are you guys looking to call opportunities for shot plays today or were they just out there?

We called some of them. Had to check out of them, rightfully so. And they did a good job trying to stay on top. That was one thing – tried to double Ja'Marr, tried to play a lot of Tampa 2. When your first down efficiency isn't very good, it's easy for them to try to take that away, particularly early.

On the communication on offense today.

Not great in the first half. Not good enough in the first half I should say. fence today. It led to some errors that were difficult when that shouldn't have happened.

On what you attribute that to.

I don't know. We'll have to find out.

On why he didn't go for the field goal in the second quarter when he was at the 42-yard line.

It's a 59-yarder, 60-yarder. We've got a great kicker, trust me. At some point, you've just got to make smart decisions. We know our defense has got to settle down. So there were about six minutes left in the second quarter, so you're hoping that that's going to lead to points. You're able to pin them down there inside the ten, which I think we got them right on the ten. Get the ball back, two minute drill with good field position to be able to punch it in. So it's just having faith in your defense, faith in your punt coverage team. Defense gets a stop and the offense has an opportunity to go into halftime with a score and they get the ball back to start the second half. I understand, ball on the 42. Be aggressive there. Again, we were just thinking we were going to just get one more possession and points and get the ball to start the second half.

On if he thought of going for it on fourth down.

That's really what went into the thinking. Let's play the field possession battle on this drive, leading into the half. Get one more possession and score, and try to double up at the end of the half.

On if he's surprised that the offense has looked so disjointed during the first two games.

No, because people are going to look back at two games last year and say something very similar. These reactions always happen when you lose a game. It's a long season. That's what we tell our players. We're just going to take ownership of these losses and continue to get better. We know that we have a good football team. We shot ourselves in the foot a little bit early on here in two games. Long season yet to go and our guys are going to continue to improve and play better and get some wins.

On if Dallas' pass rush impacted how aggressive he wanted to be, especially early in downs.

Maybe they haven't gotten the sacks against everybody you watch, but quarterbacks are just springing out of the pocket when you watch all of the tape from last season against these guys. They have a really stellar pass rush. They use these guys really well. Micah Parsons is going to be in the conversation for one of the best, if not the best pass rushers, just the way they can move him around. The way he can take advantage and bend. He's a real problem and they've got real good players behind him too. We put ourselves in some positions where they could really tee off and maximize what they're

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really good at. And that was frustrating early on. I thought we settled in better later in the game and were a lot more efficient.

On if it's frustrating the Burrow hasn't been given better protection in the first two games.

It's all frustrating. We've give ourselves an opportunity to win these games against good teams, so once things settle down, I know that we're going to be a really good football team.

On if he feels he's getting enough from a pass rush standpoint.

At the end of the day, you don't have as many sacks as you'd like early on. They gave up 14 points to start the game and then after that, they played really lights out aside from those two field goals there at the end. So our defense is playing really well.

On if he feels like there was a stretch last year when he faced the same obstacles on offense.

Every team's going to go through this, where you face a two game losing streak at some point. Unfortunately for us, it's the first two games of the season. It's a long season. Again, we've just got to hit the reset button, not in a negative way, but just regroup for Tuesday to get ready for the Jets this Sunday. I know our guys are going to be focused the right way. We have great leadership. So again, that's just what we're relaying on right now, is those guys to get focused, have a great week of practice and go to New York and find a way to win.

On the play of Hayden Hurst.

I think Hayden's been really solid. That's what we expected. That's what he's done. He's focused on his game, he does a great job and it's not surprising that he's had the performances that he's had.

On Drew Sample's status.

I'm not sure. We'll have to look at it. I think it was his knee. We'll have to find out.

On his takeaway from the long, sustained, tying touchdown drive.

It's just what was needed at that point of the game and that's the position we put ourselves in. But our guys answered the bell. They made some tremendous one-on-one plays, some great throws, tremendous protection. About everybody I can think of stepped up on that drive to help us go score. The protection was tremendous on the two-point play. Joe had all day back there. I thought those guys really came together and put the drive together when we needed it.

On if the punt hit the scoreboard.

With my own eyes, the ball hit the scoreboard, but not on the replay, I guess. It was a big point of the game, where a punt's just dead for no reason. For a reason that we all saw, and we were lining up for a punt again. They just got a downed punt, no return. That part was really frustrating. [The officials] reviewed it and said it didn't hit...just watch the game.

On if there is a part of the offense that can be rectified by next Sunday.

I think we're going to be in good shape. Again, "settle down" is not the great word. I think we're going to be in great position going forward. Any time you lose, it's going to feel like, from everybody that's watching, that's the story. I get it. That's how it should be. We're going to work hard, just as we have, to go on the road and find a way to win against a good team.