

Sunday, November 20, 2022

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Quarterback Joe Burrow

Visitors Postgame Press Conference

Pittsburgh - 30, Cincinnati - 37

Q. How did that one feel for you?

JOE BURROW: That was awesome, that was awesome. One of my favorite wins since I've been here.

Q. How come?

JOE BURROW: A lot of adversity. AFC North game. Bad weather, cold, windy. We fought through. We found a way to win.

Q. What was the difference on that 93-yard drive? What was going through your mind on that drive?

JOE BURROW: Man, guys stepped up and made plays. TB, two big plays. Protection was great. Samaje, you know, fighting through tackles to get another touchdown. A lot of guys stepped up today.

Q. How would you describe the connection you have with Samaje? It just seems that you guys have a good chemistry.

JOE BURROW: Samaje's just -- one, obviously, he's a great player. He steps up whenever his opportunity presents itself. And two, he's -- you know, one of those locker room guys that everybody talks about. Great in the locker room. Great guy to talk to. Culture builder. He's fun to play with.

Q. What do you like about Trent Irwin?

JOE BURROW: Man, that guy, ever since I've been here, he's in there foam rolling, catching tennis balls. You know, he hasn't had a ton of opportunities, but every single time that his opportunity comes, he makes a play.

I couldn't be happier for that guy. He just continues to show up when his opportunity presents itself. And, you know, those are the kind of guys that Bengals football and the Bengals organization is all about.

Q. Can you talk about Tee Higgins performance today? And Zac told us that he was very communicative with him on the sideline where he was telling him what routes he wanted because of what he was seeing on the field? Do you think that emergence of Tee kind of becoming a more mature into his own receiver?

JOE BURROW: Tee's -- you know what you're going to get out of Tee every single week. He's a big time player, No. 1 in this league that works hard, understands his craft and understands what he needs to do every week to get himself ready to play.

You know, I wish I could say that I was surprised about his performance, but this is what is expected of Tee at this point. He just continues to get better and better.

Q. Joe, you said this is one of your favorite wins since you've been here. 92 and 93-yard drives to touchdowns to do that. What was it about those two drives that stuck out to you?

JOE BURROW: Man, just all day, just overcoming adversity, fighting through, finding ways to get yards, get first downs, put points on the board. Two interceptions that, you know, obviously, not much I can do about those.

TJ Watt's an unbelievable player. He just continues to make plays like that. And then another tipped ball. They do a good job getting their hands up, understanding drops and reads. Just a lot of adversity today, a lot of great things from a lot of people.

Q. How did you counter their pressure? You know, you didn't -- it looked like you were -- you know, compared to the opener, it was a lot of time --

JOE BURROW: Yeah, our guys did a great job upfront. You know, we -- we're a drop-back team. And when you drop back as many times as we do, you're going to have a lot of one-on-one's upfront and those guys won consistently all day.

Q. Joe, I know you're not much of a stats guy. But you matched Kurt Warner for third quickest to 10,000 career passing yards. What's it mean to be in the record books with a guy that I know you know well and someone that I know you have a relationship with and a guy that's in the Hall of Fame?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, something that I'm proud of. You know, I think that shows the kind of player I've been since I've been here. I've got a lot of great people around me, obviously. Great coaches, great players. So it was a team effort, but that's one I'm proud of.

Q. (No microphone.)

JOE BURROW: (Laughing). I'll keep that one on the field. Maybe I'll keep that one to myself.

Q. (No microphone.)

JOE BURROW: Yeah, you weren't in here yet, but I said, you know, this is one of my favorite wins since I've been here. Just a lot of adversity that we fought through. Cold weather, windy, that, you know, we were able to really throw the ball around in. And so, I was proud of that.

Q. How much more momentum do you feel like you guys have right now?

JOE BURROW: You know, I think we're playing as good as anybody. We're hitting our stride offensively. Still left some points out there. There's always room to improve, obviously. But the last couple weeks, you know, apart from that Monday night game, we've been pretty lights out.

Q. No Ja'Marr for the game and then Joe out for the second half. How much did that change the playbook? And what does it say about you guys that you're still able to be as effective as you were?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, it really doesn't change the playbook much. Obviously, you know, Ja'Marr not being out there is a big loss just because of how good he is.

But, you know, Trenton Irwin stepped up. Trent Taylor comes in and does a great job. Mike Thomas comes in and does a great job. And then TB and Tee continue to do what they do. It doesn't change much, but it's always nice when you have that guy out there.

Q. (No microphone.)

JOE BURROW: Yeah, we -- I mean, we have great scheme. And we have guys that really understand the scheme. And so, we can -- we have so many reps invested in all these plays that we can make adjustments quickly on a sideline. And that's a testament to the guys and their hard work.

Q. It was a win that kind of showed your whole roster. When you woke up this morning and somebody said you were going to have four touchdown passes, three to Samaje and one to Trenton, I mean, what does this mean? What does it show about the back of your roster?

JOE BURROW: Just guys that work really, really hard and step up when their opportunity comes. You know, you never -- never know when it's going to come.

And Trenton Irwin and Samaje are two guys that work hard day in and day out. Special teams, you know, invested in their craft and can get better every single day no matter whether they're getting the reps or whether they're not. Staying after it, getting their opportunities. So I'm so happy for those guys.

Q. What is your favorite pass you made today?

JOE BURROW: The out route to Trenton Irwin over there. I think that shows the kind of confidence that he's playing with. A lot of guys would take that ball and go out of bounds and be happy with that. But he cut it back and got, you know, 25/30 extra. I think that shows his confidence that he's playing with.

Q. On that 93-yard drive, when that drive starts you're back on your own seven, are you a message guy? Is there a message to deliver in the huddle before that drive starts?

JOE BURROW: No, we knew what we had to do. We were up by, I think, four at that point, and we had to go down and score. It's always tough when you're backed up like that, especially with that defensive line and this crowd that we were playing in front of. But that's a bigtime drive.

Q. 93-yard drive and 92-yard drive, I think you guys faced one third down on those drives, period. Does that just illustrate how in rhythm you guys looked tonight?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, we've been really good on third down all year. And, obviously, prefer not to have that many. That means that you're being efficient on first and second down and moving the chains.

Q. I think the one you converted was to Tee, it was a third and four. That seemed to be the play of the game going one-on-one with a safety, I think. Can you --

JOE BURROW: Can't picture that one. But Tee stepped up all day.

Q. How much did your defense help you in the second half, getting three outs and getting you guys right back out on the field?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, they got us the ball when they needed to. Our pass rushers continue to give pressure and make it tough on quarterbacks. But I will say that I think Kenny did a really good job today. I was very impressed with the way that he played.

Q. Joe, Trenton said he wanted to do a dance after his first NFL touchdown but he wasn't able to. What is it about him and you were one of the guys that rushed to celebrate with him. What is it about Trenton that makes him so popular with his teammates?

JOE BURROW: Just because everyone sees the work that he puts in. He's in there long after everybody's gone, you know, working on his body, working on his craft, catching tennis balls, he's on the foam roller, he's always in the weight room.

So when you have a guy like that that finds success, you know, everyone's super happy for him.

Q. What was going on with the swing passes? Why were the swing passes -- I think two of them that went for touchdowns?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, we had a great scheme. Samaje, you know, the first one is not the -- didn't plan out the way we expected it. But, you know, that's sometimes how it works.

And checkdowns end up being touchdowns sometimes just because, you know, you see a defense that maybe you didn't expect on a play that you schemed up. And Samaje went and made plays.

Q. (Question concerning Evan McPherson.)

JOE BURROW: No, he's -- I think everybody expects him to make every kick.

Q. You had 11 straight completions in the second half on those touchdown drives. Are you cognizant of that in the moment or is that a reflection of the synch that you, the offensive linemen, and receivers' work that they put in?

JOE BURROW: No, you're not really thinking about that at the time. But, you know, it's great when it shakes out that way. But sometimes it doesn't and you got to -- sometimes you've got to throw the ball

away and, you know, get out of harm's way. But when you have a stretch like that, it's -- you know, you're in rhythm.

Q. Kenny Pickett is kind of struggling to get wins in his rookie season. What advice would you have for him or any first-year quarterback that's starting that's kind of struggling to find his way as a first-year starter?

JOE BURROW: I thought he did great today. You know, build off that momentum that he showed today. He's got some young guys around him that he can build some chemistry with. And I think, you know, he did a great job today. I told him that after the game, continue to build off of this one.

Q. How good was Jonah today?

JOE BURROW: Man, good. Jonah was locked in all day. And, you know, when you're going up against TJ Watt like LC was all day and we drop back the way that we are, and we didn't really help him that much.

There weren't a lot of ribs and chips. So those guys were unbelievable. TJ's going to get one every now and then, but LC was lights out all day.

Q. You mentioned the Watt pick. I mean, was that a play that you thought was humanly possible when you threw it?

JOE BURROW: Man, that guy -- I mean, I've never seen plays like that made before from a defensive linemen. And he's made two against me this year. I would love to say that there's something I can do about that, but there's just nothing I can do about that.

Q. You can't work on that in the offseason, huh?

JOE BURROW: No. (Laughing.)

Q. That first touchdown you threw to Samaje on the screen, I mean, what do you think of the blocking? How much did that set the tone for the offensive line just moving forward from that point on?

JOE BURROW: Yeah, our guys are great at those screens. We've got big, athletic guys upfront that can get out and move get out in space and get a body on a body. And then Samaje is also great at those screens. He showed it in the AFC championship last year and he's shown it all year we love those plays.

Q. Same play?

JOE BURROW: Different play, different play.

Q. (Question concerning Joe Burrow's sweatshirt.)

JOE BURROW: Oh, yeah, you like this one? Pretty comfy too.

Q. Favorite show? One of them?

JOE BURROW: Definitely one of them.

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Head Coach Zac Taylor

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ZAC TAYLOR: In the second half and that was really important in this game, getting control in the second half. I thought our defense did a great job. Came out in the second half, after giving 20 in the first half. Really, held them to a field goal, but that came on a short field off that pick that they had.

And then did a great job allowing the offense to regain some momentum. And I thought the 93-yard scoring drive there with nine and a half minutes left in the fourth quarter really put the game away for us.

And then obviously we gave up the touchdown late, we don't want to do that. But our defense just kind of playing bend but don't break there. Gave us a chance to win.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Well, I thought he was really decisive. We didn't see the easiest looks tonight. They did a good job packaging their stuff. They had their defense back. They did a good job, you know, trying to put a lot of pressure on us especially on second down. Joe, I thought, handled that really well and found the guy that had the best matchup, even when it didn't entirely work out.

I thought on that last drive, TB really stepped up big time. He had the back shoulder inside fade and then he had kind of the pull away on the four verticals. That was big. So those guys really stepped up. And I thought the protection all day was really good.

I know there was a sack where an empty Burrow kind of turned it into draw on the fly and got sacked. So I know that one's going to go on the line, but that one was him trying to make a play on a makeshift quarterback draw. But I thought those guys did a great job giving him time.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: He always does that. You know, it's every role you ask him to play, he's going to do it. Whether it's the second half, feature back when Joe's out, whether it's playing his role on third down, or some of the other packages we put him in, he's just as reliable as they come. Very dependable. And we don't take him for granted because we understand how valuable PC is for our team.

Q. Boyd doesn't do anything except for the last eight minutes, two huge catches, then he's there at the end.

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah.

Q. I mean, he seems to be that kind of a --

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah, I mean, over the course of the game, it was just kind of a corky game how it played out from an offensive play calling standpoint. I wanted to get him involved. It just wasn't working out that point.

So the interception actually was going to be a big play to him, the one TJ got. You know, I think TB did a great job winning. That was going to be a big play. And the next thing you know, it's an interception. Crazy.

But he's always reliable. He always just waits his turn. And knows when his number's called, he's going to be expected to make the play. And that's exactly what he did on that last drive.

Q. Can you give us your thoughts on Tee Higgins? Nine catches for 148 yards tonight. And then what type of statement do you feel like your team made tonight? No Chase, no Mixon for most of the game.

ZAC TAYLOR: Well, yeah, starting with Tee, he just -- when his number's called, you just expect him to make the play every single time. And he and Joe just have such a great rapport.

Tee is such a smart football player. He's got a great understanding of when the ball's going to come his way. He did a great job communicating with me on some routes that he wanted as the game went based on how they were playing him. I thought that was awesome.

And so, Tee's just always steps up big time for us. And, again, every team in the league is going to deal with players being out and you've got to find a way to overcome that. I think our guys -- you know, Trenton Irwin just got a game ball, stepping up, getting his first touchdown. Mike Thomas steps up. Trent Taylor steps up.

You know, so we've got a lot of faith in that entirety of that room. And those guys stepped up. Trayveon Williams, when his number was called, I think his first carry was an eight-yard, tough run. Almost broke another one there. I think he maybe had two or three carries.

So, again, just the depth has really stepped up. And they're guys that we've had in the building for a really long time and so we've got a lot of faith in them for that reason.

Q. (Question concerning the Bengals' running backs.)

ZAC TAYLOR: We got great players. We got great players. And those guys understand what the standard is and they live up to it every single week. They put in the work consistently, which is just great for me to see as a coach.

So when their number's called, Burrow's got the faith to find a way to get it to them. And they can step up to the plate and deliver for this team.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah, I mean, we feel like we've been winning a lot of games as of late, I know that one got away from us. But I thought we played good football today.

You know, it's not perfect. But I thought we handled the conditions really well. We were mentally ready for it. We were ready for what they threw at us defensively. I thought our guys did a great job handling that. It's a really good defense.

And so, again, I'm really pleased with today. But that doesn't mean we're going to be pleased with next Sunday. We got seven days of work we've got to put in to go play a really good Tennessee Titans team on the road. And it's probably gonna be a similar style in terms of the physicality that we faced today.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah, I mean, there's nothing we can do about the earlier part of the season and the ones that got away from us. We can just focus on the present.

And I thought our guys did a great job of just having a very narrow focus this week and doing everything it took to feel like we feel in that locker room. That was our message, that was our theme.

We congratulated each other in the locker room and let's be ready to move on to next week. And so, I'm really happy to see that those guys are enjoying it right now.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Yeah, these conditions weren't great. The field isn't great. He just stepped up and delivered. I thought Drue Chrisman did a nice job. It's not the greatest conditions for him either. And did a great job with the holds and had a great punt there.

That punt had them inside the 10-yard line. And then Cal, you know, all three of those guys really stepped up and did their jobs and got us a win.

Q. Zac, who else got game balls besides Trent?

ZAC TAYLOR: The two sack masters there, the Bash Brothers, Trey and Sam. They gave us a lot of momentum there in the second half. And then we gave -- you know, the guys that had a big production on offense, there was several of those guys.

Q. Zac, can you provide us some insight on what happens with Burrow and some of the batted passes and if there's anything you can do as a quarterback or is that just --

ZAC TAYLOR: They're great at us. It's not just us. You know, you watch every game that they play, they do a great job at it. And, you know, I think Myles Jack got one of them on a twist. So some of them, you

know, you're watching. And they're in twist, they're engaging the line. And then they're throwing their hand up at the last second.

The Watt brothers have always been tops in the league. My first game in the NFL, JJ Watt, I think, batted four passes when he played for the Texans. And I thought this is going to be terrible coaching in this league if that's what defensemen's do every snap.

And TJ really -- you know, LC had a -- was all over him, pushing him. And how he got the ball off, I will never understand. But they do a great job with that. That's something that they probably emphasize. They've got great pros upfront that do a good job batting balls.

Q. What stood out to you with the blocking on those first two touchdowns that Samaje had, especially the first one? What do you think of that and how do you compare that from the performance from week one from the offensive line?

ZAC TAYLOR: I think the first one was a screen. And those guys did a great job in space. So it would have been Cappa and Ted probably were leading the charges there. And they did a great job. It's really the same -- it might have been the same exact call we had against Kansas City on the road last year. Same touchdown, same situation.

Those guys in front did a great job. And Samaje is really in phase with them to allow -- to read their blocks and set it up and get to the pylon.

Q. Let's talk about the 93-yard touchdown drive. You also had the 92-yard touchdown drive, I think in the second quarter. As a defense that doesn't give those up, I think you guys only faced one third down in all those two drives. Is that as in rhythm as the offense has felt?

ZAC TAYLOR: I thought so. I thought it was easy to call. I just felt like it was going our way. And there was a whole range of play calls we were engaged in there. And our guys really responded.

I wouldn't say we got consistent looks. You know, they were really changing up their fronts and coverages and playing different personnel groupings, even on second down.

And I thought our guys did an awesome job managing that and allowing us to save some flow there without the third downs that we ran into.

Q. What switched offensively in the first half? Big difference between the first half and second half.

ZAC TAYLOR: Better communication. Better communication. I think that was the biggest thing.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: I feel like we've had good momentum. This team's in a really good place. And so, again, we feel like we played really good football most of the last several weeks we've had.

And this is the expectation when we go on the road, that we find wins in this division this way. I know the guys are going to be excited to get cranked up and go back to Tennessee next week. It's going to be a hard fought game. And our guys are ready for it.

Q. (Question about the Bengals' offensive line.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Awesome. I really thought they did a tremendous job. And, you know, it gave us time. That's a great front. They brought a lot of pressures. They really did a great job with the protection plan and the communication over the course of the game in a tough environment -- tough, noisy environment.

It's two sacks. And, again, I know one of them was Joe trying to turn it into a draw. And the other one was a really extended third down. I think they did a good job for the most part and he was just trying to make a play and got taken down. And so, I thought those guys did a really nice job upfront.

Q. (No microphone.)

ZAC TAYLOR: Off the top of my head, I couldn't tell you how much. But, you know, we always -- it depends on the concepts sometimes when we're trying to buy a bit more time.

Q. Talking about that sack, how comfortable did Joe Burrow look in the pocket? It seemed like he was really moving around, doing what he wanted from the beginning really up until just that 93-yard drive like you said.

ZAC TAYLOR: He's always comfortable. You know, it's -- the whole world could be falling down around him and that just goes into his preparation and what makes him so great. And, again, he's a special player. We're lucky to have him. Thank you.