



Las Vegas Raiders Transcript

Raiders Interim Head Coach Antonio Pierce

Q: You made the decision this week to put Bo Hardegree up in the box. Obviously, that had an impact. I'm just curious about what went into you making that decision? The second part of that question is: I talked to you this week about attacking down the field and you said, 'That's what we have to do.' Can you talk about how you addressed it with the team and how they responded, sir?

Coach Pierce: "First, for Bo [Hardegree], it's just something I thought about over some time. It's been building up and obviously after last week's performance we needed to make a change. And I think it worked out well for us. To your second question, I've been saying every week that's the plan. A young quarterback, you got to let it go and tonight he did. And second play of the game, boom, we took a shot. Yeah, it wasn't completed, but that set the tone and you can see what we were going to do the rest of the game. Obviously, there was more opportunities later in the game. We have a lot of skilled players that we know, and it just takes confidence. I wish we could do it day one, I wish we could just draw it up and it's that easy, but obviously it took us six games to do it and I hope that's part of what's going forward the rest of the year."

Q: Was there a sense of catharsis in terms of getting a lot of the frustrations out by the players? We had almost everyone on the scoreboard tonight.

Coach Pierce: "We talked about just having a short-term memory. I'm going to reference what Davante [Adams] said last week, we were on the wrong side of history. Well, we're on the right side now. And that's the way we want to be. But it's like anything, turnovers, points, they always come in bunches and for us it became a frenzy, right? You saw it on defense. You saw it on offense. Special teams jumped in it. Just look at the sideline. I think if you're going to watch the game, if you didn't see it, you can just hear it. There was a lot of energy down there by those guys. Hats off to our team, they responded four days after what just happened here previously."

Q: What was it like knowing that you guys scored a franchise history as 63 points?

Coach Pierce: "We knew at halftime what the record was. I was made aware of it, and we wanted to be aggressive regardless of what the score was, even if we only had 21 or 10. We were going to be aggressive and that was our mindset. I talked to our team about it last week about playing better in the second half and I thought we did. This one was playing a full second half and not lifting off the gas pedal and hats off to them because that was their mindset."

Q: What does this win do for the confidence of the team and the coaching staff?

Coach Pierce: "Big. Obviously, it doesn't matter who you play, it's hard to score 60-plus points in the National Football League. But I think just seeing the guys understand that if we execute and we do things the right way...you hear it all the time, right? It's kind of a cliché, believe in the process, and I think the guys have done that. They bounced back and like I told them on Tuesday, because I'll be honest, we were all down. I was down, I was into it, and the best thing that they did was they came to work and their mindset, their mentality, their energy, their bounce in the building, the way they were talking...I had to slap myself and get out of the funk. And they got me out of the funk. I told them that on Tuesday, I told them that again today. Hats off to our players because that's what leaders and real men do. They bring others along with them, they brought me along and hell, we kicked some ass today."



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Q: You and Jack Jones go back a long way. He obviously had the pick-six. Can you just talk about the growth that you've seen in Jack Jones?

Coach Pierce: I've seen that two or three times to be honest with you, which is crazy. I've seen him do it in high school, I've seen him do it in college, and then to see him do it in here and we just got into it because he was getting into it with the refs and the other team, and I told Davante [Adams] to go tell him to shut up. And I was going to pull him, then the next play he makes the play, then I had to really pull him because I knew he was going to really act a fool. But man, this is a talented individual. When we brought him in, I told Mr. [Mark] Davis and Champ [Kelly], this is a guy that just needs some love and maturity. He needs a good locker room around him, which we have, and he has really blossomed here and I'm glad that he's a Raider.

Q: Could you please talk about the backup offensive linemen who came in and performed well? And just the pride that you have in the guys and the next man up mentality?

Coach Pierce: Yeah, I'm going to start with Jermaine [Eluemunor]. He got a lot of slack and people got after that that first game, right? Six sacks, bench him, do this and that. And listen, it was his birthday yesterday, and I said, best way to celebrate your birthday is blow out them candles right there on 52, and he did a hell of a job on that man. I think all those guys amongst the offensive line and to our offensive line coach Carmen [Bricillo] and Cam [Clemmons], they've done an excellent job of just getting the next man ready. We've been rotating guys throughout practice. It came to fruition last week, short week this week, Dylan [Parham] went in there and did a hell of a job at center. Took Greg [Van Roten] out at guard, put another guy in there. I mean, you couldn't tell. Be honest, that's coaching and that's guys buying into what the coaches are saying, all the stuff that we've been doing it came to fruition tonight."

Q: How can you bottle something like tonight and take it on the road with you?

Coach Pierce: I'll be honest, we're going to treat this game like we did every game this year that I've been a part of, at least with me at the helm. Short-term memory. I gave them victory Friday off tomorrow. We got a Christmas party; we're going to enjoy it. Give them a couple of days off. We'll come back and get ready for these World Champs. We played them here tough and maybe let an opportunity slip by and we'll move on to the next one. That's just what we've been doing. The biggest window in front of us is the front, not worrying about what's behind us.

Q: Aidan O'Connell after the last game said he believed he was the guy. He had confidence in himself no matter what happened. You went with him tonight and he gave it back to you in terms of how he played. Can you just talk about what you saw from him?

Coach Pierce: I never lost confidence. There was a lot of questions asked throughout the week and I made it very clear, and I believe it was yesterday, that I've never wavered on anything. You asked me a question and I said, yeah, I'll keep evaluating this if that's what you want to ask me, I'll look into it. But I made that decision with Aidan [O'Connell] when I first took over, and I don't think you ever go back on your gut. And Aidan is a rookie. When I was a rookie and I played, I made mistakes. I had ugly games and it's hard to play the position he plays, he's going to have rough days and he had a rough day on offense last week. But you know what he did on Monday? His ass was the first one in the building. Know what he did yesterday? He's the last one in the building, he didn't leave. He stayed there all day until he got it right. Same thing today, didn't leave the building all day today after our morning meeting. So, here's a guy, he has a great opportunity, no different than me, and he's taking advantage of it, and tonight he's on the winning side.



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Quarterback Aidan O'Connell

Q: I know Antonio Pierce talked to you this week, can you talk about what he said and how this team responded?

O'Connell: "Just super proud of our guys for executing well. I think we were almost spared to have a short week here, so we couldn't really think about what happened and we had to move on. Just getting to move on from everything that happened on Sunday was great for us, and to be able to do this is pretty awesome. Every phase did a really good job, and it was really fun to watch and fun to be a part of."

Q: Talk about the offensive line giving you so much time to throw the football?

O'Connell: "Yeah, like you said, they did an awesome job. Bo [Hardegree] did a great job of switching up, getting the ball out of my hands quick and also trying to call some shots. It was a great job by everybody involved, especially the offensive line. They fought their butts off again. They don't score points like that, they're not the ones scoring touchdowns, they're just doing the dirty work. So, super proud, we had obviously some new guys in there as well. So, really, they led the way tonight."

Q: Down two starters on that offensive line, can you talk about the performance of the guys and the next man up mentality?

O'Connell: "Yeah, I think it's that exactly. I think we've been trying to do that all year and the coaches have done a great job. Coach Carm [Carmen Bricillo] has done a great job preparing those guys in practice and just throughout the week to be ready to go. And so, like you said, it's next man up, guys have to step up when their number is called. And those guys didn't blink, so super proud of those guys."

Q: Can you talk about what happened tonight? What happened that made it click tonight?

O'Connell: "Yeah, sometimes the stars just align. Tre's [Tucker] first touchdown, it was really just a perfect play call, the look that we wanted is the one we got. And so, Bo [Hardegree] did a great job of working hard to try to get that look and calling the play at the right time. And so, like I said, it's a group effort. Bo called a great play, offensive line protected, Tre did a great job, and the rest of the guys did as well. So, it's fun when everything comes together like that."

Q: How important was it to get that lead?

O'Connell: "Yeah, besides last week, I think we've been doing a good job of starting fast. And I think both sides of the ball really started fast this game. An offensive score and the defense held and got turnovers, it's huge. It feeds your confidence when you know the other side of the ball is playing well. And so, it was like I said, a full team effort. Starting fast is really important, but you got to maintain it and I thought we did that."

Q: Can you talk about the chemistry between yourself and Tre Tucker and Michael Mayer, and how you guys continue to develop and build that connection?

O'Connell: "Yeah, I came in with those guys and we were even talking today and yesterday about how far we've come and how different it is now compared to what it was when we first got here and in training camp and stuff. And the NFL is really hard, it's hard in your first year. And so, to be able to go through it with those guys and share similar experiences has been awesome. They both work super hard, they stay late. I throw to Tre after practice all the time. Mike is always in the facility getting work, watching film, and so it's really fun to see both those guys succeed."



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Q: Jakobi Meyers had a quarterback rating of 131 tonight. Is he now an honorary member of the quarterback room this week?

O'Connell: "I definitely think so. I think it was even before tonight, Kobs can really throw the ball. Sometimes we try to tell him not to because it makes us look a little bad, but he can roll out of bed and spin it and throw it pretty far. So, yeah, I mean, the one double pass, it wasn't supposed to be like that, and him and Tae [Davante Adams] just made a play. Those guys are pretty fun to watch, it's pretty special just watching guys like that play football."

Q: After last week's loss, you mentioned you still had confidence in yourself. And after a game like this, what does it do to validate the kind of growth you've had this season?

O'Connell: "Yeah, I think you try not to get too high, try not to get too low. This week, Jimmy [Garoppolo] actually really helped me a lot. We had some good discussions about just what the NFL is, how hard it is every week, how hard it is to bounce back after a game like that. But it's week to week, anything can happen. And so, I have great guys in my corner, Brian [Hoyer] and Jimmy are both super supportive and are helping me just kind of tread through the waters here in my first year."

Q: Can you talk about the crowd tonight? I mean, they were electric and probably one of the best crowds since you've been here. Could you discuss the crowd and the fans?

O'Connell: "Yeah, I think for the fans, after what happened on Sunday, to come back out and show their support and it was like four minutes left and we were obviously up big and it was a third down in the red zone and the Chargers were on offense and I just looked around like, 'How are this many people still here and being this loud?' And so, we have awesome support from our fans. Like I said, especially coming off a tough week. We appreciate them a lot and they were rowdy from the get-go."

Wide Receiver Davante Adams

Q: I don't know if that was pent up frustration, anger, whatever it is from Sunday to today, but that was quite the turnaround. What was behind it?

Adams: "We just had a lot to prove to ourselves. It had nothing to do with any of the external stuff. Obviously, we didn't play to our standard last week and having a short week, we talked about in the presser, that's kind of what you want, to be able to have opportunity to come back and right the wrongs and be on the right side of history. So, it's good to come in here and do something that no team has done as a Raider and put up that many points, so it's big for us."

Q: On both sides of the ball, a lot of young players really stepped up out there. Obviously, you did your thing too, but how pleasing is it to see some of the young kids growing up and contributing the way they did?

Adams: "I mean, it's an even better feeling than when myself or any of the vets that have been doing it a long time, the young guys are the ones that you need. Some of those guys that may not be scheming for the same way that they would be for me, they might end up with more opportunities. Just getting the ball in their hands and letting different guys make plays, whether it's in the run game, pass game, whether it is some of our guys up front. That is what we need to keep that momentum going and finish off the year the right way."



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Q: Where does Jakobi Myers in his career perfect passer rating rank amongst the quarterbacks you caught touchdowns from?

Adams: "That's amazing, man. We were talking about it because EB [Edgar Bennett] my receiver coach was saying that his QBR was like 120 or something, he was one-for-one and had a touchdown. So, it was good to see Kob [Jakobi Meyers] go out there and throw one, glad I was able to get in. The first pass on the sideline, we worked on that in practice and it kind of broke down the same way as it did there, so it's a real gratifying feeling to see those type of plays pays off."

Q: There was video view kind of you rocking out on the sideline.

Adams: "I was trying to channel my inner Marshawn [Lynch], I know y'all remember him on the sideline at Oakland. So, it's a good feeling to go out there and have some fun. Regardless of personal success or whatever it is, that's the type of feeling that you want to have on the sideline, everybody's smiling. When all three phases come together and can play ball like that together makes it fun."

Q: What does it say about you guys with the bounce back you had when just four days ago you were shut out?

Adams: "Shows the resilience that we have as a group, you can easily let something like that get in your head and throw off the rest of the season. But to bounce back, like you said, with just a short amount of time in front of you, that's the type of response that we need. Going through adversity, it's not going to be perfect, but you got to find a way to battle through it and still come out on top."

Q: What does it say about Antonio Pierce as a leader in that situation?

Adams: "AP's [Antonio Pierce] a dog, man. When you've been in the shoes that we're in now, it helps a lot. He understands the mindset, he understands the goal that we have as a team, and I think everyone has rallied around him real tight to make sure he knows that we got his back. He has our back, we have his back, we just got to do this thing together."

Wide Receiver Tre Tucker

Q: What was it like just kind of bouncing back from the previous week and now having this big win?

Tucker: "It feels great. Obviously, we scored zero points and lost 0-3, that's a feeling you don't want to have. Luckily it was a short week, so we were able to kind of turn things around fast and focus on our execution which is what we did this game."

Q: How much was it to get this one for head coach Antonio Pierce?

Tucker: "Everything. And I think we just respond to him well. He brings it every day. So, for us, like I said, what you saw on the field is a product of him."

Q: How did it feel to get in the end zone? And were you sure it wasn't going to be overturned? What was that like in the in the moment?

Tucker: "I don't even know at this point. I don't know. But I have to do a better job focusing on the ball. It's not that I don't trust myself, it's just sometimes, in those situations, you kind of get googly eyed. I kind of settled in and obviously the second it got called, I wanted to make sure I landed in because in the NFL, you have to have two feet down and you cannot bobble the ball."



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Q: It looks like your role has increased as the season is going on. What's going into your development and just gaining more confidence throughout the year?

Tucker: "I think it kind of started back when Josh [McDaniels] was here. For me, a great coach. He pushed me really hard. He told me I was drafted high here for a reason and I came to play. So, just understanding that my role is what I make it, those were his exact words, 'My role is what I make it.' So, obviously through training camp, preseason, I had a few ups and downs. But each and every week, I've just gotten better and that's a credit to obviously Tae [Davante Adams]. He's like a big brother. EB [Edgar Bennett], Kob [Jakobi Meyers]. Those guys push me to be better every day."

Q: You and Aidan O'Connell both had a night tonight. What can you say about the connection between you two?

Tucker: "Aidan is my guy. We were actually just reminiscing about some of the rookie things we had to do earlier in the year. Sometimes when you have a special connection off the field, it kind of boosts your connection on the field. So, I trust him, I know he trusts me. He's a great guy, he works really hard. I can't tell you a time I haven't seen him being the first in the building. I'm usually one of the first people in the building, but he's always there. I haven't beaten him all season, so he works hard day and night. He deserves it."

Defensive Tackle John Jenkins

Q: Take us through that moment, I mean what goes through your head?

Jenkins: "Listen, me being a nose tackle a lot of times when we pick up the ball, the referee always blows the whistle and they don't believe we're in the right. But for the first time, I just kept on going. I saw my dog Maxx [Crosby] gave me the green light, and I just took off and I didn't tilt my head back and just kept on going."

Q: Broadcast said they had you clocked at 17 miles per hour?

Jenkins: "I thought I was a little faster, but what can I say. Just next year, hopefully, be a little lighter. I'm probably the heaviest guy to run a touchdown in the NFL."

Q: Did you know you had a touchdown right away?

Jenkins: "Oh, yeah, I had Maxx [Crosby] right next to me. I'm looking at the Jumbotron too. I was aware of my surroundings and kept my head on the swivel. So, that's how I knew it was six."

Q: When's the last time you scored a touchdown?

Jenkins: "College. College, yeah. So, now I can honestly say besides peewee, I scored on every level. So, it's a blessing, man. I can't even lie."

Q: What did it feel like getting this victory especially after coming off that loss on Sunday?

Jenkins: "I mean, it felt good, right? It's been tough. It's been an up and down situation for us. But at the end of the day, you can tell we still have the locker room, we still enjoy one another. We still have that bond and we're still building together. So, we enjoy it, we're just taking it day by day, minute by minute, game by game."



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Q: How'd you guys turn things around so quickly on a short week?

Jenkins: "Stay focused, stay focused. You never know what's going to happen. We just came out swinging."

Q: Is it safe to say you guys played hard for Antonio Pierce?

Jenkins: "Yeah, we played hard for everybody, man. Whoever is in this building, we're playing for, that's how we are. Everybody can see it, no matter win or lose, we're just going out there swinging every chance we get and every opportunity we have."

Cornerback Jack Jones

Q: Take us through that interception. What did you see in that play?

Jones: "First of all, I want to give it off to Coach PG [Patrick Graham]. He made a great call and just from my personal feelings, I've been feeling like the last two games he'd been calling great calls. I just gave kudos to him. What I saw as far as a player, four strong, running back at one, motion into a bunch, I have to go steal that because nine times out of ten, that's a screen."

Q: Last week, you had your hands on the ball and let it get away. What did you think this week when you were able to get it?

Jones: "Can't let it get away this time. Last week, I was maybe a step away. This week, I had to fine tune all of my techniques and everything I had to do just to make that play."

Q: What did it feel like when you're in the end zone and you hear the crowd cheering you on?

Jones: "That's cool, but I want to win. Winning feels way better. We were kicking ass."

Q: What did it feel like winning like that, especially after coming off that Sunday game?

Jones: "I feel like that's big for us. As far as the team, last week we put up zero, this week we put up 63. That is a big turnaround. That's probably the biggest turnaround in the NFL. Don't quote me, but possibly, we up there. That's great, as long as we keep heading in and trending in the right direction then we are doing something."

Q: How did you guys do that in such a short week?

Jones: "Come together. It's about believing in one another, believing in the coaches, believing in the process."

Q: A bunch of young players, yourself included stepped up tonight, making plays all over the field, how good does it feel to be part of a young foundation?

Jones: "It is just the start of it, man. We're getting going. We're putting our foot in the door and we're going to make some noise."

Q: Is it safe to say you guys are playing hard for Antonio Pierce?

Jones: "Yeah, of course. I know me, I'm balls to the wall. I can't speak for everybody else, but from what I'm seeing, of course, yeah, we all out."



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Q: What does Antonio Pierce mean to you?

Jones: "He means everything to me. He feels like a father figure. Just from high school all the way up until now, mentoring me through the ups and downs. He's a big piece of my life."

Q: Did you feel like you had an opportunity to kind of reward him for the team bringing you in off waivers?

Jones: "Oh, yeah, definitely. Without him, who knows where I'd be. It is great to be in Vegas."

Q: When you were in the air, were you thinking about the ball behind you to reach back, or was it all just kind of one motion?

Jones: "I'll be honest, when I jumped it, in my head, 'I was like, damn, I overran it.' So, I reached back and was like, 'I stuck, oh yeah.'"

Chargers Head Coach Brandon Staley

Q: At halftime, you said the team wasn't ready to play. Why do you think that was?

Coach Staley: "I don't know. We just didn't have a good game tonight. We didn't have it from the beginning to the end. It's just one of those games where nothing went right for us. We got a good group of guys, but it was just one of those games where all three phases, the worst thing happened to us tonight."

Q: Is that a reflection on the coaches?

Coach Staley: "It's a reflection on all of us."

Q: Do you feel like that happened tonight in terms of your messaging not coming across?

Coach Staley: "We didn't play well enough. Like I said, nothing went right for us tonight. I thought the guys at the end did a good job of hanging tough and putting some good drives together on both sides of the ball. But like I said in that first half, it's the worst that you can play, and it was in all three phases, and I take full responsibility."

Q: How did you feel about the effort?

Coach Staley: "I don't question the effort of our guys."

Q: Why not?

Coach Staley: "I know those guys. I have been with most of them for three years, and I know them inside and out. I'm with them every single day. So, this was just a really bad game in the NFL where nothing went right and everything goes wrong. This is the tough side of things."

Q: Do you personally feel there's a disconnect between yourself and the locker room with the players?

Coach Staley: "I don't."



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Q: Do you expect to be the coach here tomorrow?

Coach Staley: "I don't know."

Q: Do you think you should be?

Coach Staley: "Yes."

Q: Why?

Coach Staley: "I know what I've done here for three years, and I know what I've put into this. I know what we're capable of. I know the type of coach that I am, and I believe in myself. But again, this isn't about me. This is about a group that's hurting in there. We got to get some rest and we have to get ready for Buffalo."

Q: Why do you still believe that guys still believe in you and that you can go back in there and lead this team for the rest of the season?

Coach Staley: "You'll go talk to the guys after this. You'll be able to hear from them, and I know these guys really well."

Q: At halftime, what did you what did you say to them down 42-0?

Coach Staley: "I said that everything that could have gone wrong went wrong for us, and we got to go out in the second half and play for pride and make sure that we finish this game the right way so that we can look at each other at the end of the game knowing that we gave the game everything we had. And that's what that group did in the second half."

Q: What could you have done differently in preparation to get these guys better prepared to play tonight?

Coach Staley: "Everything. I didn't do anything well enough to get us ready to play tonight."

Q: If that's the case, then why should you be the coach?

Coach Staley: "Games like this happen in the NFL to every coach that's ever coached in this league. You can look at any great coach that's ever coached in the league, sometimes games like this happen. And I don't need to retrace history, but it's part of sports. Sometimes there are games where it doesn't go right, none of it, and you got to put it behind you and move on to the next thing."

Q: It doesn't happen like this. 42-0 at halftime, that's only happened twice since 2000. The last time it happened was 2014, so this is not a normal occurrence.

Coach Staley: "No, tonight was not a normal occurrence. Everything that could have gone wrong in all three phases went wrong."

Q: Was there any sense at all before the game that this could be coming?

Coach Staley: "Our guys did a good job in the two days that we had preparation. We took the plan with the right mindset. I thought we had good enough plans to win, but that wasn't the case."



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Q: For this to happen against the Raiders, obviously, if you're a football fan you know how important this rivalry is to the organization. How much more does it sting for a game like this to happen against your biggest rivals?

Coach Staley: "Yeah, I hate it for our fans. I hate it for our fans, I hate it for the players because I know what they're putting into this. I know what this season has been. We've fallen short, but we've been in the fight every week until this one. This one stings because we haven't had a game like this. And again, I take full responsibility. I really care about that group of men in that locker room. I believe in them. We're going to get some rest and we're going to get ready for Buffalo."

Q: Do you expect to have a conversation with ownership at some point in the next 24 hours?

Coach Staley: "I always have conversations 24 hours after the game with the owners."

Q: Are you expecting to have a conversation about your future?

Coach Staley: "Every time there's a game, we unpack it. Every single time. So, this will be nothing new tomorrow. We'll unpack the game, and we'll talk about what we need to do moving forward."

Quarterback Easton Stick

Q: Just take us through the night. First half was probably bad on all three levels, but just what did you guys say at halftime and maybe what adjustments did you make in the second half?

Stick: "Just to keep fighting, there's nothing else you can do. There's no 42-point play or whatever it was. You just play one at a time and guys have a lot of pride, and so that's what we did."

Q: The three turnovers in the first half, just how deflating is that since it seemed like most of the game was played on your side of the field?

Stick: "Yeah, it's tough when you go down three turnovers in a half and tarts with me. I put the one on the ground and ultimately it starts and ends with me. So, yeah, really frustrated."

Q: On that fumble of yours, could you feel the blindside pressure or what happened there?

Stick: "Yeah, just trying to step up and he got his hands on it. I got to be stronger with the ball. I can't put the ball on the ground. That's all it is."

Q: And then what did you see on that first touchdown pass to Joshua Palmer?

Stick: "Kellen [Moore] had a good call on it and it looked like they had some miscommunication and Josh was able to hit a big one."

Q: What can you take from the last two quarters of this game with the three touchdowns to maybe try to build going into next Saturday against Buffalo?

Stick: "Well, I think it just shows the type of guys we have. We weren't going to quit. We didn't quit. We got three more football games, so we'll regroup and get ready to go."

Q: What do you hope to kind of show these last three games?

Stick: "Yeah, I'm not sure, but we just got to go fight. We play them one at a time. Tonight was really, really tough for a lot of reasons, so we'll regroup and get ready to go again."



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Q: How much did your group kind of still believe in the coaches and have confidence since there's been a lot of talk about Brandon Staley's future?

Stick: "Yeah, we're not worried about that. We love coach, I love coach. Tonight was really tough and we're the ones on the field, and so it starts with me at quarterback putting the ball on the ground and turning it over."