

Washington Football Team Postgame (vs. NYG) Transcripts: HC Ron Rivera

October 18, 2020

Q: Could you start with Kyle Allen's day and what you thought of him?

A: I thought Kyle's day was good with the exception of the two takeaways, he's got to do a little better with the ball. On the interception, he misread the coverage. Initially, it looked like they were in man and they ended up in zone, so he got fooled on that a little bit. You've got to give them credit for what they did in terms of disguising. Then on the fumble, when the guy is trying to escape and make a play, he's got to protect the ball better. But I thought he had a very productive day; he moved us when we had to get moved, he threw touchdown passes when we needed scores. And unfortunately, we came out on the short end, and that's disappointing. I really thought we had a chance to win this game. We played to win. At the end, I went for two because I believe the only way to learn to win is to play to win.

Q: Obviously you're trying to win a football game, you go for two at the end, was there a bigger picture in mind, was there a message you were trying to send to your team there?

A: I told them in the locker room, I said guys, I play to win. I told you guys that's a part of my philosophy, the only way to learn to win is to play to win, and that's what I want those guys to understand, that's the mentality. Some of those fourth downs, I went for it because I believe that, again, that's the mentality, we have to do certain things to win football games, and if taking a gamble is part of it, that's what I'm doing.

Q: Did you consider at all not going for it on that play, that two-point conversion? Or was it solid, I'm going for it?

A: I'm going for it. Because, again guys, as I said, the intent is to learn how to win football games.

Q: What was the play call there? What did you want to have on that play?

A: What it was was an opportunity. The play call called for a couple of things: if he had a certain read, he would work a certain side. If he had a pressure, he had a hot. So we tried to cover the basics of what they could potentially do, and that was zone or man or pressure, and he made the call. If he had a little bit more time, I didn't see who it was, but he had someone in the back of the end zone that he could've tried to fire it to. Unfortunately, as he started to roll out, he got a little bit of pressure.

Q: Were guys on the sideline asking to go for it as well?

A: I think the players wanted to go for it. But again, it was my decision and like I said, I'm going to go for it. When you're on the road, I believe overtime favors the home team. When you're on the road, my mentality is that if you're down there, and you need two yards, you got to go for it.

Q: You brought in Deshaun Everett this week and said you wanted more out of the linebackers. Did you get what you were looking for defensively?

A: I thought we got a pretty good game out of Deshaun (Everett), I've got to take an opportunity to watch that on tape. As far as linebackers were concerned, I thought we had some good things. There are some other things we have to take a look at, and really this game came down to the two takeaways. We turned the ball over twice and you can't do that and expect to win unless you take the ball back, and we didn't do that.

Q: You mentioned the two fourth downs earlier in the game, I'm curious about your thought process on not taking the ball on the punt to the one and then going for it on 4th and 4. Could you take us through what you were thinking and how you thought that out?

A: I looked at the opportunity for us to go for a first down that would give us an opportunity for a touchdown. That was all my thought process was. I thought we were in position, I thought we were capable of moving the ball, I just felt that we had to score a touchdown to put ourselves in position to be competitive in the second half.

Q: Did Kyle Allen show enough to retain the starting job for next week?

A: Yeah, I would like to believe so. His statistics are pretty darn good, he was 31 of 42 for 280 yards. Unfortunately, he did have the interception and the fumble, but we totaled 337 total yards. That gives us an opportunity, if we're scoring points, to be competitive in a game, and I think we got what we wanted out of it in terms of being competitive.

Q: You talked about contending for the NFC East title a few weeks ago. Regardless of the results from the rest of the division, has back to back losses altered your opinion?

A: No, it hasn't, because it's about what happens in a division. Right now, we're 1-5, (the Giants) are 1-5, we got to see what happens to Philadelphia and Dallas, and then we play Dallas next week. It hasn't changed my opinion, I still feel the same way, and we'll see what happens, that's why we're playing these games.

Q: Kendall (Fuller) has had a pretty good streak these three games with four interceptions and half the team's turnovers. Could you discuss what kind of juice he gives the defense, and also I saw him playing a little free safety, could you talk about moving him around a little bit?

A: He's a very headsy player. He's a guy, with his skillset, we have to put him in position to make plays. So what you saw was an opportunity for us to bring in an extra DB, take a linebacker out, so we had an extra DB for coverage, to put our best guy who plays with vision back at the safety position, in Kendall, and obviously it paid off for us. I believe on the touchdown at the back of the endzone, I believe we were in a specific defense that put him at free safety.

Q: On the two-point conversion, did you think Kyle (Allen) had room to scramble to try to get to the pylon after the initial break?

A: Yes, and then again, we have to take a look at it. The one thing he has to think about is, once you commit, you have to go one way or another. Either commit to the throw or commit to the run. Now everything else has to unfold, and you can go from there. And that's one thing I know Scott (Turner) will talk to him about, Kenny (Zampese) will talk to him about. Once you break contain, you have to commit one way or another.

Q: When you make that decision (two-point conversion) and it doesn't work, does that eat at you or are you content because of what you're trying to establish long term?

A: It'll eat at me because we lost. I want to win, at the end of the day, that's why. Like I said, I'm playing to win. I'm trying to get our players to understand that's how we're going to do things. We're going to do things to the max. We're going to play to win football games. It's going to bug me because we lost. It really does, it pisses me off, I want to win football games. I don't care that it's my first year, I don't care that we have a group of young guys that have to learn, we're trying to teach them, we're going to teach them, and they're going to learn how to win and at the end of the day, that's what we're here for.

Q: Did the fact that you guys are only a game out of first place play into your decision to go for the two-point conversion?

A: No, because you never know. Let's say we kick the extra point, now we're tied. They toss the coin and get the ball and drive down and score a touchdown. Or, we could get the ball and drive down and score

a touchdown. You don't know, you will never be able to tell me you know what will happen. As far as I'm concerned, when you're on the road, our attitude is we're going to play to win. Especially when there's that little time left, a half a minute, why not take that opportunity? Because you may never get back down there.

Q: Going back to the fourth down sequence before halftime, you guys pinned them on the one, which was very good field position, what was it that led you to give your offense that chance?

A: I thought because we moved the ball pretty well and didn't have enough to show for it. I thought again that we could get the first down, I wanted to get the first down. I wanted to put points on the board before half. If you score before the half, you increase your chances to win. That's a part of the attitude and, again, that's what we're looking to do.

Q: One of the matchups to watch was their pass rush versus your offensive line, what did you think of how that played out?

A: I didn't think it was that bad. I think our guys worked hard, I thought we had an opportunity at times to move the ball around, they moved some of their guys around to create different circumstances. They brought pressure a couple times at the right times, and that was tough. So again, I thought it was fair, I thought it was equal, I thought our guys played hard.

Q: Is there anything you say to Kyle Allen on some of those sacks he took this game?

A: Most certainly, you want him to get rid of the ball, but at the same time, you want to protect the ball. And that's what he has to understand. He's done this in the past, where he's fumbled it a couple times. And again, in certain situations, it hurts because it led to points. And in fact, most turnovers lead to points, and that's a tough pill to swallow.

Q: With Kyle, when he throws an interception, he responds well, when he fumbles, he responds well. How do you factor that in when you look at his game?

A: He put 19 points on the board, could've been 20 if we kicked the extra point. But, he did what we needed him to do, and that was, he moved the ball when we had to, he put us in the endzone when he had to have it. He did a lot of positive things, like I said, and going for two and not converting, that's on me, that's my decision, I'll stick with it. Like I said, I really do believe you play to win when you're on the road, as opposed to when you're at home, you take a different approach.

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Q: Could you walk us through that two-point conversion, what you saw there?

A: It looked like they might've been going cover zero on the snap, they bluffed out. I looked around, didn't have much. We had good protection, so I wanted to get out and try to make a play, flushed to the left, and they stuck on our guys good. I thought I might've had a shot to run it in, but I think it was Jabrill (Peppers) took a good angle and ran me down. So it's tough, you want to give our guys a chance to make a play there. I'm glad we went for two, that's our mentality, but I wish we could've gotten it.

Q: On the fumble, was that just a situation where you're trying to make a play and did too much?

A: I'm just trying to step up in the pocket. I was going to tuck the ball as I stepped up. Nice play by them. I can't make that mistake there, it's too late in the game to do that.

Q: You had a number of lengthy drives that didn't turn into points, what was the difference maker?

A: Just need to convert. We'll look at the tape and see what it really was but need to convert. Especially when we cross the 40, it seemed like we stalled a bunch of times when we crossed the 40, not really in good field goal range, and not really in the red zone yet. We'll go back and look at the tape to see what it really was, but we've just got to convert in those situations.

Q: Did you know you were going to go for two all along?

A: I had a feeling, that's kind of how Coach Rivera is. We did that a couple times last year, so I had a feeling we were going to go for it.

Q: What happened on the interception?

A: They dropped down into zone, I thought I had a hole to throw it into and I just tried to force it into a tight window. It was a good play by James (Bradbury), poor decision by me.

Q: Could you walk us through your touchdown pass to Logan Thomas?

A: We've been working on that all week. It was a matchup deal, we got him outside on a safety and I believe Logan can do that stuff all the time. He's kind of like a rebounder, so we wanted to give him a chance. He played off in the endzone, which kind of threw me off at first, but Logan had a great release and just tried to give him a ball he could go up and get, and he made a hell of a play.

Q: When you see Kendall Fuller on the other side of the endzone with that interception setting you guys up to go down the field to get that field goal, could you talk to me about what you saw when he made that interception there?

A: It's huge. Kendall has been the biggest playmaker on our defense so far. It was an unbelievable play, and the spark plug we needed. They were sustaining a long, long drive and I think it was a first down play, too, and he just made that play and totally switched the momentum. So huge play by Kendall, he's been making those all year.

Q: People are going to say you guys lost, you came up empty in the end, but does that touchdown drive to put yourself in the position to tie or win it prove anything about this offense, this team, and specifically you?

A: I don't know, we're just going to keep fighting. If you want to look for something other than a win or a loss, it's that we kept fighting, that's all I know how to do. Just keep fighting. We have to clean up the mistakes, do this and that, and we're working through a lot of things, but I'm proud of the way we fought. I think that's the mentality we're starting to build around here, that's starting to become a part of who we are, and I told the guys that yesterday, too. I was like, 'whatever we do, we have to keep fighting. Whatever it is, we've had a tough year so far, but that's the only thing that's going to keep us together, we keep fighting.'

Q: As someone who's been around Ron (Rivera) for a couple years in the past, what do you think he's trying to pull this team to right now with decisions like the fourth downs and the two points today and everything else over the past few weeks?

A: He said this to us today, he said we came here to win. We didn't come to tie, we didn't come here to lose, we came here to win. And so, I think that's his mentality right now, I think that this division is up for grabs, and I wish we would've won the game today. And so, I think a tie, a loss, that's kind of just been our mentality, we want to win.

Q: When you can play the entire game unlike last week, what changes about your game as you get more in rhythm?

A: I think you start to figure out what defenses are trying to do a little bit more. You start to figure out their game plan, start to figure out who they're trying to take away, what they're trying to do. They switched it up a little late in the second half, but it's good to get settled in, to really be in there for the full game. I heard this from Pete Carroll, he said you don't win in the first, second or third quarter, you win in the fourth. And so, for me, to be able to be in there for the whole time and really try to give us a chance to win in the fourth quarter, that's all I can ask for.

Q: On the two-point conversion, did you think you had a chance to run it in or did Jabrill's angle take that away?

A: Yeah, that's what I said. I didn't think I was going to beat him.

Q: When Ron goes for those decisions like that even if they don't pay off, does it still build something, or is it just results oriented, you didn't get the win, whatever?

A: I don't know if it builds anything, I guess it's a mentality, if anything. We came here to win, and we're either going to win, or we're going to lose, we're not going to tie. I don't know if it builds anything, you want to win the game at the end of the day, no matter what. At the end of the day, people are going to look back on this game at the end of the year and they're not going to say they went for two and missed it, it's just going to show up as an L.