



DENVER BRONCOS vs. WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM

Empower Field at Mile High • Oct. 31, 2021

WASHINGTON HEAD COACH RON RIVERA

On his general thoughts on the game

“Probably just missed opportunities. You get the ball down there and you have to put it in the endzone. Unfortunately, we didn't. We had a couple of opportunities to stop them, and we didn't. When we get those opportunities, we have got to make it.”

On if he's seeing progression that he'd hope to see from this team

“Well, I've seen some things that are positive, and I've seen some things that we need to get better at obviously. That's the big thing that we've got to figure out going forward is, where are we? So, that's the nice thing about having this bye—we'll have the chance to reevaluate, take a look at a lot of things and have a good feeling about where we think we're headed.”

On if the quarterback position needs reevaluation

“Yeah, we'll evaluate all twenty-whatever positions you have.”

On where he believes this team is right now

“I think this team still trying to search and find ourselves more than anything else. That's where we are.”

On how disappointing it is for him to say that after eight games

“I don't think I'm disappointed to say it—I think it's the truth. We are where we are and as I said to you guys before, we're a 2-6 football team right now trying to find ourselves and trying to find our footing. The nice thing about coming out of the bye is we should get a bunch of guys back on the football field. Then we'll see how we do from there.”

On K Chris Blewitt's blocked field goals

“Well, one was low, obviously. The other one, I thought there was a little bit of the operation. So, we'll see when we get a chance to look at him on tape.”

On his message to the team afterwards

“Really, for the most part, it's we've got to stop making it hard on ourselves. We've got to do our jobs. When we take a look at this, we'll realize and recognize and see that. We can't make it harder on ourselves and we can't make the mistakes that we've made. The way I see it right now is that we're making the types of mistakes that don't give you a chance to win—that's something we've got to get corrected.”

On them using a lot of RB Jared Patterson and if that was by design or was RB Antonio Gibson injured

“A little bit of both—just trying to be smart going into this with RB Antonio Gibson. And it did give us an opportunity to see RB Jared Patterson. I thought (Patterson) did some good things. He led us in rushing for the most part. But again, it's one of those things that we've got a good group of backs. We've got some guys that we've got to get the ball in their hands. We'll see how it goes when we get out of this bye.”

On an injury update on C Chase Roullier

“No, he'll be more evaluated when we get back, and then the same thing with [OT] Ereck Flowers [Sr.]”

On if he intends to audition any kickers during the bye week

“As I said, we're going to evaluate all of the positions and then we'll go from there.”

On if he wishes that he went in a different direction with the quarterback position

“No, that's hindsight. That's easy to second guess. I made a decision and I'm going to go with it. Just like the kicker decision. I told you guys that's all me. Okay. We made a decision going forward on the quarterback - we liked a couple of guys. We're not going to mortgage the future because if we put the pieces in place, and then find the guy, we'll feel better with that rather than

having to give up some of the capital that people wanted from us. I wasn't going to give up some of the players people wanted to give up and I wasn't going to give up some of the draft picks people wanted.”

On how he plans to stop a snowball effect

“By making the plays. Third and long—you’ve got to stop them. Third-and-short—you’ve got to convert. That helps. Sometimes when you don’t, they build momentum. Then you’ve got that snowball coming at you. That’s a part of the problem right now.”

On what’s preventing this team from being great

“Those things. We have a protection on, and somebody makes a mistake. We have a particular run defense and have an eight-man box—and then they pop one for a first down. It’s the little things. Now, were there a couple of calls we would have liked to have back? Absolutely. We could have called something different. But, at the same time, we have to execute, and we have got to make sure we’re putting them in position to give them a chance to succeed. You watch some of the guys play and you watch them play hard and you feel bad, because they’re guys that are really giving everything they have, and you know we can be better than we are right now.”

On how disappointing the final few minutes of the game were

Well, I’m either going to be elated, or I’m going to be disappointed. It’s one or the other and that’s the truth. So yeah, I’m disappointed because I wanted to win the football game. I wanted our team to win. And that’s the truth of the matter. If we had done it and completed and scored the touchdown, yeah, we’d be elated. That kind of goes with the with the situation and circumstances.”

On how he reacts to seeing moments where it’s just not there yet for the team

“As I said, when we don’t do the things that we’re supposed to. When we do our thing the right way because it’s the right thing to do? That gives us a chance to win.”

On where the line is between the players executing and coaches unable to get through to them

“Well, right now we’re a young team that’s learning how to mature and that’s what we’re at. We’re going to do the best we can to coach them up and we’ll see what happens. When we come out of the bye, we’ve got a heck of a game coming up with Tampa Bay in two weeks. We’ll show up on Sunday. We’ll play hard. We’ll see what we’ve learned, and we’ll see if we’ve progressed.”

WASHINGTON QUARTERBACK TAYLOR HEINICKE

On his overall assessment of the game

“We moved the ball really well. It’s just the same story as last week. We get down to the red zone and for some reason, we just stall out. Again, we had a lot of guys go down and guys step up and play. We’ll look at the film tomorrow and try and get better.”

On what he thinks the main issues are offensively

“I don’t know. Whether it’s self-inflicted or a sack or a missed throw or a missed block— something. It’s just like coach was saying, everyone’s got to do their job. 11 guys [have] to do their job every play for us to be successful. Again, we’ll look at the film tomorrow and really see what happened, but I just feel like one person here or there or myself we just took turns making a mistake.”

On if there is a point where a flux of in-game injuries starts to become more noticeable

“Yeah maybe but again, during the game, you don’t think of that. We have a lot of trust in everybody that’s dressed and out there. You’re on the team for a reason. It’s because you can play so again like I said before I don’t know exactly what happened out there. Again, I was playing but we’ll look at the film tomorrow and see where things went wrong.”

On the two blocked field goals

“It’s tough. You drive the ball 50-to-60 yards and get in field goal range. To get some field goals blocked, that’s points on the board. Every point matters, so it’s a little deflating but at the same time, I think our offense did a great job of not letting it get to us and continuing to move the ball throughout the whole game. Again, we just fell short.”

On C Chase Roullier and if he’s spoken with him since the game ended

“When I saw him, he was on the ground. It didn’t look good from the moment I was out there. He’s the leader of that line and it’s tough to lose him but [C] Tyler [Larsen] came in did a great job. He really did. Again, it’s not good when you keep losing offensive linemen.”

On what happened during the final offensive drive of the game

“We were kind of in a tough spot. I think we had two timeouts and 18 seconds left. In the first play, I thought I had [WR] DeAndre [Carter] there on the right side. I got a little pressure from the left and got hit while I was throwing. I don’t remember the second or third play. When you’re in that situation you need a touchdown, it’s tough because the defense is just backed up. They know



what's coming, they know that we need to score a touchdown, and it's a tough situation for any offense but again, we should have never been at that point."

On the first fourth-and-three that was not converted

"We liked it throughout practice—we've been practicing that for a couple of weeks now. It was really just a play for me to sprint out and get it to [TE] Ricky [Seals-Jones] there pretty quick and I don't know if it was a d-lineman or a linebacker that got in the lane—my throwing lane to him. I tried to outrun that leverage and give him a shot and he tipped it. The defense made a good play there, so it was unfortunate that that guy made a good play."

On if the defensive pressure caused him to be late on the throw

"Yeah, I wanted to get the ball out there quickly but again, when that linebacker is just looking at me right in my lane, it's tough. I didn't want to float it because that would've [given] the safety a lot of time to come get the tackle. Again, they just played it really well."

On if the bye week is coming at a good time even though they're on a losing streak

"Hopefully it's a good thing. We have a lot of injuries, so it'll be good for them to rest up for a week, week and a half and get back whether it's [G Brandon] Scherff, [TE] Logan [Thomas], or [C] Chase [Roullier]—hopefully it's not too serious. A number of guys. Maybe it's a good thing for us—who knows. I feel like we're just so close to getting that win, so we'll see."

On if he feels like he deserves the starting quarterback position

"It's not my decision. I'm not really going to speak on that because it's out of my hands but the biggest thing I do is I go into that facility every single day and I give it my all and that's all I can do. I control what I can control, and I feel like I've gotten better throughout the weeks and I feel like it's just not been enough lately. Again, every day I'm trying to get better—trying to figure out what I can do to maybe score more points or anything. I try to control what I can control and go from there."

On where the offense has been able to progress since he took over as quarterback

"I feel like in most of the games, we move the ball well. It's not like we're not getting a lot of yards. I think we're driving and sustaining long drives. Again, it's just when we get to that thirty-five-yard line to the twenty [yard line], for whatever reason we just stall out. The name of the game is to score more points than them, so it's something we continue to work on every week and try and get better at."

WASHINGTON WIDE RECEIVER DEANDRE CARTER

On the mood of the locker room

"Yeah, it's frustrating, you know, you get close. In a game like that you get opportunities to win, and you fall short. It hurts. But you know, we've been in this, last year's team was in this position before. We got to come back after the bye and put it together and go on a little run."

On missed opportunities in the red zone

"We just have to execute, especially on that last drive. The drive before the last drive, the third-and-6, the opportunity to score there, I have to score. If I take that upon myself, you know, you get one chance in life, one opportunity in life to do whatever you're going to do, to be whoever you're going to be. To leave whatever legacy you're going to leave. That's a missed opportunity there."

On how they enter the bye week

"We just got to keep playing football. Keep putting it together, keep building, keep getting better. Each and everybody individually, you got to worry about ourselves, each side of the ball. We got to stick together through this, you know, it's a rough time. When we come back after the bye, try to go on a little run. And, you know, see what the season holds."

WASHINGTON SAFETY LANDON COLLINS

On how hard it is to not let frustration seep in

“It’s not too hard. Playing in this game so long, you just try to keep the guys that we need tuned in so we can maybe make those plays that we need to make.”

On whether he saw the current struggles in the preseason

“That’s a good question. I would say that what we did in the preseason isn’t affecting us now. I think just feeling ourselves out and making sure we are accountable and making the plays we need to make is the big thing.”

On whether he thinks guys are accountable

“Yes. We talk to each other; we call each other out. We keep each other accountable on the field so when we get to the sideline, any corrections or even if we have to hold the edge, that’s what we need to do.”

WASHINGTON TACKLE CHARLES LENO JR.

On how hard it’s been with all the injuries on the offensive line

“It’s very tough. It’s part of the game. We just want those guys to come back, hope for speedy recoveries, as fast as possible. Whoever is down, it’s a next man up mentality.”

On how to adjust when new players come into the game

“You just have to do it on the fly. I don’t think I’ve ever played next to [T Saahdiq Charles] in a practice or game situation, but it worked out. We had to do it. I have to do my job and he has to do his job and that’s how you have to make it happen.”

On the offensive struggles near the red zone

“Once we get to the 30-yard line, it’s just putter, putter, putter. I can’t tell you why. That’s something the coaches need to look at on film, but I know for a fact that I need to do a better job. I’m just worried about myself in that situation. I can’t really speak for everyone else but everyone else needs to do their job. I know I need to do a better job, myself, to help the team to score some points.”

On how injuries impact the offensive growth

“Injuries can definitely impact that, but the bye week came at a good time. When you get in those situations that we’ve been in, we are still searching for an identity as an offense, and we need to look at the tape and do some self-scouting and understand what we are really good at and do those things and eliminate all the stuff we’re bad at. I think that will help our offense find an identity and then we will be able to get things rolling in the right direction. Our defense is starting to play really good football and we need to help compliment them.”

WASHINGTON RUNNING BACK J.D. McKISSIC

On where he feels the team needs to improve during the bye week

“It’s a tough time right now. We’ve got to get guys back, get guys healthy. Just focus on us.”

On why he thinks the offense is struggling in the red zone

“We need to get guys on the same page. We just need to finish, everyone needs to execute, including me.”

On what is preventing the team from being on the same page

“Not being focused, not executing. [WR DeAndre Center] Dre had a touchdown that he should have had but I was in the way. I guess I was too tired. I need to finish.”

WASHINGTON DEFENSIVE END CHASE YOUNG

On holding Denver to 17 points but not getting the win

“We’ve got to go back to the drawing board. We’ve got to go back and see what we did wrong, like every week, and make corrections to the best of our ability.”

On whether this year’s start feels different than last year

“Not really. I think it’s the same. We need to go back and review what we did wrong. I feel like last year, I could have felt like this, I could have felt bad, but we have to keep going. I’m not going to stop.”

On whether he is surprised at where the team is at

“I wouldn’t say surprise. I would say in my mind, we can be a lot better. What are we not doing right? That’s what we need to find out. It’s a process.”



On why he would say he's not surprised at where the team is at

“Because this is the NFL. This isn't college at Ohio State where you are going to win every game. We play against guys who are getting paid too, so we just have to be better. I have to be better, we all have to be better.”