



## **WASHINGTON HEAD COACH RON RIVERA**

### **Opening statement:**

“I wanted to say I’m very sorry to hear about what happened to [Bengals QB] Joe Burrow. He’s a heck of a young man and a heck of a football player. I know he’ll be back. Our thoughts and prayers are with him. I just wanted to give a shoutout to the kid.”

### **On both teams supporting Burrow after his injury:**

“It is a fraternity. The neat thing about it is, obviously, these are guys that have played together and against each other for a long time. They know each other and have a tremendous amount of respect. Everybody cares about each other’s career, and I think that’s one of the cool things about this game. You can go out and fight and scratch and claw, but when it’s all said and done, you’re friends. I think that was a good example of sportsmanship. It was just unfortunate. I hate to see a young man like Joe get hurt. Like I said, he’s a heck of a football player and we know he’ll be back.”

### **On the defense taking over the second half:**

“It did. Joe, he’s a very talented player. He understands the game. He understands it better than most people. You bring in the backup who doesn’t get the snaps and doesn’t know what to anticipate and stuff like that, the defense can take advantage. That’s what our defense did. They did take advantage and did get after it. Good for them. It really was good to see them play and to be able to cut it loose.”

### **On getting a win:**

“It feels good. It really does. It feels good. The guys have played well enough to win the last three. Three of the last four or whatever it was. We just hadn’t done it. Today they scratched and clawed a little bit. They were a little out of sync the first half. But again, we tend to play a little better in the second half, which we did. I was just really pleased with the way the guys played.”

### **On QB Alex Smith getting a win:**

“I think – to us as a unit, as a group – just winning is great. We all play this game for our own reasons. Some of us play for our loved ones, some of us play for our family members, some of us play for ourselves. When a guy like Alex who has gone through what he has gets his opportunity to get back on the football field and play well, I think that’s pretty cool. I’m very happy for him and very happy for our football team.”

### **On DE Chase Young:**

“Again, like I said people will be critical. They’re always going to be critical. A lot of people will look for things to point out or people to blame. That’s OK. But I know who we have in terms of the young man he is. I know what he’s going to be for us for a long time. I think he’s done a great job. He played hard. He does things the right way, and he’s learning. He’s going to make mistakes. He’s a rookie. He’s a 21-year old rookie. He’s going to make mistakes. Those things happen. You’ve just got to correct them. You talk to him; you teach him and work with him. Hopefully, he won’t repeat the mistakes. We’ve got a lot of faith in him. Like I said, I believe in what the young man is going to be for us.”

### **On how Young responded to criticism:**

“I’ll be honest with you, I don’t think he really worries about the criticism either. I think probably the only criticism he’s really worried with other than ours is probably his mom. I know she’s a heck of a fan. I know moms are always tough on their boys.”

**On the quick turnaround with a game Thursday:**

“Well, most importantly is making sure that we take care of the players and their bodies and minds. Secondly, get them to know who Dallas is, what they do and how they do it and how we want to attack them. That’s probably the biggest thing, like I said, is really take care of the players, their bodies and their minds just trying to get them back for Thursday.”

**On Smith in the second half:**

“Especially once we got the lead, it was about first downs and grinding it out and not having a mistake. That’s the big thing that we have to do is understand how to win a football game. You’ve got to lead, you’ve got to be methodical, you can’t make mistakes and just grind it out. That’s probably the most important thing that happened in the second half was we grinded it out. We ran the ball effectively. We took what was given to us, we got the first downs. We had a tough penalty on the clip. It looked like, in all honesty, that was [T] David [Sharpe]’s trip. As he was falling, he ended up landing on the guy’s leg. I understand why he threw the flag, but it’s unfortunate. It was the right call. But at the end of the day, moving the way we did, getting ourselves into position the way we did and then putting the points on the board I think was important.”

**On if he saw what he wanted to from the linebackers:**

“I think we did. Again, I just want to see guys out there that are competing. I think guys understood and got the message that we’re going to play different combinations of guys. We’re going to try to get these guys to understand that this is how we want it done. We’ll coach off of this tape.”

**On the division:**

“The biggest thing we’ve got to do is really focus in on the ‘one game at a time’ mentality. That’s what we’ll do, and we’ll see what happens. Again, I look forward to it on Thursday. I look forward to the opportunity to see where we are.”

**On Young’s forced fumble:**

“I’ll tell you, the thing about Chase is he played sideline-to-sideline. He gave you run and hustle and gave you everything he has. That’s why he was able to come to the right side to get to the quarterback and make the play because of his great hustle. As far as that play was concerned, we were very fortunate that the guy knocked the ball out of [S] Kamren [Curl]’s hand before Kam had a chance to possess it. Just heads up by Ronald to get the recovery. It was a good day. It was a good day for us as far as that was concerned.”

**On the linebacker rotation:**

“The packages and you picked up on that. That was something that a lot of times people miss. When you shuffle in different groups of guys, at times, you can change it and give it to a guy and say: ‘This is your package. Own it.’ Some of those guys took it really personal and made sure that they did their jobs and did their jobs well in those packages.”

**On the run game:**

“Yes, that’s what I’d like to see us do is continue to run the ball effectively and be a little more balanced. Again, I think the thing that really, like I said, I get a big kick out of when [Director of Football Communications] Sean [DeBarbieri] hands me the information and I get a chance to look at it. You see how many people get targeted, and that’s why I get a kick out of it. Really being able to distribute the ball so they can’t focus in on the one guy. Running the ball effectively I think is very, very important though.”

**On the second half run game adjustment:**

“Well, I think the biggest thing we did in the second half more so than anything else was we ran the ball much more effectively. I think that really helps. It grinds it out and wears down the opponent. Again, just kudos to our front for blocking the way they did.”

## WASHINGTON QB ALEX SMITH

### **On his first win in two years:**

“It felt really good. Another step, another thing I never thought I’d be doing again. It’s one thing to obviously come out and then even to get playing time and a whole other deal playing football as a starter. Felt like we had one last week get away from us, so it was amazing to get to get a win and it was by putting all the work in. That’s from doing what we do and so obviously a great, great team win today.

### **On playing in the same uniforms from his injury two years ago:**

“Yeah, it was weird all week. You know, obviously when I was in the equipment room all week that I saw the jerseys up. I’m such a big fan of these jerseys, and have been and it was two years ago and, you know, the last time I wore them I got them cut off me in the ambulance. So, fun to be wearing them now obviously grateful for that, to be back out there playing and it was amazing and obviously to get a win. But yeah, eerie and again the same week before Thanksgiving and same uni. Grateful to be here today.”

### **On seeing injuries in the game and the opportunity this team has in front of them:**

“Yeah, I mean I think anytime you go through something like that. I’m so thankful for the opportunity and I’m not looking past each and every single day, just trying to make the most of it. That really is my mentality and one opportunity today was to go out there and play. Enjoy this win a little bit but excited for this next opportunity coming up on the short week to play Dallas on Thanksgiving, obviously pretty special.”

### **On Joe Burrow’s injury:**

“Yeah, I mean feeling for him. Anytime there’s an injury to anybody and you see the cart come out, you’re obviously wishing and hoping for the best. You don’t know what it is from afar and certainly as a quarterback. Yeah, young kid with a really bright future that’s been playing really well this year. So, you’re just hoping that it isn’t serious. Tough to see, I mean it was obviously tough a few weeks ago to see Kyle carted off, and then see it come out again today with Joe is as tough as well, so obviously wishing him the best and a speedy recovery.”

### **On the team’s mindset during the second half:**

“I thought we came in and our guys had a great mindset. You know, realizing it, we didn’t possess the ball very much in that first half, and knowing that we had to make the most of each and every drive. Every time we touch the football and that second half, we had that sense of urgency and it was nice. Nobody panicked, but certainly knowing that we had to go make something happen every time we touched the football and obviously the big, big stop by the defense and for us to go down and score. You know, really changed the game.”

### **On reaching out to Joe Burrow:**

“Yeah, maybe. I mean obviously I would love to do that, but we’ll see. We have a short week here. I haven’t heard anything, what happened, prognosis or anything so I obviously have to find out some more information. Big fan of his game. The way he was playing this year. I remember how hard it was as a rookie to play, and certainly as well as he is playing you hate to see this.”

### **On impactful messages from friends and family:**

“Oh yeah, tons, too many too many to count, and they all meant a lot. Family, friends, coaches, players, people that reached out to me over the course of the year and a half. It all meant a lot. I know every day I got a message. I know how much it meant to me. So, absolutely did give me a lot.”

### **On 3-7 record and position in division:**

“I think where we're at is, we understand what the division is this year. But for us, not getting caught up in all that. We really need to live week to week. That's it. I mean, we don't need to be looking at the bigger picture or weeks down the line or anything like that. We got a short week this week. Huge division game. We have to find a way to go get a win and not really thinking anything else.”

**On the team's growth:**

“I think we're developing. I think we're an incredibly young team that is still kind of finding out who we are – our strengths, finding out how to win, trusting in each other. I hate to say it but with COVID, no offseason and new coaching staff, those are things that are real with no preseason. I think it's important for us to kind of continue to keep getting better. Collectively, and within that obviously week to week, working and giving everything you can do to try and find a way to win. So, for us, just not getting discouraged by some of these tough losses and continue to grow and move forward. I think that's important for us right now for sure.”

**On play calling during first quarter:**

“Yeah, we practice all of it, prep for all of it. You know, Scott [Offensive Coordinator Scott Turner] and the coaching staff do a great job of obviously preparing for all that. Sometimes, the things that we don't know when they're going to come depending on the situation and got to be ready for it. That's part of the deal. I think obviously they don't handle all this stuff. As a professional, the volume and then a lot of times you don't know necessarily how they're going to play us. You try to anticipate but you don't know how they're going to see us, and you got to be able to make those adjustments and everybody's got to be on the same page.”

**On the offensive line performance:**

“I think the stat sheet speaks for itself on that one. I mean to run for 164 yards, especially the second half, protection like we did all day. I know that sounds easy on paper, just go play left tackle now. Obviously, David [Sharpe] stepping in at right. But to look at the production and the way they played the protection all day, I mean I thought it was outstanding. Certainly, a lot of a lot of credit to those guys because it all starts up front.”

**On Bengals QB Joe Burrow:**

“Well yeah, it's tough. The injury rate in the NFL, it is what it is. I mean this is a physical game. Injuries are part of this game as unfortunate as they are. I think even within that though, it is part of the job and I know that's what drew me to the game – that physicality, the edge you have to play with. I think the feeling that we all get even watching it. I mean it is real, it's part of the game, it's what makes it so special. It'll never be, you don't ever want to see anybody get hurt but that's not reality. Again, I don't know. I don't know what happened Joe, as far as prognosis, hoping for the best. Reflecting on my situation, just that it was so unique with the infection and that being such a freak thing and certainly unfortunate. But obviously hoping whatever the injury is the speedy recovery for Joe and obviously you can move forward and get right back to where he was playing, playing really good football.”

**On getting control of the game:**

“I mean it feels amazing, especially once we started chunking off some of the runs to have the 15, 16, 20-yard runs. It's hard to always grind it down the field, always have to convert third downs. That's tough in this league, everybody's good. If you're running the ball at that clip, like we were there a little bit in the second half, obviously makes things really easy.”

**RB ANTONIO GIBSON**

**On where he feels he is in his career:**

“Just getting started. It's a lot I have to learn. There's a lot to the running back position that's new to me. Each week I'm learning. I keep saying that. It's just the beginning.”

**On what clicked in the second half:**

“[Head] Coach [Ron Rivera] said that we were going to run the ball. We tried throwing the ball a little more in the first half, and we switched it over. When Coach said we were going to run the ball, just trusting our reads and running hard.”

**On QB Alex Smith:**

“Having a vet at the quarterback position changes dramatically. He’s been there and done that, so there’s not too much pressure on him. He relaxes in the huddle, I feel like for me anyway. Having a vet there just helps in that situation.”

**On his comfortability:**

“I’m getting there. If you can see it, once I get going, I start to get comfortable each game. Being able to know my reads, know where my linemen are going, knowing where my tight end is going, anticipating a play before it happens. It allows me to just run and not worrying about too much that’s going on. I’m getting there.”

**On the challenges of getting ready to play Thursday:**

“Recovery. I feel like each game we’re prepared to go out and win. We just have to put it together like today. I feel like recovery will be the biggest part coming out of today’s game.”

**On the morale in the locker room:**

“It’s good. We had a lot of close games. It’s all been on us beating ourselves or starting out slow in the first half. To come out and get that win and just showing that we’re capable. We’re always keeping a positive mindset. For us to still be in it at this point, that gives us hope too. We’re just trying to build on that.”

## DE CHASE YOUNG

**On Bengals QB Joe Burrow’s injury:**

“I was definitely hurting. I don’t want to see anyone go down. Definitely to see an injury like that, I was hurt because I know how badly Joe wants it. He’s a dude. I know Joe wanted it. I know Joe. Someone like him, he’s going to start recovery tomorrow. That’s just the guy he is. I’m going to be praying for Joe. Joe’s my guy. He already knows.”

**On how the game changed after Burrow’s injury:**

“We definitely took over after that. The sacks started coming and everything just started falling into place. I just felt like even at the start of the game, we went out there with more emotion. I just felt like we had a lot more fun out there playing ball just together as a group. I felt like we trusted each other a lot more out there today. We’re going to keep going. Just like I said last week, we’re going to keep going.”

**On his reaction to Burrow’s injury:**

“I was going and all I heard was the yelling. He held his knee. You never want to see that. I was hurting, man. I was hurting because I know Joe. I wanted to keep playing against Joe. I was hurting for Joe. You just never want to see that happen to anybody. I was hurting.”

**On his forced fumble:**

“I was rushing. When they slid to the side, I was there with two guys. Joe rolled out and I just ran to the ball like you’re supposed to. I ran to the ball and I felt somebody on my outside. I said: ‘Hm, I may not overrun him because he’s going to have to cut the ball up.’ I knew when he cut the ball up, I could deliver a blow because obviously he’s a quarterback. That’s what I was trying to do, just run to the ball and make a play.”

**On what he said to Burrow as he was carted off:**

“I said: ‘I love you and get better.’ I pat him on the head and said a little prayer to God. There’s nothing else I could do.”

**On being fired up before the game:**

“I told them there are 365 days out of the year. I said: ‘These 16 days out of the year, why can’t you be a dog?’ Today was one of the days. There are 16 days out of the year, why can’t you be a dog? I kept repeating myself. There are 16 days out of 365 days. I told them that with passion. I felt like that energy before the game helped lead us into the game with energy and momentum.”

**WR TERRY McLAURIN**

**On Bengals QB Joe Burrow:**

“Seeing that sucks, especially when you know the person. I mean you don’t want to see anybody go down. We all have families and work so hard to play on Sundays. Seeing anybody go down is hard, but especially to see a friend go down that was really tough. He’s the leader of their team and one thing I do know about Joe, since I’ve known for a little bit, is he’s a resilient guy. He always bounce back from adversity, from challenges and he attacks them head on. I’m praying for him. I’m wishing him well and try to check on him here and there but also allow him to rehab and give him space. He is going to come back stronger and watch out because he’s a guy who every time he gets knocked down, he gets back a little stronger.”

**On what the team did to refocus after Burrow went down:**

“Yeah, I mean, as soon as he got off the field and they took they took him off the field, I came back to the sidelines and I just wanted to encourage our guys because we still had a game to play. We wanted to get a really good field position. Defense held really strong and we had to capitalize getting the ball and great field position. So while that was a tough moment for everyone, we could take advantage of an opportunity with good field position.”

**On what this win can do for the team:**

“It is hard to win in this league, it is really hard. We’ve been in a lot of games this year, but we haven’t quite finished. We had strong second half, we came back stronger but I feel like we did a little better job of getting off to a faster start and that has to be continued to get better. Just to get a win is a good feeling, especially when you’ve taken some tough losses in our locker room. We have a short week coming up and we want to hopefully use some of that momentum when going into Dallas on a very tough game on Thanksgiving. So anytime you can win, you appreciate it. We want to try to learn from it but probably starting tomorrow are focusing on the shift to Dallas.”

**On players going up to Burrow as he was carted off:**

“Yeah, I mean in the NFL, we’re competitors and we’re opponents but we are brothers. It’s a brotherhood and you don’t want to see guys go down. You know how much work guys put into this. Just to play on Sundays to give your team a chance to win. Then there’s kind of a little added thing going with me, Dwayne [Haskins Jr.] and Chase [Young] because we know Joe and we played with him. We know the type of competitor he is. We know he’s not only hurt physically, but emotionally because he’s the leader of that team and that dates back to Ohio State days. You see guys out there, even though you’re opponents, you know you’re still brothers. You still got that Ohio State brotherhood. Under that jersey you’re wearing on your respective team, I feel like you still got that ‘Block O’ close to your heart. So you never want to see guys go down, but we just want to try to encourage him from afar and we know he’s going to come back stronger.”

**On DE Chase Young:**

“I mean Chase is relentless when he’s going after the ball, going after the quarterback. He’s a D-lineman where he’s playing every down. You don’t really see him take plays off. The way he pursues, his pursuit angles for guys is really impressive. He never quits on a play. From my vantage point before I even looked

up, it looked like Joe was going to walk in but Chase came in and lodged the ball free and that was a huge play for our defense and our team because we stopped them from scoring. Those are the type of plays we need to continue to have from guys like him. He's a big-time player. I tell him before every game, be the best player on the field and you got to take that to heart and I think that he is. The rest of the defense also played great again in some key stops. We've got to continue that momentum going forward and we're going to need every ounce of that next week.”

**On QB Alex Smith:**

“Yeah, I mean one thing I could say about Alex is he never makes it about him. He has every reason to kind of ‘look at my comeback story, look what I've done’ but he makes it about the team. He's always trying to figure out ways you can make it easier on us as receivers, make it easy on the whole offense and play complimentary football. One thing about Alex, you just can't quantify enough that just his experience playing. Even when we make good plays and make bad plays, he treats it the same. He tries to keep everybody even keeled and focused on the task at hand. To see him come back and get a win as a starter, I wasn't here, but to see when the injury happened, nobody knew the future not even him. So to see him come back, that's not only a motivation to us as players, but I feel as motivation everybody that has watched that. I know Alex is going to try to keep it going as best he can, but he never makes it about him. He's just great to have him on our team.”

**WR STEVEN SIMS JR.**

**On scoring a touchdown today:**

“It was definitely great to get into the endzone. That's, I guess, every receiver's dream. It's been a long time. It's hard to get into the endzone. When I get into it – whether it's a short play or a big play – it's always fun. It's a good feeling.”

**On reflecting on his journey back from injury:**

“Definitely. I just feel like it was a test from God. I felt like he put something in front of me. He wanted to see how I handled adversity through the season. I've been fighting to get back right with a lot of extra on my feet and my body so I can get back right. It's been a long time coming. I'm very excited. I'm very happy to be back competing with the guys. It's so much fun when I'm out there.”

**On QB Alex Smith:**

“Alex is a vet guy. Everything about him is professional. It's everything you want in a quarterback. To see him come back from what he's come back from, my journey is nothing. That guy fought for his life. All those things, he's just an inspiration. His whole story is an inspiration. I go hard just when he's back there. Regardless of who's back there, I go hard. But it's a different feeling when he's back there.”

**On wearing a Cincinnati Reds hat:**

“It's just swag [laughs]. I've got on red. It's a red hat. I don't even see that on there.”

**On the offense the last three weeks:**

“I feel like the last couple weeks, we've been able to do whatever we want to do to the defense. I feel like we kind of stalled at times or there was a turnover here or offsides or something that set us back. Today, I feel like we fought. We had a little bit of it, and then we got back right after halftime. We focused, we locked in and then we started rolling as we always do.”

**On playing an NFC East team with a quick turnaround Thursday:**

“I guess we know—we played them already, so I guess that's the only help really. We've still got to go out on Thursday and play, or they'll beat us and send us right back here with a loss.”

**On if there was anyone he was excited to have watch him today:**

“No, not really. I love when the lights come on and it’s bright and big time. That’s the game that you make your name. That’s what you live for, especially me.”

## **DE RYAN KERRIGAN**

### **On getting sacks:**

“That’s my mindset when I get out there. I still want to be making plays, and I know I still can make plays. So yeah, whenever I’m out there, that’s my focus is trying to be a productive member of the team.”

### **On getting more snaps in the last few games:**

“Yeah, I mean, it’s been nice the past couple of weeks getting a little bit more run. The more you’re out there, the more you get in the flow of the game and whatnot, so it’s definitely trending in a good direction.”

### **On overall defensive performance going into this game:**

“Yeah, certainly. We gave up 30 points last week, so we definitely had to do a lot more this week. We gave up some yardage early in the game in the first half, but ultimately bent but didn’t break. Then in the second half, I felt like I liked what I saw a lot more. We got off the field more quickly, a bunch of 3-and-outs and hopefully we can continue that.”

### **On Bengals QB Joe Burrow:**

“He’s impressive man. That guy has a good command of the offense, really great chemistry with his receivers. The ball came out on time, came out quickly. You see why he’s the number 1 overall pick. He’s real mobile. Yeah, he’s as advertised. I hope the young man’s alright. He’s going to be a great player in this league and hopefully he is that for many years.”

### **On trade speculation:**

“Yeah, I mean, it was a weird couple of weeks. The past two years really, you kind of see your name coming up around the trade deadline. I’ve always wanted to be here and so seeing that gives you a weird feeling in your stomach. But I’m glad I’m here. I’m glad I’m able to contribute to this team still, especially because we’re still in it in the NFC East and as weird as that is to say at 3-7, we’re very much still in it and hopefully we can make it happen down the stretch here.”

### **On preparing younger players for the Thanksgiving game:**

“I’m just going to tell them that their recovery begins the second this game against the Bengals ends. You have to try and treat tonight, Sunday night, kind of treat that as Monday as you get your recovery started, whether that’s getting in the cold tub, getting your recovery flush at home if you got that at home. Like I said, just get the recovery started tonight because it’s a very quick turnaround. You’re going to wake up Thursday and be like ‘wow, we’re doing this again right now.’ So the better you can make yourself feel physically, the better chance you’re going to have to succeed on Thursday.”

## **CB RONALD DARBY**

### **On being targeted early on:**

“It just wakes you up. I kind of know what kind of day it is going to be. I like to compete, so it made me lock in a lot more.”

### **On how things changed once Bengals QB Joe burrow went down:**

“Yeah. I mean, like you said, he is a special talent, so he can make a lot of things happen. Once he left, praying for him. But it’s like things kind of slowed down a little bit.”

### **On today’s win and what it means for the division:**

“A win like this is important. Like you said, we got to think about our next one coming up. This win is going to be short lived. And after today, thinking about Dallas.”

**On what he saw early on in the game:**

“Seeing what I’ve been seeing all year really. I just was playing fast. In life, you’re not going to always know everything. Being a corner is about reacting to some stuff you might recognize. But they scout just like us, so they line up in something you always see on film. There are some different. So I was going out there and making a play. Staying calm with the deep balls, locating it and just making a play on it.”

**On Burrow’s play before he got hurt:**

“He was real accurate. He was getting the ball out fast. Getting to where he needed to be. He was a really good quarterback.”

**On the play where DE Chase Young forced a fumble:**

“I seen what you just said. Chase chased him down, caused the fumble. Kam [Curl] pick it up, got knocked out and I was able to jump on it. I was able to make up for the play before.”

**CINCINNATI BENGALS HEAD COACH ZAC TAYLOR**

**On QB Joe Burrow injury:**

“I don't have any final update yet.”

**On his reaction after Burrow’s injury:**

“I just told them that we needed to come out with some emotion. That's an injury to a team leader that can take the wind out of your sails and we wanted to try to recapture some energy that we had going into halftime. Unfortunately, they went down and scored a touchdown and we had a three and out, so we didn’t get that done”

**On if he is bracing for a season-ending injury:**

“We will just wait for a final update before I make any guesses.”

**On if Burrow is staying here or flying back with the team:**

“I don’t know yet. I just got off the field and talked with the team. I will be getting more information after this.”

**On what he saw on Burrow’s injury:**

“Probably the toughest view that I've got, it’s a backed-up area. That's the worst view I have on the field. So, I really can't say.”

**On how difficult it is to see Burrow go down:**

“It’s not fun. He's making improvements every week and we were getting the offense headed in a direction that we thought was exciting. And I really felt like in that first half, we missed some opportunities for points, it was unbelievable. We felt like we were doing a great job moving the ball, and only came up with nine points somehow. And we felt really good coming out of the second half and then to lose your quarterback is tough, but that's the way it goes and next man up is [Ryan] Finley. Finley came up and we got to help him, I have to put him in some better situations there to give him some confidence going early, and we just didn't get it done all the way around.”

**On how much of the game plan was altered when Burrow went down:**

“Well, Ryan's always done a good job preparing himself, and you know the life of a backup quarterback in this league is that they don't get reps on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. You got to find a way to simulate your own reps and scout team and off to the side or in special teams and he's always done a good job of that, so again we just didn't get it done as a team in the second half.”

**On if QB Ryan Finley had a lot of reps before this game:**

“He didn't get as much as you would normally get for your number two quarterback, but it's where we're at right now. And so then again, we've just got to handle the situation that's been dealt to us and make the most of it and get ready to win a game next weekend.”

**On if he felt like he was rolling the dice this season starting Burrow:**

“No, because he showed that he was mentally ready to go right from the get-go, even from the summer Zoom meetings. For those of you that were at practice, that felt the energy of the team when he was our quarterback moving the ball. You felt like we could have a lot of success and he's given us a chance and, most of all these games he's done what he could do in the fourth quarter which is drive us down and sometimes we just haven't gotten the win, but got a lot of belief in Joe and whenever he's back we'll be ready for him to come back.”

**On the offensive line:**

“We had no sacks in first half out there. I think the last couple of weeks the lines done a pretty good job keeping people off him. I know we had four against Pittsburgh last week, two of them at the end of the half. I think they've been moving in the right direction. So, the second half here today these guys [Washington Football] teed off. They got a two-score lead, they've got a great front. They got five guys that can really rush the passer, they got a two-score lead there against the backup quarterback and teed off and that's where they got their pressures there.”

**On starting Hakeem Adeniji and then switching back to Bobby Hart**

“Bobby was coming off an injury the last couple weeks. We felt like Hakeem had done a good job and just decided to put him out there at right tackle today, but again Bobby's done everything you can to get yourself back in shape to play football for us.”

**On if he could've done anything different on the play where Burrow got injured or if it was a freak accident:**

“I mean he got the ball clean, so it's hard for me to see when that hit came. But I know at the point when he made the throw, he was clean.”

**On his message to the team in the locker room after the game and Burrow's injury:**

“That's really just for us. It is tough. We felt like we had a lot of momentum coming out of halftime, we expected to win the football game, we didn't. There's a lot of disappointment but we expect our guys to handle it the right way.”

**On why he went back to Bobby Hart:**

“Just a decision we made there late in the game.”

**On what the objective is for this year now that Burrow is not on the field and can't develop until he is healthy again:**

“The objective is to win and that's been the objective since day one, regardless of who's playing on the field for you. We got to do more to win football games. We have not won enough. I tell these guys, I love going to battle with these guys. I really do because they give us everything they got. Today was a disappointing day for all of us, but to answer your question the goal is to go win football games next week.”

**On if he could have done more to protect Burrow over the course of the season:**

“It's hard for me because all we can do is make progress as this season goes and we gave up a lot of pressure early in the season. In these last couple weeks, our guys have done a great job of keeping people off Joe, he's had a great pocket. He did not have a sack in the first half, in the hit as I saw it, wasn't when he had the ball in his hand. And people keep talking about the offensive line without it seemingly watching the film from last four weeks. And so, again, those guys have done a good job. It's been a revolving door of players; we're doing a great job. Joe's done a good job moving us down the field, and we felt like we're making a lot of progress over the last five weeks, and we're not going to apologize for any of that.”

**On if this is it for Burrow can he reflect on what he did in such a challenging rookie year:**

“He handled everything like a professional from day one, and to be voted a captain just speaks to everything that you need to know about the guy. The players have responded to him, the coaches have responded to him, the city has responded to him and all that is equally as important. He energizes this team and he's been a tremendous player. Everything we'd hoped he would be, and we'll get him back at some point. We don't know when that is, but for now we got to transform that energy and put it somewhere else in this team, again we got plenty of guys we can rely on. I thought our defense showed us some really good stuff today in some areas. We didn't do enough in the second half on offense, so the defense got us some stops. But you got to transfer that and go down and score points and we're getting that momentum, but we didn't do that today. And so again, we weren't solid enough in all three phases to come out of here with a win.”

**On if both teams coming off of the sideline to share well wishes with Burrow shows his character:**

“It sure does. There is a tremendous amount of respect for him and it was unfortunate to see what happened.”

**BENGALS QB RYAN FINLAY**

**On being thrown into this game:**

“Yeah, I mean, obviously, you know you said it, it's been a strange year. Obviously my thoughts right now are with Joe [Burrow] and just hoping he's going to be okay and have a speedy recovery. That was tough to see. We've grown close so that stuff's hard to see but you know I got to be ready. That's my role, so I got a week to get a lot better and be able to put this team in a position to win football games so it's kind of where my mind's at.”

**On taking snaps with the first team:**

“Yeah, I mean it doesn't matter. I mean, the theme of the day, I do what I need to do to get ready and you know, this week in practice will be good, getting reps with those guys and getting timing and getting some confidence, but you got to get ready for the starting quarterback each week. So obviously Joe [Burrow]'s a special talent, it's been his show but I'm ready for my role and I'm ready to play well.”

**On if he's talked to Joe Burrow yet:**

“Yeah, I talked with him, I sat with them for a little bit. I didn't really have many words. I didn't know what to say. I hope he recovers very soon because he's a hell of a player and it's been a lot of fun watching him play this first half of the season, so excited for when he's back. I think he was doing well. I think that's just who Joe [Burrow] is. I think he's a competitor. I think he's going to be one of those guys that will be back before he's supposed to, whenever that is.”

**On Joe Burrow's impact on the team:**

“I think there's just something about it, about him. I think we can just all feel it. I think our offense has had a lot of success early with him and we kind of, just the energy kind of fed off that, so I thought we were, you know, as an offense, these past four or five games. I thought there's been some pretty special moments and that's largely due to Joe [Burrow].”

**On finishing the game after Joe Burrow's injury:**

“Yeah, I mean, I think guys were a little shook, to be honest. But, you know we have to roll. We’ve got the Giants next week and we got a lot of games left in the season. Many that we feel like we can win. So it's time to move on and it's time to prepare harder than we have, and even more than we have, and try to keep getting some wins.”

**On the experience with preparation that he got starting three games last season:**

“Yeah, I think any game, any week of preparation where you are the starter is very helpful so, just kind of navigating a week of practice, being the starter and kind of what's expected of you preparation wise. That was something that I've learned and learned in those three games where I played last year, and I'll lean on that now. But, you know, not much will change, as far as preparation goes for this week because Joe [Burrow] did a really good job with that. So kind of same old same old just get back to work and get our guys ready.”

**On being the only active quarterback:**

“Yeah, I'm confident that I need to play well and I'm going to play well. Obviously you know Brandon [Allen] will come up but I got to put our team in a position to win games.”

**On what he has learned from Burrow:**

“There's a lot of things. Too many for a single answer right now, but his mindset towards the game is different. You can play for a long time and still have stuff to learn. But how he thinks, how he approaches the game is very positive and confident and it's awesome to learn. Those are all things I've learned from him and I'll lean on some of that stuff going forward.”

**On the biggest things he's learned this offseason:**

“Just getting stronger. Just kind of my main thing is getting physically stronger. Just thinking about today's game, and the few drives that I was in, and just got to make some throws. Got to be a little bit more accurate, get my lower body activated a little bit and get the speed of the game. It's been a long time since I've played with the speed of the game, so I've got to find a way to activate that lower body and speed everything up and get a little bit more aggressive and intentional with throwing the ball.”