



NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS AT MIAMI DOLPHINS HARD ROCK STADIUM

Jan. 1, 2017 | 1 P.M.

POSTGAME QUOTES

New England Patriots Defensive Back Devin McCourty (transcribed by Sara Perez)

(On the impact of turnovers) – “Defensively, we’ve been talking about that all year. Sometimes we get in those long drives, the offense is making a couple plays. If we can just get a turnover late in that drive, it changes everything. We really had two opportunities today. The forced fumble Shea (McClellin) up and then Malcolm (Butler) forced a fumble if we could have got on that, that would have been huge for us. They made some plays, but when you get off on a turnover it just changes the game.”

(How important is it to be part of a team and to have a team that has a mindset where they’re not going to be daunted by little things, whether it be the heat, having to sit on the plane, field conditions, a game that doesn’t have a lot of bearing on who you are? You guys seem as if you block things out, is that an ability you developed?) – “Yes, I think I hit on that earlier this year when Jamie got traded and different things happened and, as a team, we just talk about if it doesn’t end in winning, whatever it is, if it’s not pushing us closer to our goal of winning that game, we just have to throw it out the window. We have to block it out, focus on what it takes to win and like you said, coming here yesterday and sitting on the plane, everyone was wondering what was going on; but we get here, meetings are cancelled tonight, we’re going to meet tomorrow. Alright, we move on. We meet tomorrow, wake up, meet, alright, let’s find a way to win this game. Everything in the game is like that. You get out there, you get off to a good start, they make a couple plays, let’s see what we have to do to win. This team is very mentally tough and it shows. We just have to keep pushing forward. Now, it’s win or go home, so we really have to lock in on our mental toughness and try to play our best football.”

(Coming into this game RB Jay Ajayi had a lot of yards after contact, the receivers a lot of yards, big plays after the catch – how important was the tone you set early on, in terms of tackling and not allowing those things to happen?) – “It was huge. ‘Matty P’ (Defensive Coordinator Matt Patricia) hit on it all week. The X’s and O’s are important, but the key to this game was going to be tackling. There were going to be plays that were short and we couldn’t do anything or Ajayi was going to get a hole and come through. We had to get as many guys to the ball and tackle, and we did that for the most part. The times we didn’t do it, they made us pay for it. It’s going to be key going forward. Any team we really play, a lot of the teams left in the playoffs, have guys who can create plays on quick throws or running plays. It’s been our focus all year. We just have to keep tackling well and trying to get as many guys to the ball.”





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(What were the field conditions like out there? It seemed like a lot of guys were slipping.) – “Yes, we were slipping a little bit. It was a little moist. It was something Bill (Belichick) talked to us about just from, he watches everything, from seeing some of the college game that was here Friday night and then knowing they were going to re-sod it and do different things. We came and tested it out in pregame and then it just, it was what it was. It was picking the right cleats that you felt most comfortable in and playing with your feet under you. It’s not the first time we played on a ground like that. We play in the rain, all those different things. It was just about keeping your feet under you and planning and doing the right things.”

(What have you noticed from WR Michael Floyd. I know obviously he plays on the other side of the ball, but what have you noticed from him in his time with the team and contributions today?) – “Focus. Since he came in, he’s just trying to learn as much as he can, practicing hard every day and it paid off today. He made some plays, obviously the touchdown was huge; but that block he made on ‘Jules’ (Julian Edelman) touchdown, everybody on the bench went crazy. He’s fitting in well, just doing the little things, working hard. Everybody talks about Patriot Way but that’s what it is, following the guys that are here and just doing the little things to get better each day.”

