**PATRIOTS QUARTERBACK MAC JONES**

**PRESS CONFERENCE**

**August 17, 2022**

**Q: What are your thoughts on the progression over the last two days for this offense?**

MJ: Yeah, we’ve had some good work against the Panthers. They were a top-5 defense last year and they’re continuing to grow. So it was good to get our offense against a really good defense, let the young guys see some really good players, and scheme, and then obviously adjusting each day and then carrying that over to the game. So I think we competed. It was a good week.

**Q: Do you plan on playing on Friday night?**

MJ: I hope so.

**Q: How much are the fights effecting productivity during practice?**

MJ: Yeah I think everyone’s competitive and then sometimes that’s how it gets out here. The big thing is it’s football and we’re here to practice and try and have a good day. The coaches handled it properly just calling up the teams, and Coach Belichick obviously gave us good advice about just playing the next play, and play football, and not worry about fighting other people and stuff like that. Just come together and get the good work in that we need to get against a good team.

**Q: You said last week that you felt as if ‘I’ve always gotten it. I always will. I’ll master whatever I need to’ How’s the progress this week relative to last week?**

MJ: It’s good. I think we’ve done some good things, made some adjustments, and stuff and moving in the right direction. That’s all you can ask for is just for me to be able to step up in the pocket and make the throws. That’s all it is for me, or hand the ball off to the right guy, or hit the check down hit the deep ball, it doesn’t matter. I think we have guys that can make plays all over the field. So regardless of how we call the play or do it, it doesn’t matter the guys are open, and if they’re not, I just have to be smart and throw it away. But they’ve been open a lot and those 50-50 balls have been really good for us.

**Q: What are some of the specific improvements, little more time, little more area to step up, a fewer avoided plays?**

MJ: Yeah, I definitely agree with that.

**Q: Inaudible**

MJ: Good, I think I’m excited to progress here and just focus on each day. Obviously I played against them and we played against them last year, and I was a rookie and just to talk to some of the guys on the Panthers and stuff and just see what I’m doing different or anything like that. Anything I can pick up. Obviously just growing every day and try not to look too far ahead and just get ready for this game and really just get ready for practice tomorrow, make the adjustments.

**Q: You talked earlier about getting everyone on the same page. How would you characterize your progress in terms of communication team wide?**

MJ: Yeah we’re getting there. I think the coaches have done a good job just kind of listening to us and you know if we don’t like something it’s something that they’re going to listen to and tell us why we should do one thing or another. At the end of the day they have a lot of experience and they know exactly how to attack a defense and that’s something that we’ve kind of bought into. There’s a lot of knowledge. A lot of it is just making sure we’re all on the same page like you said. We’ve grown in that area and we have to continue to do that. Everyday is a new battle and the coaches have done a great job preparing us for one day. You come out here there’s a new look and we come out here today and we adjust to it and we nail it. So that’s something you need to do from drive to drive in the NFL. In a game, one drive they might give you one look and then the next drive you got to be ready for the new look they just gave you. So I’m really pleased with that.

**Q: You mentioned making adjustments. Are some of those driven by the conversations you just mentioned, player suggesting things to the coaching staff about terminology or the communication?**

MJ: Yeah I think we laid our foundation of what we want to do and what the coaches want to do. We’ve definitely bought into that. There’s things that I’ve done in the past. There are things that I like, and we’re trying to incorporate them more. Or things that Coach Belichick sees on film he’s like, ‘hey what do you think about this?’ So it’s very fluid and for them to be able to take some of our thoughts is really important. I think the really good offenses in the NFL, you can tell that the play callers and the quarterback are on the same page. So I think we’re getting there and that’s the progress we need, and I’ve been really pleased with that.

**Q: Do you feel like you’re in that next stage of the installation and now in the execution and that it’s just getting to that next level you need to get to? Because you were clearly frustrated at times.**

MJ: Yeah, I think we’re not trying to come out here and scheme everything up like you said. So a lot of it is just executing our core plays and when we get to that point we’ll get to that point. But right now it’s just doing everything we can to – alright this is my read, I’m going to throw it to the first read if he’s open, if he’s not I’m going to move on. So, there’s a lot of scheme in the NFL, and sometimes you want to just come out and see how things look, too. It’s not just always going to be your best play against that best coverage or whatever it is. So, I think like I said, the guys are making plays which is important, and they all know they can get the ball any play. The offensive line did a really good job at protecting me. Obviously there’s no contact at practice but I do feel very comfortable back there. We just need to continue to grow in that area.

**Q: Have you had the chance to talk to Brian Burns about the play that happened last year in the game?**

MJ: Yeah, I talked with Brian. We already made up at the Pro Bowl, and everything’s good. He’s a great player and I just love watching him on film: how he can speed-rush. He’s got good power and he’s just a great football player. He really doesn’t like to talk, he just kind of keeps getting after it and keeps getting after it and I’m kind of the same way. So, we’re definitely friends now. It’s all good.

**Q: You’ve talked about the importance between the play caller and the quarterback – how has that been going with Matt Patricia?**

MJ: I think it’s good. I know Matt’s called a lot of plays in the NFL, so, he has really good experience. Coach Judge has good experience, and obviously Coach Belichick does, too. So, whoever’s calling it, it’s our job to execute. I think the communication’s been really good, even with assistant coaches and their position groups. You can tell that it’s not just a one-headed monster, it’s a lot of different guys coming together. ‘Hey, what did you see on this?’ The wide receiver coaches, are like ‘hey, let’s try this.’ There’s a lot more conversation, which is really a good thing because sometimes you don’t want to just come down from one person. It’s good to get everyone’s input and make sure that we’re all on the same page.

**Q: Is the plan, as far as you know, for Matt Patricia to call plays in the regular season?**

MJ: I think that’s up to Coach Belichick to make the decisions. At the end of the day, I’m going to do whatever they tell me to do and do it to the best of my ability, as is everyone on the offensive line and the skill players. That’s all we can control is doing our job, and our attitude and our effort. We’ll get there, hopefully this week, when we get a chance to play it’ll be really good.

**Q: Has this week added confidence to you and your group after some frustration last week?**

MJ: I think there’s only a handful of bad plays. If you really know football, you can see there was only a handful of bad plays out here. So, you take away those bad plays, whatever it is – four or five a day – and then everyone’s saying it’s a great day. So, at the end of the day, we play each play as if it has a life of it’s own. Slot each play, and don’t look forward and don’t look back. But, at the same time, you want to make the adjustments like I talked about, and we definitely did that pretty well. You have to keep doing it and eliminate the really bad plays.

**Q: Talk about your chemistry with DeVante Parker?**

MJ: I think, like I said, our skill players have done a great job attacking the football. DP’s a really good vertical threat. He’s really competitive, quiet in his own manner, but all those guys, they all bring a different trait to the receiver room. We have a good mix of size, speed, shiftiness, route-runners. YAC-guys, like run-after-catch. So I’ve been really pleased. That’s why my job is just distribute the ball to the guy who’s open. They’ve done a great job doing that.

**Q: You’ve been pushing the ball down the field a little bit more in the past few days. Is that being emphasized, or do you just throw to the open guy?**

MJ: I think we want to take our matchups, and if it’s there when I need to throw it and give them a chance to touch the ball and keep it in-bounds – like you said, there’s scenarios we go through where maybe it’s the last play of the game and you have to throw the ball, or whatever it is. Sometimes you wouldn’t do that on a first-down-and-ten, but that’s football. You want to give yourself a chance to win, and that’s good to practice and practice because you get to the game and you’re like ‘alright, we got the last play here, there’s six seconds, can we get two plays or not?’ Or whatever the situation is. So, I love how we do that here with the Patriots. I’m prepared for all the situations in the game, and then when they come up, we know we’ve already practiced them. Pushing the ball down the field has been a big emphasis, too, and obviously the lines provide time to do that.

**Q: How do you describe the growth of Nelson Agholor?**

MJ: I love Nelson. He’s obviously very quick, very fast. He loves football. I don’t know that I’ve seen a receiver who understands football as well as he does in terms of just general knowledge. He’s almost like a quarterback out there. All of our guys have worked really hard. We put in a lot of work together in the offseason. He was at all of the throwing sessions. That’s what we’re trying to grow from, like: ‘Remember that one time we were throwing, and I told you to do this? Let’s try it on the next play.’ We’ve all done that together as a group. He’s definitely done a good job, and we just need to keep consistency up with all those guys. Like I said, they all bring a different trait to the table.

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