

Transcript: Why Kansas City Chief and Houston Texans Got Booed before the Kick off.

SACHA PFEIFFER, HOST:

Last night, the NFL returned with the Kansas City Chiefs, the defending Super Bowl champions, facing the Houston Texans. Spoiler alert, the Chiefs won, led by star quarterback Patrick Mahomes. But what stole the show was the moment before kickoff. As Chiefs and Texans players locked arms in an attempt to show unity, they were greeted by boos - all this as the NFL has acknowledged the racial justice protests of this summer and as the slogan, End Racism, was sprayed in one end zone, and the phrase, It Takes All of Us, was sprayed in the other. To talk about this, we're joined by Tyler Tynes from The Ringer.

Tyler, thanks for coming on the program.

TYLER TYNES: I appreciate it.

PFEIFFER: And, Tyler, I want to clarify. Certainly oftentimes, we will hear boos from the crowd when the non-home team comes out on the field, but that does not seem to be what was happening last night. Is that right?

TYNES: No, absolutely not. What happened was that, you know, you had a display of what these players and what their teams respectively would call unity. Basically what they did was a gesture, to lock arms to say that this is some sort of blanket equality because they don't either want to disrespect an idea about patriotism in Americana or an idea about racism in Americana. You had a faction of fans who had an issue knowing that the overall context was about racism in America and specifically about a form of protest in America. That doesn't fly in the NFL.

PFEIFFER: What did you think when you heard the boos? Did they catch you off-guard?

TYNES: Not at all. I mean, as somebody who's really been covering this since, you know, the Colin Kaepernick moment in the springtime of athlete activism, this is very standard for when we do these games and when we see these protests. When Colin Kaepernick kneeled in Buffalo, they threw bottles at him. You know, when Kenny Stills kneeled in Texas before, he got those same boos. And so this is par of the course for the type of white fan that finds themselves at the intersectional point between the nation's reckoning with racism and the athletic ecosystem that they believe they can go into as an oasis of sorts.

PFEIFFER: I think maybe the key question here is, what kind of expression is acceptable at this point? Is there any gesture? What will work?

TYNES: In this movement for Black lives where we have seen Black people speak out and specifically march in protest against police brutality, this is the norm in

that we are not protesting so that the status quo can be, you know, settled and normalcy can go back to where it needs to be. No. We need to now find new ways to be in line with the voice and the vigor of a movement for Black lives. And if that means, as we saw in the NBA, a labor strike, a wildcat strike at the moment, then so be it.

PFEIFFER: But do you think there's anything players can do that won't get criticized as disrespecting the flag or be criticized for any other reason?

TYNES: No. And the thing about it is that who cares - right? - because the thing here is that these players must do whatever is necessary to find a way toward equity if they want to because the reality of the situation is the onus is not on Black people to be the ones to solve the inherent original sin of this country. No. You see, this is a white problem, and whiteness must also fix it with their hands first. These people and these players have been very clear what their demands are. It's time to listen with open ears.

PFEIFFER: Tyler, last night a retired NFL linebacker, Lance Briggs, tweeted this. He wrote, there's a segment of Americans who have an ability to compartmentalize their affinity for Black athletes as a source of entertainment, yet remain apathetic and indifferent to their plight. What do you think about that?

TYNES: Well, Lance Briggs has always been a good man. And he's right in that example. You know, if you have fans who love to watch LeBron James, if you have fans who love to watch Patrick Mahomes, but those same fans cannot not understand the plight of what racism can do to the Black body in modern time, then we have a massive issue. It was the academic Imani Perry who said there is nothing wrong with being Black. Blackness is a joy. But it is racism that is the poison on the Black body because at the end of the day, we no longer need allies. We need accomplices in this fight towards Black liberation. We're here to get something now, and the world is listening.

PFEIFFER: That's Tyler Tynes of The Ringer.

Tyler, thank you.

TYNES: No problem.

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