



POSTGAME QUOTES

Carolina Panthers vs. Dallas Cowboys
Sunday, September 9, 2018

Carolina Panthers

Ron Rivera
Head Coach

RE: Importance of defensive line pressure late in the game

I thought it was critical because it allowed Eric Washington to do what he felt like he needed to do in terms of whether to rush five, rush four or rush three. When you can get pressure doing those different combinations, you can have success. I thought the d-line stepped up in a big way and did some good things for us.

RE: Mike Adams

Mike made a couple of real big plays for us, a couple of open field tackles that were really big. Ezekiel Elliott caught a couple check downs and Mike was out there by himself and just made great plays. Mike also did a great job controlling the young corners we have, working with them. Again, you have a veteran guy out there, it means an awful lot.

RE: Injury Update

No updates on anybody who was hurt in the game other than the fact there is a little bit of concern for all of them. We will see how they are. Greg Olsen left early obviously. Daryl Williams left later in the game and Luke Kuechly left but he came back in. We will go from there. That's all I know.

RE: Concern with the potential of re-injuries

No. That's the one thing I do know about Daryl is that it is not the re-injury. I'll tell you that much. That's the one thing I do know. Greg, I couldn't tell you on that other than it is the foot and it is the same one.

RE: What he liked about the defensive line play today

I thought they did a nice job. Again, it goes hand in hand because a couple of those you could look at as either coverage pressures or coverage sacks. I thought our combination did well. I thought Eric Washington mixed up his plays calls very nicely. I thought the rush patterns that we had I thought what Brady Hoke and Sam Mills III did with those guys was good all week. I thought the linebackers' underneath coverage was solid. We got the ball thrown in front of us, we drove downhill, we made tackles. I thought the defensive backs played well. I was really pleased with the defense as a whole. I thought their effort was good.

RE: Cam Newton's play today

The thing about him is he knows how to make plays when we need him. He has done a great job for us. We kind of shot ourselves in the foot a couple times. We had a couple of big plays but then we had some sort of penalty called against us. We can't make mistakes and expect to beat really good teams. This is a good football team

that we played today. They gave us everything. They had a chance at the end and you want to take that away from teams. You don't want to give them a chance. But hats off to how hard they played.

RE: Cam Newton's passing game

I thought some of his decisions were outstanding, I really did. The time of possession was interesting on up until we got into the 4th quarter and I think that's where the skew is. We drove down the first drive and unfortunately we turned it over and got no points. Then the last drive of the first half we had an opportunity for a touchdown and ended up with a field goal because we had a couple penalties that drove us back a little bit. Then the opening drive in the third quarter, drive it down, get across the 50 and then we go backwards on a couple plays. We can't do that and expect to win consistently. We have to take care of those mistakes we made.

RE: Interpretation on what happened on play that Daryl Williams got hurt

No, I didn't. They just told me they felt he got rolled up on the back of the legs. Again, we will take a look at that and the one thing they did tell me is they don't think it is anything similar to what he did the first time so that's good to hear.

RE: To win the way the team did today, what does it speak to about this program?

I said it to the guys, it's about the depth we have right now. If something happens, you have to be the next guy to step up, you have to be ready to play. When I'm talking to them, I'm not just talking to the players, I'm talking to the coaches. We have to make sure we are coaching our players up, we are giving them an opportunity to understand what we need them to do and then put in the position to have success. It all starts with us and we have to make sure we are doing our job. I really appreciated the way the guys came in and played and did their best to give us an opportunity. Again, it does speak well that we do have some depth and some good positions, and we have some things that we have to continue to work on to get better at.

RE: Donte Jackson

I thought Donte played a solid game. He is very active, plays with his eyes, plays with his hands. I don't necessarily agree with some of the things that were called but, again, those are things we will look at and work on. He works very hard on his technique and you can see it. Again, I'm pretty excited about the way he played and as I said, the defensive backs as a whole.

RE: Norv Turner's play calling today

I thought he did a nice job. Again, we hurt ourselves. We made too many mistakes and again, it starts with us as coaches. We have to get those things shored up. We have to make sure our guys understand, hey, we have to be careful. We don't need penalties, we don't need offside, we don't need offensive or defensive penalties. We have to play a sound game and it gives us a better chance to win.

RE: Desire to go for one more play when ball was snapped with seven seconds left at end of first half

There was but when we were in Cam's headset and once Cam set himself we all said let's take it down and kick it. So again, it's one of those things that you wish you hadn't had to us a timeout earlier but we did.

RE: Did team do anything for new owner David Tepper after his first win?

We did. We gave him the game ball. Again, it's his first win as our owner and the guys were really appreciative of him. We just wanted to make sure we congratulated him the right way.

RE: Communication with Eric Washington while he was on the sidelines and his feel for the game

I thought he had a good feel for the game. He mixed up his calls very well. I'm watching and he would come over to ask me something or tell me something or he will make a statement on something so there is communication

between he and I. But he handled it very well and I liked his aggressive nature at times. I liked how he mixed up his calls. I liked their communication on the sidelines. I thought the communication between the guys on the sidelines and Eric was outstanding. The guys up in box did a nice job for us.

RE: How Christian McCaffrey bounced back from early fumble

He did. You are going to have tough days and you are going to have good days. But if you can weather the storms and pick it right back up, which he did, he is going to be fine. Again, as we continue to work this we will get more and more comfortable with things, I'm really pleased with the effort we got.

RE: His reaction when he saw Luke Kuechly come out of the game and go back in

The best thing is I knew right away what had happened. The doctors communicated that very well. Luke just wanted to come to the sidelines for a second to catch his breath, which he did. Once he got settled in, he was fine and ready to go back out there.

Fullback Alex Armah
Carolina Panthers

RE: His first touchdown

It felt good. We practiced it during the week, so when the play was called I was ready.

RE: Putting together particular game packages

It starts early in the week when you're studying film. We knew we had some big guys up front we had to take care of, we knew they liked to shift. That all started early in the week and game planning those types of deals.

RE: Reactions after scoring

I scored and I was like, "Where is Cam? I'm keeping this one." It felt good to get in there.

RE: Getting the win

It felt good. I'm really confident in our offense and moving forward. We've got a lot to improve on but I think this victory really helps us start our season off.

Running Back CJ Anderson
Carolina Panthers

RE: Giving David Tepper the game ball

Gave Tepper the game ball, he deserves it.

RE: Describe the scene

It's just good. He's the owner, he got his first win with us. We feel happy about it, we're excited about it. It feels good to give him his first game ball, hopefully we can give him many more wins from here.

RE: Almost scoring a touchdown

I was close, when my number is called I just try to do what I can do best. Continue to keep playing, grinding from there. I've played in this game for six years now, I've got more than 50-plus games under my belt. Played in some big games, some playoffs...I understand when the time comes make plays.

RE: Starting season 1-0

It feels good, it always feels good to protect home. You want to get eight of them, so we've got seven left. It feels good to be 1-0 and now we're about to get ready to go on the road and play a good Atlanta football team. All we can do is clean this tape up and get better.

Quarterback Cam Newton
Carolina Panthers

RE: His cleats

To be honest with you, that is all the creators of my cleats – an affiliation with Under Armour – I don't see my cleats until gameday. They used to send them to me early but I just still want the 'wow' factor. I didn't see them until today and it was pretty cool. I had the spurs too but the spurs didn't make it, we have to go back to the drawing board with those. Just something leading up to the game, obviously we were playing the Cowboys.

RE: His touchdown celebration

I thought about that today, I said 'what am I going to do when I score?' I'm big on energy, I'm big on feeding the world energy, on seeing yourself doing certain things, so when I was doing my body prayer today – something that is very dear to me – I was thinking 'man, I've got to think about something to do' and that was the only thing I thought of. I didn't want to ruffle any feathers, it was just all out of love and respect for the game.

RE: Early rushes setting the tempo for the game

Got a little too greedy early on but it's just getting back into the flow of the game. Going out there and playing four quarters of football is something that we haven't done in a long time so just trying to get back into the groove of things. But all in all, the offense, we did a lot of good things but we've just got to stay on rhythm, that's when we're at our best. Those methodical, long drives from running the ball, throwing the ball, keeping the defense off balance and you saw flashes of those today. Then also, there were lulls that we can't keep allowing ourselves to get in, but I'm just excited to get a good team win today, much needed and we will deal with our mistakes leading up to next week.

RE: Greg Olsen's injury

You guys know how I feel about Greg, you can't ever replace him, his professionalism that he brings to the game, his overall outlook, his IQ, his understanding. But, in a way, Ian (Thomas) has been being prepared for this moment – and Blistex (Chris Manhertz) and I'm just going to leave it up to the front office who they bring up next or if we just do with what we have. And also, just seeing Nostrils (Daryl Williams) go down too. I know how hard he worked to battle back and I hope it's not as bad as it seemed. I'm being optimistic about both of their injuries but we'll be good. This is the NFL where injuries do happen. The severity of the injuries you never know but at the end of the day, you're only as good as your weakest link and I say that with all due respect of knowing the 'next man up' approach.

RE: The final drive of the first half

We did a good job of getting the ball into the red zone and I just knew that we didn't have any more timeouts and I don't know if it was a sack or a short-yard gain but when I saw 13 seconds, I just felt in my mind we needed to play the conservative route, points are better than nothing, don't want to risk a sack with no timeouts. So, they were telling me to spike the ball and it was kind of me saying 'I just want points. We just need points right here.' Better safe than sorry. So, when I saw it and I was seeing people unset, I was thinking to myself there was no need to rush. All week we've been hearing about the pass rush and I've seen it today and not necessarily that I didn't have any trust or faith, I'm just saying that we needed points and I just wanted to get points right there.

RE: David Tepper getting the game ball

It's been good. I'm happy for that, I'm happy for the community, I'm happy for the fans. All in all, Mr. Tepper has been a good thing for this organization and the energy that he's bringing upon us has been somewhat of a light – not saying that we didn't have that before – but to see a guy of his magnitude, knowing that he still has a lot of other things going on – pretty sure he could be anywhere else – I'm just happy that we were able to get a win today.

RE: Norv Turner's play calling

It's still early, I felt extremely comfortable with what he was doing. I understood the game plan going into it and it is still kind of give and take, knowing how he calls just the preparation process throughout this whole week. This is the first week we've really had to kind of hone in. It was a long week so you can kind of overload yourself with overthinking certain things. But all in all, we felt good and we're just going to keep getting better.

RE: Panthers' pass rush and the strip sack at the end of the game

Frazier (Julius Peppers), Super Mario (Mario Addison), KK (Kawan Short) and I'm Just Chilling (Dontari Poe), those guys wreak havoc. A lot of havoc. I know, I see it every day in practice, everybody just runs by – obviously you can't hit the quarterback because of that pretty red jersey – you hear them yell 'sack!' So now for it to come to fruition in the actual game and to see it, you start believing certain things and I'm just happy for those guys. I'm happy for us as a team.

RE: The energy of the crowd at the end of the game

Well winning at home is very pivotal in the National Football League and I said it earlier in the week, we know they have a very strong fan base. We have a very strong fan base too and playing in [Bank of America Stadium], it was electrifying and we've just got to keep feeding it energy. It's just like anything else, it's a living creature. Our fans are alive and when you do certain things to get them hyped, they can be a huge asset for us and that's what we're going to expect throughout this whole year.

***Cornerback Captain Munnerlyn
Carolina Panthers*****RE: What was going through his mind during the last play on defense**

Someone jumped on me, I don't know if it was Kawaan Short, or one of their guys. I said, "No let me turn back this way so he can't take the ball from me." It was a great play by Mario Addison, I just came to get on the ball. We practice on that each and every Wednesday when we have our turnover circuit, and it was a perfect time and a perfect situation.

RE: Throwing the ball in the stands for the fans following the turnover

I was just happy to get the win, I know the hard work we put in through training camp and everything, I know the hard work that I have put in just trying to get back to where we were. I know how to play football, so it was just some rejoicing.

RE: How confident and excited the defense is after their performance

I'm very excited, coach Washington called a great game. We still have a whole lot of work to do don't get me wrong. We let some runs get out, we let some passes get out, we let Dak Prescott scramble a couple of times on third down, but I feel like we are definitely going in the right direction. We still have work to do, we have to watch this film and get better.

Running Back Christian McCaffrey
Carolina Panthers

RE: Overcoming fumble in first half

It can't happen, but it's football. Stuff happens, take a win.

RE: Offensive performance as a whole

I think there were spurts and droughts. I think we were moving at times. I think the biggest thing is we've got to eliminate the negatives. If we do that, we'll be a pretty good offensively. But to play like we did and still win is a good thing. We'll learn from it and keep going.

RE: Greg Olsen's injury

That's tough. He's worked so hard to get back after last year and finish the season and this whole offseason working so hard to be healthy. To see that happen is tough and we're going to miss him while he's gone, but I know he's going to do everything in his power to come back as fast as possible.

Cornerback Donte Jackson
Carolina Panthers

RE: Mike Adams making a big tackle in the open field, late in the game

Pops [Mike Adams], he's a huge inspiration to us. Coming into this game, knowing this is his 15th year, and me being a young guy, a first year guy, I'm going out there and play for him. Just to see him giving all that effort in his 15th year, it gives you extra juice to kind of help you, and make you want to go make a play for him, that's what we were out there doing today.

RE: Showing emotion after his big hit early in the game

Yes, you guys saw that, a little guy that can hit a little bit. I was just feeling the energy, we were clicking on all cylinders, just playing fast, and I was able to come down and be able to make a good hit. It was exciting to do, so that's why I kind of did the Hulk when I got up, it was a great play.

Tackle Kawann Short
Carolina Panthers

RE: Defense's big play at the end of the game

The outcome was determined by us up front, offensive line, defensive line. We knew what those guys were doing all game and me and Mario...he told me what to do and I did it. Next thing you know he got the fumble.

RE: Staying after Dak

He's one of those guys you don't want to see in a two-minute, but if you do you've got to rally up and keep him in that pocket and make him throw it. Everybody communicated, that's what happened today. We rallied up and got the win.

RE: Limiting Ezekiel Elliott early on

He's a great back and we respect him. We know he's a north, south guy, it's going to take everybody from the corners to the defensive linemen to tackling him and gang tackling him and that's what we did today.

Linebacker Luke Kuechly
Carolina Panthers

RE: Feelings on his injury scare

I'm good. I will be fine. I just got rolled up a little bit, but I will be good to go.

RE: An overall outstanding defensive effort

They guys up front played well like they always do, and our defense always starts with them. They played great in the run game, and they played great at the end of the game with those sacks. Kawaan Short had a couple. Wes had one more, and Mario has the big one at the end. Julius Peppers had some good routes, all of those guys played excellent. It's fun to have a front like that; you ask Shaq, you ask David, you ask any of these linebackers when you have guys like that up front, it makes our jobs as linebackers so much easier.

RE: Thoughts on the severity of his injury when it occurred

I didn't know. I just knew it got a little bit rolled up. It will be fine. I went back in, and there were no issues with it. I will be good to go.

***Defensive End Mario Addison
Carolina Panthers*****RE: Withstanding multiple hits throughout the game and coming out victorious**

You know me, I always talk about our defense. I don't really talk about the offensive side. Some guys who went down man, they'll be back. That's all I got to say, cause they're warriors. They won't let an injury hold them down. You'll see them back.

RE: On the better defensive line winning the game

We can't compare ourselves to those guys, because we are not even in the same room as them. They have a good coordinator. I know Marinelli is a good coordinator over there. But at the same time, we have a great coordinator too. I know what we can do. I know what the game plan is for us to do, and we came out and did it.

RE: Feelings on the first win of the season

It feels good. Not only for us, but it feels good to give the owner of the team his first victory and the game ball. To me, that feels good. He trusts in us. We are very fortunate to have him. We needed that win to start the game off. Now it's time to build from it.

***Linebacker Shaq Thompson
Carolina Panthers*****RE: Defensive performance tonight**

I felt like we executed a little bit, but like they say, there's always room for improvement. There are some runs that we let get out, that's on us. But we'll come back tomorrow and get that corrected and make sure that doesn't happen again.

RE: Game plan for Dak Prescott

Keep him in the pocket. We know he's a scrambling quarterback and we know he likes to get out of the pocket. We really did a good job. I mean there were some times he got out and escaped but overall I think the D-line did a phenomenal job just keeping him in the pocket, rewarding us with some sacks, some overthrown balls, some incomplete passes. I felt like they did a great job.

RE: Mood in Carolina locker room

We feel good. We started off 1-0. We came out fast on both sides. It's time to go back to the boards, watch this film, get better and get ready for Atlanta.

Wide Receiver Torrey Smith
Carolina Panthers

RE: His personal performance

It felt alright, there were some things that I wish I would've done better, but overall I think I did well. First game is different, conditioning, you know everything, but I felt fine. We practice hard and we work hard so when you do that it tends to be a lot easier in games and that's the way I felt today. We just have to take care of business and not shoot ourselves in the foot.

RE: Losing Greg Olsen for an extended period of time

It means a lot, that's Cam's blankie. They have a different type of chemistry and that's his security blanket and he means a lot to this offense, and leadership...everything that he has to offer. It's going to be a huge loss if he ends up being out for an extended period of time, but it's next man up. That's the way it is in the NFL. People get hurt each and every week and it's a new opportunity for someone else. We have to go out there and continue to work, and that's going to put more pressure on us as receivers too to make sure that we're doing our job.