



## **POSTGAME QUOTES**

**Carolina Panthers vs. New Orleans Saints**

**Monday, December 17th, 2018**

### **Carolina Panthers**

***Head Coach Ron Rivera***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Not clicking for offense tonight**

Well we just missed a couple opportunities. We missed a couple throws, a couple blocks and had a chance for a couple catches. It was tough. We moved the ball right before the half and Cam [Newton] went to throw the fade and the corner made a really good play. We got the jump ball up to [Devin] Funchess that we wanted and he undercut and got inside of Funch. That was a tough one. We make a big play, had a big run going and unfortunately we fumbled. Again, it is hard to fault when a young man is fighting his butt off to try and put up into position. That's the hard part. A couple of self-inflicted wounds that hurt us.

**RE: How the season has gone with one side of the ball playing well while the other does not**

We played smart on the defensive side and were able to keep the ball in front of us. Because we did that we were able to give ourselves a chance, give ourselves the opportunity. I thought the guys competed as a team. I thought they came out and tried to do some things. We had some pluses and some opportunities and unfortunately we missed out. I really appreciate the great effort and that's all you can ask this time of year is that your guys go out and compete and give you great effort.

**RE: Will you consider sitting Cam Newton for last two games?**

No. What we are going to do is see how the week goes right now. Again, we will continue to evaluate and see what the doctors have to say. But, the route has been the same and will continue.

**RE: Hard to not have down field options due to Cam Newton's shoulder soreness?**

The hard part again obviously is you try to take what they give you. We will see. We will go from there.

**RE: Is this the most complete effort from the defense this season?**

Yes, I would most certainly give them praise. I thought they competed. I thought they did some good things. They took the ball away when they had to. They scored when we had an opportunity. Donte's [Jackson] return was spectacular. The young man has played very well for us at times and he has made a couple of young mistakes. But that's the kind of effort you expect from your guys and you can expect from us from here on out. I really appreciated the way they handled things and I think we can continue to go and get better.

**RE: Christian McCaffrey touchdown pass**

It was just a little something that Norv [Turner] had been cooking up for a while. Was looking for the right opportunity and that's what this was. This was the right opportunity to call it. They were very aggressive and

that's what happened. We caught them being overly aggressive and Christian was able to complete it. It was well executed.

**RE: IF someone told you before the game you would hold the Saints to 12 points you would probably like your chances**

All I needed was 5%. That's it. Just give me a chance.

**RE: Interception before half**

Again, you have to give a guy credit. He is getting paid too. He went up, made a nice play and was in position. We would have loved to have been able to score there. Who knows. But again, we had a chance, and that's all you can ask for.

**RE: Handling the pressure as the leader of the team**

That's the nature of it. Again, I try to do the best we can. We come out and go to work. I really appreciate, like I said, the effort we got from our guys. It was an interesting week, a lot of rain. But the guys went out and practiced, practiced in the conditions, prepared. I thought they came out and gave us the kind of effort that gives you the chance to win a football game.

**RE: Circumstances surrounding interception of pass intended for Devin Funchess at the end of first half**

I thought the corner did a nice job getting all the way underneath him and undercutting the play. If he is a half-step late or his jump is mistimed, I think we have a chance to catch the touchdown pass. But again, the corner made a nice play.

**RE: Is Cam Newton's shoulder soreness affecting the way he throws the short pass?**

Again, I think you'll have to ask him. I'm not going to try and guess as to what he is going through. I would never do that. I think the young man is a courageous guy who fights and tries to do the best he can for us.

**RE: Devin Funchess' role in this offense since injury**

I think it all a matter of location. Coach has a couple of personnel groupings that he uses and he likes. There is a couple that include Funchess and there are a couple that don't. When Coach gets into a rhythm, he calls the personnel groupings and Funchess comes out and does his job and works hard, just as he does in practice.

**RE: Decision to start Marshall Newhouse**

Chris Clark was laboring a little bit and we just wanted to give him an opportunity to rest a little bit and also wanted to see what Newhouse could do.

**RE: What does laboring for Clark mean?**

I think just being worn down. Giving him an opportunity, it was a chance to allow him to rest.

**RE: If the fumble was a learning experience for DJ Moore**

Oh yeah. Again, just a great effort. You have to give them credit. The guy came up from behind and punched the ball out.

**RE: Players remaining positive with 6 game losing streak**

I think it speaks well to who they are more so than anything else. That they come out, they practice and they compete. They are not just going to show up. These young men are going to come out and fight and do their jobs. That's all you can ask is that these guys come out and do that.

**RE: Maturity of Donte Jackson to come back with interception after defensive pass interference**

That's a corner's mentality. You have to be able to move on to the next play. He did. I really appreciate the way he competes and the way he tries to make things happen. I think the young man has a bright future in this league.

**RE: Do you foresee having a conversation with Cam Newton about taking him out like in the Tampa Bay game of 2016?**

We will see. Like I said, we have to let the doctors and the trainers let him go through his normal week and we will see what happens. Again, until then, I can't tell you anything different.

**RE: Did defense come in today frustrated with how they have been portrayed over the last few weeks?**

They may have. You'll have to ask them. I just know that they came in and worked very hard, working on their techniques, working on some of their coverages that we have done. Like I said, I really appreciate what they have done in terms of the hard work and the effort.

**RE: Was this loss any tougher than the others with the defense playing the way that they did?**

They are all tough. They really are. It's a team thing. We had opportunities and we didn't come through. Again, you win as a team and you lose as a team.

***Quarterback Cam Newton  
Carolina Panthers***

**RE: How does your shoulder feel?**

It's alright.

**RE: Where did the offense struggle to find consistency after the Chris Manhertz touchdown?**

I'm not sure. We didn't hold up our end of the bargain today. We just didn't sustain drives. The defense that we played against, they're pretty good. We just have to do a better job. Our defense played a hell of a game and we have to reward them when they do those things. Two turnovers in the red zone. It just comes down to execution and sustaining drives. We didn't do that.

**RE: Thought on the touchdown attempt to Devin Funchess**

I just tried to give him a chance. I saw man to man and he won. I was trying to give Fun [Devin Funchess] an opportunity. That's pretty much it.

**RE: What had to go differently to complete the pass to Devin Funchess?**

I tried to give him an opportunity. I saw man to man. I tried to put it in an area where he could kind of contest it. It could be higher. It could be on the back pylon or whatever, but I mean that's just the frustration of what these last couple of games have been. You wish you would have done this, you wish you would have done that. You try to hesitate and do certain things and be perfect, but it's still not good enough.

**RE: Correlation between practice reps and timing**

You can point out or finger point, I wouldn't necessarily say finger point, but you can wish you did certain things throughout the week. This has been my regimen for a while now. So me not throwing two days out of the week, I mean there are some things that you miss and at the end of the day you wish you could have those things back. You can't practice enough. You can't work on timing enough, but I don't think certain things came down to timing today. Just poor execution.

**RE: How ready are you to return to your normal routine?**

I wish I could tell you. I think the frustration comes when you do any and everything to make sure your body is at peak performance. From cardio, treatment, practice, film, cardio, treatment, practice, film. It's been repetition. I think it's disheartening to me because there's so much invested time put in. I don't want to play the "woe is me" game, but I have to be better. That's what's so frustrating. When you want it so bad and you push. You put so much on your plate and you know it doesn't come down to you, but at the end of the day you just have to uphold your end of the bargain. When certain things don't happen, that's when frustration comes. That's why I'm frustrated. It's not necessarily about practice, which it is to a degree, but when you've been doing something over a certain time you kind of get in a regimen of when you're supposed to do certain things. Obviously my arm hasn't allowed me to do a lot of practice. I've been on a pitch count for a long time, but at the end of the day it is what it is. That's not a scape goat. That's not something that I want people to bail me out on. It's just something that is reality.

**RE: How do you get off that pitch count?**

I don't know.

**RE: What does your shoulder feel like after a game?**

For people who...labrum, rotator cuff, just shoulder soreness. I wish I could say what the injury is because I don't really know what it is either. No matter how much you push, no matter how much you ice, the anti-inflammatory you take. Trust me, I've done it. Acupuncture, massages. There's not a night that goes by without me getting some type of work done on my arm. You just don't have the strength. From the range of motion, you work on the range of motion then come game time and you never know how the game can play out. Of course you try to stay under 25-30 throws, but if you surpass that or you get hit on it or you have to run or you get tackled and fall on your shoulder, certain things happen. That's the game of football. As far as stiffness, just muscle tension, there's a lot going on. At the end of the day it's not something that hasn't got worse over the weeks or hasn't got better over the weeks. It's just been the same.

**RE: Is the pain affecting how you throw the ball?**

I wouldn't say so, no. I think the thing is when you talk to the different people who can help you with it, there is no magical surgery. It's just time. I've been hearing that since the injury happened, but when you look around the league and you see guys doing certain things that you know you're capable of doing, whatever it is. I feel as if this team has everything that it needs to go to the next level. Even with me and the position that I am in, it still didn't come down to my arm tonight. It still comes down to execution. You can't praise the defense enough. Those guys battled, gave us opportunities, gave us opportunities and more opportunities. It's just on us to sustain drives and take the tension and pressure off those.

**RE: Key to tonight's close game**

It's a divisional game. We are very familiar with what those guys do, even though this was our first time playing. And vice versa. I wasn't shocked that the game played out the way it played out. We just have to find ways to win.

**RE: Are you considering sitting out?**

That's not on me. My job is to do the things that I can control and for me at this particular point in time, I don't have an answer for you. I know, and I'll make public, that I have tried and done everything. I think the frustration, like I said before, comes when no matter what you do – you can rub magic dust on it, go to this or that person, have the placebo things done where you think certain things are what they are – and you come out and you're still the same. Like I said, over the past couple of weeks nothing has really changed.

**RE: Response to potentially being asked to sit out of Sunday's game**

I guess we'll have to have that conversation if we have that conversation. I'm not looking forward to that conversation.

**RE: How frustrating is it to not be able to do the things you know you can do?**

I mean he [Ryan Kalil] knows. He had the same situation. Like I said, it's one thing to have shoulder soreness, but when you talk about labrum and certain things on your throwing shoulder you just have to be very strategic of how you do certain things. The way I play, it is what it was. I don't necessarily know when it happened. It felt good early on, but from running to constant throwing, but whatever.

**RE: Will it bother you if you're not on the field Sunday?**

I don't know.

**RE: Would you consider surgery?**

I don't know. At this particular point, I don't know. I've been eager to go to RV's office every week, eager to find out what it is. Did you find what it is? What am I supposed to do? What do we have to do? It is what it is. It is what we expect it to be. It's not getting better, it's not getting worse. It's just a lot of soreness and tension in the joints.

***Defensive End Mario Addison  
Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Coming up just a little bit short again**

It's hurtful. It's demoralizing when you go out there and play hard and you don't come out on the right side of the stick. But like Coach said, we need to hold our heads up high. We fought well but quite frankly, I'm tired of hearing the same stuff every week. I'm tired of telling you all that we're going to play the next game, this and that. I'm just tired of it.

**RE: The defense's performance and holding the Saints to just 12 points**

I'm proud of our defense, we did well. We fought our ass off and we did exactly what we needed to do. But we can always do a little better.

**RE: Where the motivation going forward**

To fight for each other. It's a brotherhood. We love each other. It's a family so fight for the man beside you. Do it for yourself and do it for the man beside you. For me, I wanted to win this game for Coach Rivera because he believes in us like nobody else.

***Cornerback James Bradberry  
Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Defensive mindset coming in to the game**

We knew coming in to the game that Drew Brees and Michael Thomas, all those guys on the offensive side of the ball, they're an explosive offense. They're capable of putting a lot of points on the board. We pretty much didn't want to give them anything easy. We didn't want them to score at all. Unfortunately, they scored 12. If they don't score, they can't win. Unfortunately, we lost.

**RE: Preparing for New Orleans**

They didn't do anything that we didn't expect. We knew they were going to try to get the ball over to Michael Thomas and put him in the slot. We knew [Alvin] Kamara is a good running back. He's a patient running back and he's going to find a hole. So, they didn't do anything we didn't expect, but unfortunately we just weren't at the right place at the right time.

***Linebacker Thomas Davis***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: What does it feel like to be so close to a win?**

It's extremely frustrating knowing that we are fighting for the opportunity to stay in the playoff race, knowing who was coming in, knowing this is the opportunity for us to defend what is ours. To come up short again is extremely frustrating.

**RE: Takeaways**

No moral victories in this game. No moral victories. I am pleased with the way this team went out and competed. We fought hard. We know that we were going against a dynamic offense, those guys are capable of putting up big numbers week in and week out. I feel like we did a good job of limiting them to 12 and being much better in the red zone this week.

**RE: Difference defensively this week**

I think we did a better job of executing tonight. Guys came out and played with a lot of energy. Ryan Kalil gave a speech earlier in the day that got everybody super excited about playing motivated. I feel like we just used that energy in this game tonight.

***Cornerback Donte Jackson***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Defensive game plan entering tonight's game**

Going out there, and just thinking about doing our jobs. That's all we came here to do. Do our job, and we were able to execute.

**RE: Interception on the Saints' two-point conversation try**

It was a scramble drill. I was able to sit in my zone, and kind of read the quarterback's eyes. He was rolling out towards me, but not really looking at me, he was looking at his tight end. I was just able to see him looking at his tight end coming back across. He threw the ball, and I was able to make a play on it.

**RE: The difficulties surrounding the inability to finish**

It's tough man, it's tough. Like I always say, everyone wants to win in this league. You prepare all week to win, and I think the close ones like that, they hurt the worse.

**RE: Being the team's best defensive effort thus far**

I don't know, man. We didn't win where it mattered, so you can call it what you want to call it. But, we all wanted the W.

***Center Ryan Kalil***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Not being able to sustain momentum throughout the game**

Sometimes the ball bounces funny, you know. It's frustrating, because some games come down to a couple plays, and this one you can't pick one. It's just frustrating.

**RE: Cam Newton playing through his shoulder injury**

You can tell he's frustrated. I mean more than anybody else, nobody is more frustrated than Cam. I've played a long time with the guy, and he takes it personal. It's been a frustrating season, needless to say.

**RE: The idea of resting Cam Newton for the final two weeks of the regular season**

I don't have an answer for that. That's not in my decision making, regardless. Cam is one of the toughest players I've ever played with. I've seen the guy take hits, and get his body up, game after game, season after season. Hits I've seen him take, other guys wouldn't get up from. I don't know what to tell you, it's the same guy who makes huge plays doing what he does, and fights through a lot of stuff. He's been fighting all season, and obviously he's frustrated at how things have turned out.

***Linebacker Luke Kuechly***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Frustration associated with the current losing streak**

Well, it's obviously frustrating, but you try to look for positives in situations. You look at these last few weeks, and we have had opportunities to win the game at the end of the game. Whether if we are on defense or on offense we have given ourselves opportunities. You look at stuff, sometimes the ball bounces your way, sometimes it doesn't but offense, defense, special teams we all fought today. We are going to continue to fight, we have fought all year. That's just the kind of team we have. We got guys that take a lot of pride in what's going on, and sometimes things go your way, sometimes they don't. The coaches did a great job, our guys prepare, our guys work hard. Guys take a lot of pride in what we got going on. Moving forward, it's going to be the same thing, guys are going to fight their butts off.

**RE: Any sense within the locker room of rallying around and playing for Coach Rivera**

Yes, coach is great. Coach has been great since the day I got here. You play for a lot of things, and a lot of it is the coaches that bust their butts to put us in position to play. We have a great group of guys, a great coaching staff, a lot of guys that take a lot of pride in what we have going on. We just have to make a couple more plays. This locker room, this organization, this group of guys, and coaches do an excellent job. We just have to try and find a way to come out on top these last few games.

**RE: Defensive mindset despite seeing their quarterback battle through a shoulder injury**

I think it's just the epitome of this team. You have guys that are banged up, you got guys that aren't feeling 100%, but they continue to go out there and fight. I think that's just kind of what we have always talked about with this team. These guys take a lot of pride in not only this team, but their personal efforts. That's what makes this game fun, and this team, this organization is special. That regardless of what's going on, everybody is going to go out there and fight as hard as they can to win.

***Tight End Chris Manhertz***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: His touchdown**

Caught him by surprise there. It was a play we practiced a few times this week. Given the opportunity, down and distance, I had a good feeling it was going to be caught. I think it was just a matter of execution. Christian [McCaffrey] did a good job of running the ball, I just finished it.

**RE: Offensive play calling**

I mean, we gave them a variation of things. I think they did a pretty solid job up front, but we tried to mix it up a little bit and keep them on their toes.

**RE: Inability to score despite a good defensive performance**

It's a shame that we didn't do our part as an offense as efficiently as we could have possibly been, but hats off to the defense. That's what it's all about. It's never going to be a perfect game. There are going to be ups and downs, but at the end of the day we're going to take care of each other and hold each other accountable.

***Wide Receiver DJ Moore***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Cam's shoulder and whether his passes were affected by it**

The balls always get there so I don't see any problem with it. We just have to make the catch when it's in our vicinity. They weren't coming up short, whenever the ball is in our vicinity we've just got to catch it.

**RE: Takeaways from the game**

That we played hard. On my end, I had the fumble and that was just something where I didn't even feel the guy behind me so that's that.

**RE: What he could've done differently to avoid the fumble**

Be aware. I think I had pretty good ball security, I just know somebody had my other arm so I couldn't get it in. That's about it.

**RE: The team's attitude going forward**

Positive because we're just going one game at a time now. We're just going into next week against Atlanta trying to win.

***Cornerback Captain Munneryn***  
***Carolina Panthers***

**RE: Losing another close game**

Yeah, very close one. We just fell short.

**RE: Losing another game by less than seven points**

Very tough, very tough. I felt like we played our tails off, just fell short. Didn't make the plays when we needed to, gave up a couple plays, but had a chance to win the game and we just fell short.

**RE: Holding the Saints offense to only 12 points**

It's tough, but we're a team. I'm a firm believer if they don't score, they don't win. I feel like we controlled the game, for the most part, we just couldn't finish.

**RE: What he hopes to get out of the last two games of the season**



Just finish strong and see what happens. We've got to go out and just try to win the last two. Nothing we can do but try to finish strong and go out there and just keep pounding.