



**CAROLINA PANTHERS VS. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2018 • MERCEDES-BENZ SUPERDOME**  
**PANTHERS HEAD COACH RON RIVERA**

(On getting a win) "It kind of cleansed it a little bit, going forward. The big questions that will linger for us is 'What if? What if? What if?' I get that part of it. To get off the schneid, I think, is pretty cool for the guys. It gives us the opportunity to head off into the offseason a little bit with their heads up. It's probably the best way to send Ryan (Kalil) and Pepp (Julius Peppers) off on their way. (They are) two great Panthers. It's kind of nice for them."

(On the locker room experience following the last game for Kalil and Peppers) "The guys were really appreciative we won for them. They kind of took that sense and that feel, which is really cool. I have been fortunate that I've been around some guys when they have walked away from the game. I was around when Mike Singletary did it. That was a cool deal as well."

(On winning today preventing the team from getting a higher draft pick) "It is not about draft picks. It is about winning and losing. That's what it's about. We didn't come in here to lose and throw in the towel. We came in here to compete. Sure, they (Saints) had some guys that they didn't play. That is beside the point. You still have to compete. That is the way we will always approach it as long as I am the coach. I just believe that that is the right way to do things. We are professionals, and we come here to do our job."

(On QB Kyle Allen) "He showed us that he is capable. He is a young man that has some growing and has some things to learn, but I do think that he is a guy that is going to come in and compete and give us everything that he has."

(On Allen's steady approach) "He is one of those guys that can take a moment and make it what it is. Some guys get moments like that and seem to blow it out of proportion. Kyle always seems to have that same, steady approach. I appreciate that. The moment just never seems to get too big for him; and, I think one thing that we have to understand about a lot of these young players coming out of college football, especially quarterbacks, is that a lot of these guys are throwing it 40-50 times a game. When you throw the ball that many times, you are put under a tremendous amount of pressure. With all of the scrutiny they get, too, in the media, I think they are really learning how to deal with and cope with those things. That's why you see guys like Baker Mayfield having the type of year that he's having. You see guys that seem to get it a lot sooner than (in the past)."

(On Allen's pocket-presence) "That is exactly what I saw. I thought that he had a tremendous amount of poise. I don't think that he made the moment bigger than it was. I thought that he took it for what it was, and that was an opportunity to go out and play. One of the things that we talked about last night as a group, several of the guys talked about opportunity, opportunity. In fact, one of the guys mentioned Kyle's opportunity. I thought that was really cool that the teammates were thinking about those things."

(On why Devin Funchess didn't play) "It was just a decision that I made going forward."

(On his thoughts on the Saints' offensive performance) "That would be unfair to do because they didn't play Drew (Brees) and they didn't play Alvin (Kamara). I do appreciate the way that our guys played hard and came out and fought. To do that (make comments about the Saints), would be very unfair to them. I know what Coach Payton is capable of as a play caller. I know who Drew Brees is and the rest of that offense, so I just think that they are the #1 seed in the NFC for a reason."



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**PANTHERS PLAYER QUOTES**

**QB Kyle Allen**

(On his first NFL start) “First start was incredible man. I said this last week when I went in the game, I just felt at home right when I got on the field. Coming up to this game, there were little nerves here and there throughout the week, but once I got on the field I felt back at home. Just taking it play by play, executing and having a plan every single play and just trying to focus on the now. I think we did a good job of that today.”

(On getting this opportunity to start) “It felt incredible, it’s the preparation and opportunity. We had a team meeting last night and we spoke a lot about opportunity and I think this league’s filled with opportunities and the guys that stay in the league for a long time are the guys who take advantage of those opportunities. Obviously, there are a lot of things to clean up throughout this, but I said this in my Wednesday press conference, we just wanted to come out of here with a win. For all those guys who have struggled this whole season, for guys like Ryan (Kalil), for guys like Pep (Julius Peppers). Just send them out in a good way and to be up however many that was at one point, 23-0, 30-0, it was just awesome.”

(On his confidence) “It’s just been built up for a long time. I’ve been around a lot of great quarterbacks, I’ve watched the quarterbacks in this league and I knew I can have success in this league. I think it’s self-confidence, I think it’s other people believing in me and giving me that confidence. I just think that at the quarterback position, if you do not have confidence, you do not have anything.”

**LB Luke Kuechly**

(On ending the season with a win) “It is a good feeling, guys work really hard every week. To go out there and put up a performance that gives us an opportunity to win and guys prepared this week extremely hard. I think that is a testament to this team and this coaching staff for keeping guys involved and thinking about the right things and being positive. It would have been easy this year to just pack it in and say this last game doesn’t mean anything, but it speaks to the characters of the guys in this room, it speaks to what coach (Ron) Rivera is able to do. His ability to motivate and keep guys together, no matter who it was, from top to bottom on this team everybody played hard and that is what makes this team special.”

(On sending Ryan Kalil and Julius Peppers out with a win) “You talk about two guys who are two of the best players in this team’s history and to send them out with a win after the way this season has gone is something that is cool. Those guys deserved this, they’ve worked extremely hard. Ryan (Kalil) and Pep (Julius Peppers) been through a lot of different situations and tough times. Those guys are the epitome of what this team is about; tough leaders, good leaders. We are lucky to have those guys on this team and have the opportunity to play with them.”

**C Ryan Kalil**

(On ending his career with a win) “There is just so much that you cannot control, not everybody gets to do the Peyton Manning and go out with a Super Bowl win. Listen, there is a lot that I have been proud of that I accomplished, playing 12 years for the same team is not the norm in this league, so I am very grateful. There are a lot of people that have helped me accomplish that. For me today, the person I kept thinking about the most was my dad. I have spent a lot of time with him throughout the years working on my craft; his confidence has helped me along with way.”

(On reading articles about his legacy with the Carolina Panthers) “A lot of family members have been sending me stuff. I saw some of the nicest things people have ever said about me these last couple of

weeks. So, I have been very grateful for that and feel very humbled. I will tell you what, if you ever want a confidence booster you should retire; a lot of nice things will be said about you.

### **RB Christian McCaffrey**

(On possibly playing quarterback in today's game) "They told me I was next, so I figure I should get the wing loose... Just played some backyard football, but I have been a running back my whole life."

(On Kyle Allen's Performance) "A lot of poise, I think. He is a guy who has always answered the call and had a couple great throws today. He was calm and collected the whole time. It was really cool to see him. I played with him in the Army All-American game in high school. Just being able to line up in the same backfield as him to start the game makes you remember that things come full circle. I was really happy for him."

(On the team's performance) "It shows you the kind of locker room we have. We have a lot of guys who are unbelievable leaders. We have some big-name guys and some guys who kind of go under the radar a lot too, but will always fight. That is what I thought was cool today."

(On his playing time in today's game) "They had told me before the game, 'we are going to get you in and get you out.' I did not know what that meant, so I just prepared like I was going to play the whole game and whenever they take me out I will listen to what they say."

### **CB Captain Munnerlyn**

(On the team winning the last game of the season) "We had lost six, or seven in a row, so it was definitely a good thing that we were able to go get this win."

(On sending Ryan Kalil and Julius Peppers out with a win) "It means a lot. Those guys put a lot into this franchise, like I said. To send those guys out with a bang is amazing."