

CAROLINA PANTHERS POSTGAME QUOTES SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018

HEAD COACH RON RIVERA

(On quarterback Cam Newton's shoulder injury)

"Cam's [Newton] shoulder is a little bit sore, so we'll go from there. We'll see what the doctor has to say after he gets a chance to look at him."

(On when he decided he was going to help with the defensive play calling)

"I was helping out with the defensive play calling all day. That is what I was doing."

(On whether he was making all calls on defense)

"I was helping with the defensive play calling."

(On how long he has been helping call defensive plays)

"I was helping with the defensive play calling."

(On whether his play card was different today because he was helping with defensive play calling)

"No. I have been holding that same type of play card for a long time."

(On Newton's interceptions)

"We will have to go back and look at it, but unfortunately we lost the turnover battle today."

(On why they lost the game other than the turnovers)

"Well, that and we gave up a big penalty up over the top, which I have an opinion on that, but I can't share it. Again, the guys go out and fight and they do the best they can."

(On why he felt like he needed to help with defensive play calling today)

"Just a different set of eyes and another perspective."

(On reports released from CBS Sports about Panthers Owner David Tepper being frustrated with the Panthers' losses)

"At the end of the day, unless Mr. Tepper says it, I'm not going to address it. So, we can forget about asking me those questions please."

(On losing tight end Greg Olsen to a foot injury)

"Well, it was tough. Greg [Olsen] had a good week of practice. There were some things that were put in for him and unfortunately, we lost Greg, but I thought [tight end] Ian [Thomas] got in and he made some plays himself, so we have some young guys that continue to get opportunities."

(On Olsen's injury)

"We'll see. Again, we'll let the doctors determine that situation for us."

(On whether he is concerned about his job security as head coach)

"I am not going to address that question. Do not ask that question again please."

(On how the Panthers will get out of its losing hole)

“Win, that’s the only way. At the end of the day, you give yourself a chance and fight to the very end. You can look at it, the last few games we have played have come down to the last opportunities we have had, whether it be on offense or defense. You just have to make a play. That is unfortunately something we haven’t been able to do right now. We have not been able to make a play when it matters.”

(On what led Newton calling a timeout before the two-minute warning on third down)

“Cam [Newton] looked at something and called a timeout. He didn’t like what he saw. He has that freedom to do that. You’ll have to ask him why he called it.”

(On fourth down timeout)

“That was to settle in and try to get what we felt was the best call we had. We wanted to really get a chance to think about it and that’s what we tried to do.”

(On whether Newton’s shoulder is becoming more of a concern)

“We’ll see. Again, for the most part, we’ve been able to get through it, but he got really sore at the end of this game. We’ll see again what the doctors have to say about it once they get a chance to look at it.”

(On whether Newton’s shoulder injury is worse this week compared to others)

“Well again, when you throw as many passes as he did this game, that is going to happen.”

(On what led the Panthers to turn away from the run game)

“We were trying to score. Some of it has to do with play calling and Coach [Offensive Coordinator Norv Turner] is going to call what he believes is the best for our offense. I support his play calling 100 percent.”

(On Cam Newton’s performance today versus last week)

“I’m going to look at the tape and make those. I’m not going to say something that I’m not quite sure about. I’m going to make sure I get a chance to look at it all and get a good understanding of it.”

(On giving up a touchdown on Tampa Bay’s first drive)

“If you allow a score, it’s an impact period. It doesn’t matter whether it’s the first drive, second drive or third drive, just giving up a score has an impact. We had some opportunities to get up the field, we just didn’t convert. Again, we just have to shore that up, go back and get that corrected.”

(On mixing in defensive end Wes Horton into the game)

“Trying to create a little something different as far as our pass rusher. We like Wes’ [Horton] length, we like Wes’ [Horton] quickness off the ball and his three technique. We were trying to mix something up on the inside.”

(On whether the rush and coverage complimented each other)

“I thought we did at times. I thought we had some opportunities at times. I will admit this, I thought Jameis [Winston] hurt us big time with his mobility, tucking the ball and running a couple times. He converted some early first downs for them and that kept us off balance a little bit as well. We tried to stay in the rush lanes, but sometimes we got beat out of

them. We mixed up the rush trying to trap him a couple times which we did, but a couple times, he got outside and when he got outside, he was able to find the receivers open.”

(On whether he is worried that outside reports will seep into the locker room)

“I hope not. As far as I’m concerned, unless Mr. Tepper puts his name on it, I think everybody needs to just calm down and let what’s really being said and let the truth come out. If anybody has a question, I think they should ask Mr. Tepper. I don’t think that’s fair to sit there and say, ‘sources say’.”

QUARTERBACK CAM NEWTON

(On failure being due to lack of execution in credible situations)

“Well, it was a personal blow for me being that I just have to take care of the ball. It’s a low percentage chance you’re going to win a football game if you turn the ball over four times. That’s just care-free football, we can’t have that, I can’t allow that and accept that from myself. I just have to do a better job with my accuracy and decision making.”

(On if his shoulder is affecting him)

“It’s alright, it will be alright”

(On mistakes being player driven and not coaching driven)

“Absolutely, like I said, I take this one personal being that I just have to play better, that’s what it comes down to. As a signal caller, as a quarterback, it’s hard to point blame when you have to first account for yourself in the mirror. When I look back at this game, it just really comes down to protecting the football. Who knows where we would go if we were in field goal range, it could’ve led to a fresh start or whatever but it just comes down to myself and being able to protect the ball.”

(On what happened on the second interception intended for DJ Moore)

“It’s sad because I don’t even know which one you’re talking about. I know a lot of those is just a lack of execution. They did a great job and played a great defense, very stingy and stout up front. Guys playing very opportunistic and like I said, the inaccuracy of myself today, it showed and it hurt us, it hurt us bad, and we really needed this game just as we need every single game we do play. For the most part, you have games like this in a season and for us we just have to make sure it can’t keep happening.”

(On if Tampa Bay’s pressure was a big factor in his interceptions)

“To a degree, but at the end of the day our offensive line did great. They gave me opportunities, receivers played great. But like I say, you just can’t keep throwing the ball up for grabs and I’m a better player than that and I know that. “

(On if calling two timeouts prior to consecutive plays with less than three minutes to go was because the play clock was winding down)

“It was the play clock. The clock was running down and it is better to be in a clean play rather than a bunch of guys not understanding what the call is. We came off the timeout, I had the play call, I had some type of miscommunication with formations and order of protection and I just wanted to make sure everybody was on the same page.”

(On what has to change collectively to win again)

“Take personal challenges and accept responsibility, I can’t really speak for a lot of people and I’m not going to speak for a lot of people but this wasn’t Carolina Panthers football,

offensively, today. Like I said, I take this one personal because I know, keep running off this field in embarrassment, really, knowing that you're leaving because of your mishaps. At the end of the day you learn from it, take this one on the chin – it hurts – and keep moving forward. We just have to find ways to get back in the win column and I feel like we're on a brink."

(On if the offense was affected by loss of Greg Olsen)

"Not necessarily, we have strong beliefs in Ian (Thomas) and knowing what he's capable of. He had a great catch today and just getting him comfortable. That's what it pretty much comes down to."

(On if he could have imagined going from 6-2 to 6-6)

"No, sir, but hey, we put ourselves in this situation and we have to get ourselves out."

(On if he can expand on his shoulder and how it's impacting his play)

"No."

CORNERBACK JAMES BRADBERRY

(On how frustrating it is to lose four in a row)

"Of course, the mood is down right now, but we just have to come back Monday and be prepared to work again. We can't do anything about the past. You can only do something about the future and move on from it."

(On what the message was in the locker room after a loss)

"There is nothing to be said. Everyone around here knows that you have to come to work on Monday and [prepare] for Cleveland and take it one game at a time."

(On whether they think they are still in the playoff hunt)

"We just need to focus on winning the game. We are not winning games right now. That is all we can do and that is to look forward to Cleveland. We need to play out the season and see where the cookie crumbles."

(On how he rated his play against Tampa Bay wide receiver Mike Evans)

"I thought I played alright. He caught a couple passes on me, but nothing deep though, nothing over the top. That was my goal going into the game."

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN RYAN KALIL

(On the offensive line not playing as efficiently in recent games)

"That is what it comes down to in all three phases. So, there is something you can do about that from a coaching stand point. I am very happy with how [Head Coach] Ron [Rivera] goes about things week to week. That is what makes this tough is because I think he is an incredible football coach and I think his staff is very good. Offensively, I am very happy with the game plan going in each and every week and there are plays to be made, but we do not make them. I think it boils down to a lack of discipline, at least that is what I've seen come up time and time again the last few weeks."

(On tight end Greg Olsen's injury)

“Well, guys like Greg do not come out every week and tell you what’s wrong with them. There are other guys in this league that like everybody to know that they’re hurting and when this hurts and that hurts, so that when they play and have a good game, they have people say what a tough guy they are. Greg has never been like that and this foot thing is something he has been dealing with for a long time. But, because of the kind of character guy and because of the kind of pro he is, he continues to battle each and every week and continues to play. It is just one of those things that I think caught up to him. He has been dealing with this all season long and this is different from the one he went out with last year. I have been playing with him for a long time, so I am very frustrated for him because I know how important this is to him. Being in that same situation, it’s not how you want the season to end, so hopefully he gets good news this week. We will see.”

LINEBACKER LUKE KUECHLY

(On his thoughts after a loss)

“It’s hard, because we thought we came out here with a good plan. You take another one on the chin. The thing that’s good is we’ve got next week and that’s what you can look forward to is having another opportunity next week to get out here and get this bad taste of our mouth. We’ll go in tomorrow, we’ll check things out and we’ll improve.”

(On if there was a difference with head coach Ron Rivera calling plays)

“Those guys all do a good job and we’ve just got to do a good job of executing and getting the ball out on defense.”

(On if the mobility of quarterback Jameis Winston was tough to defend)

“He did a good job of extending plays. He’s a guy that moves well. He’s ultra-competitive, so he’s not afraid to tuck it and get some extra yards. When you get a situation like that, you’ve got to make sure we’ve got eyes on him and we’re able to get on him before he gets too many yards.”

(On losing close games)

“You look at it and we gave ourselves a chance at the end of the game and that’s what you ask for. You’ve got to make plays earlier in the game so that it doesn’t come down to that. We did some good things, but obviously we didn’t do enough good things.”

WIDE RECEIVER DJ MOORE

(On how the offense struggled against the Tampa Bay defense)

“I don’t really know. They just had a good game plan for us at the end of the day, on defense.”

(On quarterback Cam Newton dealing with shoulder soreness during the game and if it affected his play)

“No, we didn’t see any difference. I guess he was hurting, but when [backup quarterback Taylor] Heinicke came in, I guess that was the breaking point with his arm. He was fine the whole game. He didn’t say anything in the huddle about his shoulder.”

(On Newton’s first interception)

“I don’t even know what happened. I tried to make the play, but I don’t know where the ball went after that, so I couldn’t tell you.”

(On Newton's second interception)

"It was well disguised. The dude came into the flat area so fast that I didn't even see him, Cam didn't even see him. He just made a good play on the ball."

TIGHT END GREG OLSEN

(On re-injuring his foot)

"I broke the bone that's already broken again, I guess that's the clarity. Since I've come back, I've dealt with a variety of pain and whatever in my foot and just stemming from the compensation or just the trauma that it's been through with the surgery and whatnot. Today, that plantar just finally had enough. It kind of just ruptured on me. It's been sore and I've been able to kind of manage it since I've come back. I felt okay; it wasn't really bothering me much today. I felt like I got off to a good start running around and then that first play of the second quarter, I just came out of my stance and I just knew right away what happened. It popped pretty good on me."

(On dealing with his injury the past two seasons)

"It's just been obviously a very frustrating two seasons now. To break last year in the first place, have the surgery, try to come back and play; make it back the last couple games and play in the playoffs, then go all offseason feeling like you're behind it and to rebreak it; you kind of go back and forth about whether we can play, not play and we decide to give it a shot. It was actually getting pretty good as far as the bone was concerned. I developed some soft-tissue stuff over the course of the last six or seven weeks and dealt with it and tried to keep it at bay as best we could. It's just kind of one of those things that it's just a matter of time and we've kind of pushed this foot I think as far as possible over the last two seasons and today it just kind of had enough."

(On how he injured his foot)

"I ruptured my plantar fascia. The plantar fascia on the bottom of my foot popped. It's just been something we've dealt with since I've come back."

(On his outlook for the rest of the season)

"Yeah, I don't know. It'll be tough. I think we've gotten about as much as we could've ever asked for out of this foot in its current state. It's just tough. To go 10 years and not really have anything and then one little injury now will stall me for a good part of two seasons is frustrating. I can still play at a high level. It just hasn't been in the plans right now."

(On what is holding back the team)

"I don't know, I don't know. I'm probably not the guy to ask right now."

DEFENSIVE END JULIUS PEPPERS

(On whether the defense was putting enough pressure on quarterback Jameis Winston)

"I think overall, it was a decent performance. For the most part, we limited the explosive runs, had a few lapses in the first quarter and the first half when Jameis stepped up scrambled a little bit. Other than that, I thought it was pretty solid."

(On whether he was happy with their play in the second half defensively)

"I thought it was progress. It was not good enough to win, which we need. Overall though, I thought that it was solid. In the game, we have been struggling a little bit in the red zone and I thought we tightened that up. We did not allow them to get down there as much. I think we need to force a little more takeaways. It was a good performance I thought."

WIDE RECEIVER JARIUS WRIGHT

(On the injury to tight end Greg Olsen)

"It's crazy, I still don't even know what happened. I don't even know what's wrong with him now. Not that we aren't thinking about Greg, but in that situation we've got to think about how we're going to try to score."

(On if losing Olsen is tough)

"No doubt about it, but we all know what type of guy Greg is, a strong, strong guy. We saw how fast he healed from the broken foot earlier this year. So, if anybody can come back from it, Greg can."

(On losing four straight game)

"We've just got to be better. At the end of the day, the X's and O's and the players making plays, we've just got to be better."

(On the offense coming up short in critical situations)

"You see it at the end of the game. When we needed to score, we just couldn't get it done. That's one critical situation. We just have to be able to stay on the field. I don't know what the third downs were today, but I know we've got to be able to stay on the field on third downs."

(On coming up short at the end of close games)

"I tell the media every week, we expect to be in those situations. We expect to win in those situations. For the past three weeks – besides Pittsburgh and that wasn't even that close – we just haven't gotten it done. I don't think it's anything new. That's the honest answer."

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