



DETROIT LIONS VS. CAROLINA PANTHERS

FORD FIELD

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2018; 1:00 PM ET

POST-GAME QUOTES

HEAD COACH MATT PATRICIA
T TAYLOR DECKER
WR KENNY GOLLADAY
QB MATTHEW STAFFORD
CB DARIUS SLAY
DB TRACY WALKER

LIONS HEAD COACH MATT PATRICIA

Opening Statement: “Obviously, real happy for our team here. I think those guys went out and fought really hard and did a good job of trying to execute the game-plan. We knew it was going to be a hard-fought game. Coach (Ron) Rivera and the Panthers, that’s a really good team. A lot of really good players, well-coached, an established team in this league for a long time. Tough team, physical team, and we knew that’s what kind of game it was going to be. We knew it would take all 60 minutes, which it did, and I’m glad and proud of our guys for fighting all the way through it. I think they showed a lot of mental toughness all the way through the game, definitely some situational football that came up that they needed to go out and execute at a high level. A lot of little things in there situationally that came up, like with the clock and field position and a couple of those things that we had to do a good job of, so, I think those guys just tried to battle and followed through with the game-plan. We knew the game was going to be tight and we just had to go and execute and finish all the way up to the last play. So, (I’m) proud of our guys for that. I think they handled the week well. Again, like I had mentioned maybe a little bit earlier in the week, we’re all so very grateful for those of our friends and family that are in the military and everyone that’s in the military right now. So, our guys, they did a couple great things this week and I was really proud of them for doing that to show their appreciation. We’re all real blessed from that standpoint.”

On if he was surprised that the Panthers went for two on the final drive: “No, I’m never surprised by anything in an NFL football game to be honest with you. But I think probably, you can ask Coach (Ron) Rivera, but they had good momentum going in that situation. When it was going to be a long, physical game, which it was, I think they had a couple players on their sideline that were grinding through it. We did, too. And I think he just probably felt—you can ask him, I’m just kind of speculating here. It just depends on the situation. That’s always an option. You have to be ready to go in those situations.”

On his defensive approach on the Panthers’ two-point play: “To definitely keep them out. That’s what we were—trying to make sure they didn’t convert. Obviously, it’s so hard. There are so many weapons right there you have to try to defend. Obviously, the quarterback’s No. 1. (Christian) McCaffrey, (Devin) Funchess, (Greg) Olsen—he’s like dynamite down there. And (DJ) Moore was having a big game. So, we were kind of holding on there. We knew it was going to be potential for a bang-bang play, like the ball

coming out quick. And when it didn't come out quick, in general, it's usually not good for anybody against Cam Newton. So, just fortunate that we were able to kind of get out of that situation."

On the status of RB Kerryon Johnson: "I don't have any injury updates on him right now. So, we'll see. He's getting checked out by the doctors and we'll handle that."

On how injuries will affect the team with the short week coming up: "Short weeks are never easy. It's something every team does, every team has a Thursday game. So, whoever the players are that are unable to play, then they won't be able to play. And who can play will play. Sometimes you may not know until the last minute. For this week, it's going to be a big mental week anyways. There's not a lot of time, you're not going to really go out there and grind it out in practice from that standpoint. You have to try to get the bodies to recover and I think it's like Wednesday in my world, or whatever it is right now already. So, it's just the mental preparation, which everybody can do. Everybody can mentally prepare and get themselves ready to go, and study and be ready to go. And we'll see how physical everybody is when we get up on Thursday morning."

On how he balances running and passing the ball: "We're going to try to do whatever we can to win that particular game. But fundamentally in football, yes, you always like to be able to have balance. To be able to run the ball, defensively we're trying to stop the run and make sure that they don't have all those plays available to them. The run game sets up the play action, which sets up the quick game, which sets up the drop back. So, it just kind of steam rolls in that effect when you can't stop it. Offensively, when you can do that, it's a big advantage for us. So, the situations dictate. It's kind of all different. Sometimes you can run it early, sometimes you can run it late. It just kind of depends on the game itself. But we're certainly going to always try to be balanced whenever we can be to help us win."

On his fear about serious injuries to his players: "That's part of the sport. This happens every single week, and for every team that plays. So, we just wait until we know concrete evidence, or circumstances, or situations or whatever it is. Some guys immediately after a game, you never really know because emotions and adrenaline and the body is revving at a high level, so you really have to just—if there's someone that's really seriously injured, make sure they're OK. But other than that, you have to kind of wait. Which is hard, but we have to wait and let all the doctors and the appropriate people that understand that stuff better than I do give me the information at that point."

On if RB Kerryon Johnson might be injured for the rest of the season: "Again, I'm not going to comment anything on it. I think when we miss anybody that's not out there that plays for us regularly, whether it's guys on offense, defense, or special teams, you have to just keep going. We don't really have any choices. We can't do anything about it. So, whatever it is we'll figure it out."

On Lions WR Kenny Golladay's touchdown catch: "Yeah, he did a great job. Obviously, he's been a solid player for us all year long. Just can't say enough good things about the way he prepares every single week and the way he approaches the game. You know, he's growing. I think maybe I've talked about this all year, just how that transfer into that next year into the NFL, just how different things can be. And from a cover standpoint and the way that they can play him, and how the people around him affect how the people play and it's good to see him still kind of push through that and grow from that standpoint. And it's going to continue to get harder, you know it is what it is. But the one thing about Kenny is he works, so I'm appreciative of that. He's going to work to make himself the best player he can be."

On how the team adjusted after allowing a touchdown on the first drive: "Well, you know, not the way you want to start a game at all. So we had to go in there and kind of tweak a couple things and kind of look at what they were doing on offense and just try to tighten some stuff up. Maybe play some things a little bit better, a little bit more aggressive from that standpoint. But you know, the game's going to have turns, from that standpoint, and they did a great job of executing early and then late. You know, I think they did a really good job of altering the game plan. (Carolina Offensive Coordinator) Norv Turner's a phenomenal coach, I mean the guy's been in the League a long time and he's got a lot of answers and you got to try to stay with it as best you can. But I would just say credit to our players for mentally pushing through, trying to have some toughness to stay in there and try to handle some of the adjustments that

we made and then go out and execute them. Sometimes you make adjustments that you necessarily don't get to practice, or you haven't run in a couple weeks, or whatever it is, but it's important for that game. You know, that's the ability of what we're looking for is to be able to kind of go from the pool of stuff that we have and use it and apply it when you need it most. And thought again, for the most part our guys did a pretty good job of that today. But again, that's a really good Carolina team now. They're very dangerous, they've obviously physical, they're tough, they're well coached. So you know, just glad we were able to go out and get the win. So we've got to turn around and get going from there."

On CB Darius Slay's tackle that saved a touchdown: "Yeah, no doubt. That's a huge play, that's a great effort play. You know, I mean great hustle, great pursuit, that's a really fast guy that he's chasing. Fortunately, we've got a faster guy for that moment. So just, we don't want to quit, we want to keep going, we want to tackle him and just give us a chance to try to get out of a bad situation. It's unfortunate that that play happened, but certainly again proud of our guys with the mental toughness to settle down and then just play the next couple plays."

LIONS T TAYLOR DECKER

On not being able to afford a loss: "It's not something we've talked about, but unfortunately we've had a string of not-so-great performances. We know that we don't have much room for error basically. We know we have to go out there and perform week to week. This was a huge one to hopefully get things back on track."

On keeping the quarterback clean today: "We all know, everybody has seen it over the years. We keep Stafford upright and he can make some plays. He's pretty phenomenal back there, give him a little time. Again, I think a huge part of that is staying on schedule, and being able to run it, then throw some screens or whatever it may be. Instead of having to get back into a drop-back-every-play-sort-of game. Sometimes that's what the flow of the game dictates, I think we obviously like to be able to start fast."

On Stafford playing with replacement players: "I think it's good to give him some completions early, so he feels comfortable back there. It's probably a broken record, but over and over again the run game going early is huge. We know we have a good group up front. We've had some poor performances on our part but at the end of the day we have some good players up front that want to play at a high level."

On the injuries across the offense: "That's the nature of football. You hate to see it, but you know that there are teams week in and out playing with injuries. Obviously, we'd love to have those guys out there because they are big time playmakers for us, but I think the guys who stepped in did a great job."

LIONS WR KENNY GOLLADAY

On how him and Lions QB Matthew Stafford seemed a little off in the first half and how they corrected it: "I mean, those guys watch film, you know. We just stay with it. I trust him, he trusts me and that's all it takes."

On his touchdown catch: "He just gave me a nice, pretty, high ball. I like balls like that for me to just use my size, hands, athletic ability to go up there and make the catch and that's what I did."

On if he changed his preparation for this game knowing he was the obvious first-choice receiver: "I go in there every week the same. You never know who, what number's going to be called. Any time my number's called, I'm out there going hard. Even when my number's not called, I'm going hard to set up other people. I didn't treat this week no different, there was never no pressure."

On if he noticed the defense playing him differently with WR Marvin Jones Jr. not playing: "I mean, it's not hard. Of course, they know Golden (Tate) is gone, they know Marvin is out, so who else are they going to look to. And you know, I just got to take that challenge, take on that challenge. The whole offense got to take on the challenge. They're going to double me and do whatever they want to do and other guys pick up the slack, which we all did, it was a collective effort out there today."

LIONS CB DARIUS SLAY

On if he was surprised the Panthers attempted a two-point conversion at the end of the game: “I mean, shoot, no. They’re a confident team. I’m glad they went for two—win us the game. Put it on the defense, we want it on the defense anyways. I’m glad they went for two.”

On the defense’s performance today: “As a defense we just knew what they were doing and we just executed our plays. We executed everything we wanted to.”

On the trend of beating good teams in the NFL this season: “I’m not thinking about what everybody else thinks, honestly. You just go out here and compete. They put their pads on just like we put our pads on. We don’t worry about none of that.”

On facing the Bears on a short week: “It’s just a short week. We go get ready to prepare. As a team, we have to take care of our bodies and be ready for Thursday.”

On if he will be watching the Bears and Vikings game tonight: “I’m going to watch the game, but I don’t care.”

On the defense’s ability to contain Panthers QB Cam Newton: “It was, I mean, we practiced it. We knew that’s what we had to do. If we stop him, he’s the show. If we stop the show, we can win. And he’s the show and we stopped him and did our best we could against him and handled that.”

LIONS QB MATT STAFFORD

On the offensive performance today without WR Marvin Jones Jr.: “You know, obviously Marvin (Jones Jr.) is a spectacular player. I have a lot of history with him, throwing the ball to him quite a few times. We’ve made some great plays, we have a lot of chemistry. Having him not out there was tough, but I’m proud of the guys that stepped in. We had Bruce (Ellington) obviously came in and played a bunch for us. Andy Jones, TJ Jones has been here for a while, doing his thing. Then obviously Kenny (Golladay) had a great day. Kerryon (Johnson) ran the ball great. We knew it was going to be a collective effort, it was going to have to take everybody doing a little bit here and there to make things go for us. We didn’t light the scoreboard up by any means, but we got enough points to win the game, which was nice.”

On the impact of RB Kerryon Johnson: “He’s just obviously a great runner when you hand it to him. He does a nice job in the backfield when you throw it to him, he had a nice play on screen here today. He’s got some big play ability, you see some 20-plus (yard) runs, and I’ve got the best view in the house. I’m right behind it sometimes and splits a guy, splits the scene and he’s out. He’s done a nice job for us and it was more the same today.”

On the passing game precision today: “Yeah, it was huge. They’ve got some good players on their defense, you know 24 (James Bradberry) is a really good player and did a nice job on Kenny (Golladay). Kenny made some big plays to help us win. It wasn’t going to be perfect, we knew that. A couple times I was on a different page with Bruce (Ellington) too, kind of hurt us there for some points. The more reps we get at that, the better. We’ll keep figuring out a way to score points.”

On if he was surprised Carolina went for the two-point conversion and if it is a disrespect to the Lions defense: “I don’t know, I wasn’t thinking about respect either way to tell you the truth. They’re an aggressive team, they want to go out and chance to steal one on the road, go for it. Obviously our defense made a great play there at the end. They were rolling a little bit there in the second half on a couple drives. I bet they felt confident, but I was confident in our guys and I’m glad we made the play.”

On what he has seen from WR Kenny Golladay and what made him ready for a performance such as today: “You know, Kenny (Golladay) is just a guy that comes to work every day. He comes to work, he runs his tail off, and he tries to make plays as much as he possibly can. He doesn’t say much and those

guys with that quiet confidence, I feel good about. He's a guy that competes, you guys see it rarely out there but he makes some big plays and starts to celebrate. That's the only time we see him show emotion, too. I'm just happy for him, obviously he's put a lot of work in. He had a lot on his shoulders coming into this game against a really good opponent and a good corner, I was happy for him."

LIONS DB TRACY WALKER

On his interception: "I'm definitely blessed and definitely honored to even be able to make plays like that. With that being said, I'm just happy. I'm very excited. Like I said, I'm just going to enjoy this win."

On the play where he and CB Darius Slay ran down Panthers WR DJ Moore: "It's definitely a little bit of a confidence booster. It definitely kind of gives the defense another chance to basically make stops, to get a stop and we ended up getting a stop. So, it definitely benefited us in the long run. So, with that being said, it just helped us. Like I said, it gives us another chance to make plays."

PANTHERS QUOTES

HEAD COACH RON RIVERA
WR DEVIN FUNCHESS
K GRAHAM GANO
QB CAM NEWTON
WR CURTIS SAMUEL
LB THOMAS DAVIS

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PANTHERS HEAD COACH RON RIVERA

On mistakes the Panthers have to overcome after today's game: "Well, there were (mistakes), but give credit to them. They did some good things. Their punter kicked a—did a heck of a job keeping the ball inside the 10-yard line. That's also a difficult thing. It's tough to go 90 yards and expect to win a football game or score. But when you get in a scoring position you have to put points on the board. That's the bottom line."

On the decision to go for two at the end of the fourth quarter: "I think you go for two on the road to win. That's what I did at the end of the day. What's to say the coin toss is going to go in our favor, what's to tell you we're going to stop them? So, why not go for two."

On K Graham Gano's performance: "He missed a couple kicks. That's all part of it. I was going for the win. That's just the bottom line."

On QB Cam Newton having options and time on the two-point conversion: "He did. That's the unfortunate part. They rushed three, so we knew we had time. Jarius (Wright) broke his route off and came back to the middle, presented a nice target and unfortunately, the ball was a little bit high. We had a chance."

On the Panthers' explosive plays combined with several drops: "Very much so. We had opportunities to make plays, you have to make them. The drops are costly. The explosive plays are great. We had a real, big explosive play and unfortunately, we didn't get points out of that. We have to get points. In this league, if you don't score points, you're not going to win games."

On the adjustments the Panthers can make moving forward to stop sacks on third down: "Be better on first and second down. That's the unfortunate part. A couple things happened on first and second down that put you in those third-and-loss situations, and then a couple times just winning at the line. Getting off clean, presenting a good target for the quarterback to get the ball to you."

On if WR Devin Funchess was overly excited today: "I couldn't tell you that. You'd have to ask Devin that. That's a question for him."

On what caused the drops from the Panthers offense: "Well, it's all part of the game. There's a combination of things that happen when things like that happen. You have to go back and watch it on the tape a little bit closer."

On what goes into the choosing the go-to options on offense despite inconsistencies: "Well, I think the quarterback—you have to ask the quarterback on those decisions that were made. But he was open. So, when you throw the ball to an open guy, hopefully he'll catch it. But those things happen."

On QB Cam Newton's injury: "A guy fell on his leg from behind. Landed on the quarterback's legs below his knees."

On why he made the decision to go for two at the end of the fourth quarter: “To win the game. That’s just as simple as it gets. I went for two to win the game on the road and go from there.”

On how frustrated he is with the loss: “Oh, very frustrated, especially (with) the first drive. We had opportunities to keep them backed up and we didn’t do that and that’s unfortunate. You get a chance to put them in a tough situation and we missed tackles, and you can’t do that. Can’t do that against teams that run the ball hard. And that’s the tough part about it. You go back and you look at it and we’ll see what exactly happened and why, and get those things looked at and taken care of.”

On the matchup between Lions WR Kenny Golladay and Panthers CB James Bradberry and the play Golladay was able to make that led to a touchdown: “Well, the third down one, again, we’ll just go back and look at that one. We’ll go from there. The unfortunate part about it was the quarterback bought a little more time on the penalty one, and then on the third down one he just threw the ball out and threw it to where only the receiver could catch it and the receiver made a heck of a catch.”

On if he thought there was contact on the play: “I definitely thought there was contact, but I’m not the one making that decision. I was also wondering why—you guys saw it, was there a facemask on that on the one where they picked the flag up. I couldn’t tell you, I didn’t see it.”

On how frustrating it is to start fast but then slow down as a team: “It’s very frustrating. This one happened a little bit differently. We didn’t tackle. At the end of the day you have to give them credit, they did some good things. They made some things happen, let’s not take anything away from them. But at the end of the day we had our opportunities’ and we just didn’t capitalize.”

On why the loss today is frustrating: “Yes, because a lot of that stuff shouldn’t have happened. That’s the unfortunate part. It’s part of football. But, again, we’ll go back. We’ll look at it. We’ll make sure we’re giving these guys these guys an opportunity to succeed. Are we putting them in place to have success? And if not, we’ll do a better job.”

On if it’s disappointing to see a veteran team struggle with fundamental mistakes: “It’s disappointing. I’m going to leave it at that. But at the end of the day, as coaches we’ll go back, we’ll show the tape, we’ll talk about what happened and we’ll work to get it corrected. Again, there’s no quick fixes, this is about understanding what your responsibilities are. You have to do your job when you’re called on to do the job. Like I said though, we have to make sure that we’re calling the right kind of plays and we’re putting them in position.”

On if he changed the play call on the timeout during the two point conversion attempt: “No, because the initial read was—we got something off the initial read. So, we went back and said, ‘If they stay in that, this is what we have to do.’ And so we went to another call and unfortunately we had a guy there and we overthrew him.”

On who was the first option on the two-point conversion attempt: “Well, again, on that I’m not going to talk about it specifically. But the quarterback gets back there with a three-man rush and he has time to make a good decision and unfortunately, like I said, we threw it high.”

On the type of confidence QB Cam Newton showed in the younger receivers looking for them late in the game: “It’s a tremendous amount of confidence. Again, it’s about finding the guys that are open, going through your progressions, making your reads and then delivering the ball, which he did.”

On the throws to WR Devin Funchess being contested: “Well, anytime the ball is in your catch radius, you have to make it. The guy’s a terrific receiver, he’s made a lot of big plays for us. Unfortunately, he had a couple that didn’t go his way.”

On his decision to attempt a two-point conversion in the fourth quarter: “I went for two to win the football game, OK? That’s all I’m going to say about it. That was my mindset. We didn’t come here to tie. We didn’t come here to lose. We came here to win the football game and I just felt that was our best opportunity to win.”

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PANTHERS WR DEVIN FUNCHESS

On playing in his hometown today: "It's not even about where we play, everywhere we play I expect to be my best person. I wasn't that today, take out my performance and we're still in the game. Whatever you guys want to say, take out my performance and we're still in the game. We're still right there, in it to win it. We just came up short today."

On if he's putting the loss on himself: "No, we in there to win. Curtis (Samuel), DJ (Moore), Wright (Jarius), everybody in our room made a play. Everybody on offense made a play, we just came up short and we have those type of games."

On what happened after his first drop: "Like I said, it is what it is. You take my performance outside of the game, we still were in it to win it. It wasn't just shouldered on me, I will take full responsibility of myself. I can do more for the team."

On the Lions defense: "Everything didn't fall right. We wanted to put up points against Pittsburgh, came out the first drive and everything was good. We just came out and they played ball, we played ball and we came up short."

PANTHERS K GRAHAM GANO

On the decision to go for two at the end: "You have to talk to Ron (Rivera), I'm not sure about that. Obviously, I've missed kicks before. I felt fine, just missed those and it's a tough game."

On any indication if the decision was because of his performance: "I've been hitting the ball well, obviously it's a tough one to swallow. You never want to have a game like this, but it happens. I'll go out there and work hard this week and bounce back. I'm still fully confident, I've been having a great year. It's not really going to change a lot, just keep kicking."

On the two missed kicks today: "Nothing really to take you through, just a missed kick."

On if he changed anything between the two: "No, I've been doing this for 10 years, plus college and high school."

On the disappointment in the team's performance the past two games: "It's frustrating, but we can't worry about what the Saints are doing. We just have to control what we can control. Like I was saying, this is a tough one. It's a game that we should have won and I'm sure that everybody feels the same way. It's how you bounce back, I'm sure we've got a lot of great guys on the team. We have a ton of talent on the team, I'm sure we'll be fine."

On what he saw on the attempted two-point conversion: “Got to make the play. I’ve got to make that play. That’s what it comes down to. Jarius did a good job with kind of improvising, I just got to make the play.”

PANTHERS QB CAM NEWTON

On having a lot of time to throw on the two-point conversion: “I’ve got to make the play.”

On Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera choosing to go for two: “I kind of expected it. I wouldn’t have wanted it any other way. He trusted in me. I’ve got to uphold my end of the bargain and I didn’t do that. I let this team down and I just got to be better. I think it’s just a perfect indication of guys taking turns making mistakes. And that’s unacceptable with the caliber team that we are, with the caliber team we know we can be, the caliber team that we need to be, it’s just unacceptable. Perfect example, the two-point conversion, I’ve got to make that play. Other times in the game, another person makes a mistake. We’re better than that and it’s just a lack of focus. It was a good opportunity for us to create some cushion in the division and get a much needed road win and we’ve just been so far gone, I feel like on the road, we just got to be better.”

On his decision to keep throwing to WR Devin Funchess: “That’s where the defense kind of indicated me to go. I don’t have no picks, I don’t have no favorites. I don’t play buddy ball on the field. Wherever the defense tells me to go as I make my reads, that’s where I go. ‘Fun’ is a good player, just like any other player on this team and it’s my job to get him the football.”

On what it does to build a player’s confidence to continue to target him: “Whatever the defense tells me to do with my reads going throughout the week, that’s what I’m supposed to do. And it’s my job to put the ball in position, and that’s what it was.”

On how surprised he was to see some of the mistakes today: “It happens. It happens. This game wasn’t won or lost in the last play of the game or the first play of the game. It was just a buildup of things. We could’ve put ourselves in position to win, we didn’t do it. I’m not here to point the blame. Things happen. It’s time for us to move on and get ready for our next opponent. Of course, it was a lot of things that I wish I could’ve had back from that game, but we play a game where you’ve got 11 guys that’s getting paid and want it just as much as the next guy. We just got the worst of the draw and we just got to go back, have a great week of practice and get ready for our next opponent.”

On what he was saying to K Graham Gano on the sideline: “I just didn’t want him to—a lot of times we can kind of overthink things, and I kind of figured this game was going to come down to a kick. And I just wanted him to keep his confidence up. Graham, just like any other player on this team has a lot of confidence. And when you see that exuberance, it’s contagious. And when we go in the tank, personally, as a team, it shows. And I just wanted to tell him, and everybody else, that wasn’t the only conversation that I had. I had it with numerous players. I just wanted to focus in, and just let everyone know that we just need to get our confidence going and create our own type of fate because when you’ve got a game like this—when a team is as balanced as it was today, running the football and throwing the football, as an offense you’ve just got to be patient and take what they give us, and do what we’re supposed to do.”

PANTHERS WR CURTIS SAMUEL

On the receiving group’s conversation in the locker room and in the huddle: “We’re just preparing for football. We try our best to start out strong, to give ourselves an opportunity. There was a lot of defense to really put the pressure on us. (In the) second half, we just went out there and did what we were supposed to.”

On Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera’s faith in the offense: “High confidence. We were all over the field, receivers, O-line doing what it’s supposed to do, a great quarterback, tight ends, the whole group. So, he put the faith in us out there to deliver and we couldn’t get the work done.”

On if the Panthers thought the game might come down to going for extra points after K Graham Gano's misses: "I don't know, me personally, I don't try to look forward to the end of the game. We just try to take it by each possession. Each play we try to drive down the field, create good plays and opportunities to go down there and score, whether our kicker is struggling or not."

PANTHERS LB THOMAS DAVIS

On the team's mindset after back-to-back losses: "I think we just have to keep working. We have to keep going. We have to keep figuring out ways to execute the game-plan better. For us defensively, we have to tackle better than we did today. And that's it, that's what we have to do."

On the coaching decision to go for the two-point conversion in the fourth quarter: "He (Ron Rivera) was being aggressive and trying to go ahead and take the lead in the game. And we had a chance as a defense, we knew they still had timeouts. They still had time on the clock. So even if we converted it, we still had to go out and defend knowing that we're going to be defending a field goal."

On if he takes the two-point conversion attempt as a lack of confidence in the defense: "No, I take it as the coach trying to make the decision and us as players backing coach's decision and going out and competing. That's it."

On his preseason comments about the Panthers defense being a top-10 defense this season: "I still feel that way. We just haven't gone out and executed a full game. We've had games where we just had a lack of execution and guys not being where they need to be. And then we had a game like today where we just didn't tackle well. We were in position to make plays and we just didn't come away with the plays. It's like that sometimes, but we have to figure out as we continue to go down this stretch a way to eliminate those things from happening."

On why the defense is struggling this season: "We'll watch the film and we'll figure out what's going on and why it's happening. And we'll correct it next week. That's all we can do at this point, is watch the film and get better from it."

On if the team interpreted the two-point conversion attempt as desperation: "I don't know how you take it, I just take it was Coach being aggressive and making a call and players going out and trying to execute it. And unfortunately we didn't make it."