



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS LAS VEGAS RAIDERS
MONDAY, SEPT. 21, 2019 • ALLEGIANT STADIUM
SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- With the loss, the Saints move to 1-1 on the season.
- The loss drops Head Coach **Sean Payton's** record against the Raiders to 1-2 and New Orleans' all-time regular season record against the Raiders moves to 6-7-1.
- Offensively, New Orleans racked up 424 yards in the loss with 312 passing yards and 112 rushing yards on the way to scoring 24 points.
- Quarterback **Drew Brees** started his 276th career regular season game today and completed 26-of-38 passes for 312 yards and one touchdown. Brees led the Saints on four scoring drives resulting in three touchdowns and one field goal three from **K Wil Lutz**.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** led the team in both rushing and receiving, gaining 79 yards on 13 carries with two touchdowns on the ground and catching nine passes for 95 yards.
- Kamara surpassed 500 rushing attempts for his career and now has 510. He is ranked 11th in franchise history with 2,321 rushing yards, surpassing Wayne Wilson. With his two rushing touchdowns, Kamara now has 30 for his career, surpassing Running backs Chuck Muncie and Pierre Thomas for sole possession of fourth in club record books. Kamara now has 42 career touchdowns and moves into a tie with Thomas for eighth place in club record books. Kamara's 254 career catches move him past Dalton Hilliard for fourth in club record books among Saints running backs.
- WR **Tre'Quan Smith** finished five catches for 80 receiving yards. Smith recorded the Saint's longest play from scrimmage on a 29-yard reception from Brees.
- Tight end **Josh Hill** played in his 105th career game tonight, putting him in a tie with DL Willie Whitehead and RB Pierre Thomas for 44th place on the club's all-time list for games played. Hill finished with one reception for 16 yards.
- TE **Jared Cook** caught a six-yard touchdown pass from Brees in the second quarter.
- FS **Marcus Williams** led the team in tackles with nine.
- S **Malcolm Jenkins**, DT **David Onyemata** and DE **Trey Hendrickson** each recorded a sack of Raiders quarterback Derek Carr. Jenkins also recorded seven tackles and one pass defense.
- Cornerback **P.J. Williams** recorded six tackles and recovered a fumble by Raiders RB Jalen Richard.
- DE **Cameron Jordan** played 146th career game tonight, moving into a tie with WR Marques Colston for 15th in NFL record books.
- P **Thomas Morstead** played in his 176th career game today, moving past TE Hoby Brenner for sole possession of seventh place on the club's all-time games played list. Morstead punted three times for 109 yards (36.9 avg.) and a long of 43 with two inside-the-20s.
- WR/RS **Deonte Harris** returned two kicks for 64 yards (32.0 avg.) and a long of 35. Harris also caught three passes for 23 yards and carried once for 11 yards.
- The Saints extended their NFL-leading streak to 290 regular season games without being shut out. The streak dates back to September 6, 2002 when New Orleans defeated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 26-20 at Raymond James Stadium.



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Raiders Head Coach Jon Gruden

OPENING STATEMENT: "I'm really happy for our team, proud of our guys, coaches and players. Thrilled to be a part of the first win in our stadium against a great team and hopefully our fans even though they couldn't be here tonight hopefully they saw something they liked. We can't wait to get them back in the stadium. It's such a great place to see a game. It was such a great game for us. We have so many contributors that I don't even have time to name them. A lot of guys got hurt a lot of guys stepped up and played good football when we needed it the most."

Q: The team was down early in the game. Talk about the efficiency it took and how important it was to the success of the game.

Gruden: "The last couple weeks we've been pretty good taking care of the ball: no turn overs, converting on third down, having balance and winning the time of possession. And when you can win the time of possession and you can keep [Drew] Brees and Sean Peyton on the sideline you have a chance. But we knew it was going to be a 15-round fight tonight we knew the Saints were going to give us everything they had and certainly the third down conversion was big tonight."

Q: Last field goal were you thinking about punting there? What was the thought process?

Gruden: "I saw [Harrison] Butker for the Chiefs get three in a row yesterday, so I had a good vibe. I said if Kansas City is going to kick a field goal in that situation I sure will. [Daniel] Carlson had a big one in Charlotte last week about the same distance. You know we're playing in a beautiful stadium the footing is great, the weather is great there's no wind and he had the look in his eye like he was going to end a football game and that's what we did. I'm really happy for him and Rich Bisaccia for having the confidence and ability to do that."

Q: How do you feel about how the defense was able to step up after Jalen Richard fumbled.

Gruden: "Jalen's fumble was obviously a key play in the game we had a play set up I think for big yardage there it was going to give us a first down, I believe. Unfortunately, he just mishandled it. You really have to tip your hat to Richard. To come back and play like he did to redeem himself, that's what a professional has to do he has to have thick skin. Kirby Wilson is a great running back coach, and our staff including Greg Olson gave him a lot of confidence to give him another shot."

Q: How much did it help get you in the rhythm to get the short pass going early on? Was it the third drive when it really started rolling for you?

Gruden: "Well, I don't know if we ever really had a rhythm. Losing [Richie] Incognito early on in the game. After losing Trent Brown, Sam Young, and a number of guys coming and going, I don't know if we ever had a true rhythm. We knew [Saints Defensive Coordinator] Dennis Allen was going to call a different defense every play and when you look at the film you'll see five-down linemen, four-down linemen, three-down linemen every play is a different coverage. Outside of the stat sheet, Derek Carr was awesome tonight. He made some plays today that very few guys I've coached could make. I tip my hat to him he hung in there with a veteran defense."

Q: Can you talk about Monday Night Football and winning here for the first time?

Gruden: "Well there's a lot of sentimental and great vibes in our locker room to be a part of winning the first game in history last week, and then winning against a great team whose won 15-16 out of 18 on the road at our home on Monday Night Football is a great thrill for all of us. We hope we can continue to improve we have a great young team. We have a great stadium and a great fan base proving it out on the streets, I just hope they wear their masks."

Q: When Incognito got hurt in the second quarter and was replaced with rookie John Simpson what do you think about his performance today?

Gruden: "I have to see film to see how the left guard plays, but we moved the ball, converted some third downs, Derek made some audibles, he showed his ability to go in as a young player in a very critical situation and do a lot



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of things well. I'm proud of him. I can't say I've been harder on any other rookie in the last couple years than John Simpson, because we drafted him with the high expectation to come in here and be a player for us. All the Clemson fans out there, we just love those Tigers, you're a big part of this Raider team."

Q: How do you explain the turn around the team had after the first quarter?

Gruden: "New Orleans is one of the best teams in football, I don't know where all the pro-football-focused people had them ranked but they're number one, two or three in the NFL. They have the best tempo I think on offense. It was great for our young team, on offense, to see how Drew Brees orchestrates that with Sean Payton after all the time they've been together. They had us on our heels. We missed a protection early on the first series and they jumped on us. They've jumped on a lot of people and well. But we knew if we had to be in this game to win this game, it's going to be a 15-round fight we just gotta keep swinging against New Orleans because they have the heart of a champion, they know what they're doing, they've been together a long time."

Q: You said this game was going to be a 'measuring stick' for the team, so what does this game tell you about the 2020 Raiders?

Gruden: "It tells me that we're on the right track. We have a real competitive group of guys. We need to get healthy. We need [Nick] Kwiatkoski back, we need Trent Brown back. Obviously, we need Incognito back. This is a young team, I give Matt Mayock and his staff a lot of credit because some of these young guys are getting better and that's a good sign. We got a short week no time to really enjoy this because we're going to Foxborough and playing New England Patriots, so we're excited to do that."

Q: The connection between Derek Carr and Darren Waller was prevalent. Was that the game plan of is that how the game evolved?

Gruden: "I don't know what the stat sheets say to be honest with you. I know we threw it to [Henry] Ruggs [III] at the end of the game on a bomb. I think Al Davis would've been proud of that, with the game on the line. We used a lot of different players [Bryan] Edwards had some key grabs. Darren's a great player. Our job is to get him the ball... I've said this before I'd take him out of any tight ends and I know [George] Kittle and [Travis] Kelce are as good as they get, but [Darren] Waller is right up there with them. This is his second year playing the position, it's astonishing what this man can do."

Q: Do you think Derek Carr's performance was an example of a player who is more and more comfortable with how you play a smart offensive game?

Gruden: "There's a lot of people who make a lot of opinions about how Derek performs and our relationship, but he had nine different flankers last year. When I was here for four years, we had Tim Brown every week for four years. I don't know how many different combinations we had on the offensive line yet he threw for over 4,000 yards at 70 percent and put us in a position to make the playoffs in week 15. This guy's a great quarterback and we're surrounding him with better players. When our defense starts playing to their potential he could be even better. He does so much with the ball and without the ball and behind the scenes that Raider fans should be proud of him and I know I am."

Q: I saw you had your mask on but then didn't have it later, are you aware that some coaches have been fined?

Gruden: "I've had the virus, I'm doing my best. I'm very sensitive about it, but I'm calling plays. I want to communicate these situations. I apologize, but if I get fined, I will have to pay the fine. I am very sensitive about all of that and I apologize."



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Raiders QB Derek Carr

Q: How much do you love having a tight end named Darren Waller?

Carr: "Yeah, I think you know how much I love him. He did an exceptional job. I hope everyone gets to see everything about Darren Waller that we know him to be. He's not only one of the best players in the NFL, he's on one of the best humans. Love that guy. Love that player. I'm glad to be his quarterback, I'm honored."

Q: Can you talk about extending drives, the importance of doing that, and being efficient on those money downs to keep Drew Brees on the sidelines?

Carr: "Since Coach Gruden got here there's been an emphasis. I'm really happy that today we saw 10-17 because that's not easy to make. Going for it on fourth down is not easy to do. This defense is one of the best ones I've ever played against. They are tough. Man to man coverage, zone coverage, different fronts multiple looks...They throw everything they have at you and I am really proud of our guys for sticking with our rules and trusting the gameplay. We have a lot of good football players. We have a lot of good football character guys which allows us to be able to go 10-17 on third down. Especially against that team, not easy to do. Really, really proud we played to finish on those crucial downs – which had to happen tonight."

Q: Being down two starters, you hit more receivers than usual. It looked like you were trying to get it out quicker and just spread it around and it seemed they protected you a lot more after the first quarter. Is there a sense you wanted to get it out quickly with those guys out in front of you?

Carr: "I'm done joking about it, I mean I have a lot of jokes. It just is what it is. You got to let that guy get a feel for the game. Against that front (*inaudible*) let's see if he can hold that up. It's not going to give the kid any confidence. You have to work him into that. We are able to and then we are able to hit our shots. He starts playing so well that we can hit him with certain shots and trust that he can hold up. Only a few times in the game did I feel like we had a double move early, where I couldn't step into it. Besides that, they were solid and against that front it's not easy to do. There is a little bit of chess to that when you are trying to figure things out."

Q: Having this performance offensively against the Saints defense and what they are able to accomplish. What kind of statement does that make for your offense as a whole?

Carr: "I'll let everyone else talk about the statement. I'm tired of talking and I think people can hear it in my voice sometimes. It's nice. It's nice to go out and be 2-0. It's nice to play against the Saints and get a win. It feels good. But like I told the guys after the game, job is not done. Be all excited and feel good about ourselves because people are saying nice things now. Going on to the Patriots next week, we can lose. Coach Belichick has a day up on me already and I got to get to studying."

Q: You said it yourself, this is home now. How does it feel to get the first win in Vegas and what does it mean for the franchise as a whole?

Carr: "I'm happy for my city. I hope they fans in the bay area are still excited. I can understand they're hurt. I heard they're hurt. I felt their pain as we left that game at the end of the year. I felt it. With that said, I am happy for our city Las Vegas, this is our town now. I know the people here at the casinos and other businesses I've seen have been out of work for a while, so hopefully they turned on the game and it put a smile on their face, and that means something to me. This is home to my wife and children and myself. We moved right out here after the season and everyone thought we were crazy. But here we are. And hopefully we put a smile on their face, and hopefully kids were inspired by the way Darren Waller caught the ball or the way Josh Jacobs ran the ball or the way our offense line was able to play. Hopefully there were some young kids inspired in the Vegas area and we were able to put a smile on their face during this crazy time."



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Q: Take me through your touchdown pass to Zay Jones. Was that a result of all the hard work you put in together this summer?

Carr: "Yeah, I don't see a lot of tweets, but I saw your tweet about that and it made my day. It really made my day because of all the work that was put in. You don't know how tough it is and how hot it is. Some days we didn't feel like it, you know? And we did it anyway. I missed that throw two times last year, so we re-worked the heck out of that route and Coach Gruden said "you can't miss that again." He told me and I said "yes, sir" As we watched the cut up. We watched 100 completions on that play, but he said "Look at these two incompletions. Can't do that again." So the fact that we were able to hit that is a lot of relief tonight. Especially for Zay. He's been through a lot. Getting traded by the team who drafted you – probably doesn't feel good. Then to come here and compete for a spot, like I said before I told him, this is yours, go do it. And tonight Coach put him in, and let me tell you this, he's not always the guy in practice running that route because we have starters, and he came in and there was so much trust because we put the work in. We've had years to work with each other. This is my third year in the system and I am on cloud 9 with that because things like that touchdown can happen when you spend time with them."

Q: Given your appreciation for the franchise, what did it feel like to see Mrs. Davis up there lighting the torch and what did feel like taking in the historic moment?

Carr: "I think you guys know how much this place means to me. I love being a Raiders. I'm never going to play for anyone else. I love this place. This is home to me. The things I grew up hearing from my dad and my uncle telling me stories about when he played here with the guys, showing me pictures of David and Daren in Raiders jackets sitting on Santa's lap. It's been in our family for a long time. Just like I told Dennis Allen after the game, I said "Thank you so much for giving me my chance" and I know he probably didn't want to hear it, but every time I see him I tell him that. Because it means a lot to me. This organization means everything to me. They stuck behind me through some hard times. Through times our team struggled, there's no doubt about it. But to be on the other side of things and to be 2-0 as the Las Vegas Raiders – that's a pretty cool thing. Just like when I told you when we were standing out there to break ground, I said I am going to take the first snap in that stadium, and that's a dream that I had. A lot of people didn't believe it. The first day I moved here Tom Brady was on the front page of the newspaper. It just adds fuel to the fire and still be here to accomplish things that mean so much to you. This is family to me, it's more than football. This place and every relationship from the top down means everything to me. I'm trying to put how much this means to me into words but it's hard. I love this place. I love our fans."

Raiders LB Nicholas Morrow

Q: What did you see on that play that pass you picked off?

Morrow: "What's up, Levi. Well I think Jared [Cook] ran the (inaudible) and then I saw two sit down so I knew there was something behind me, like a helmet behind me. I didn't think he was going to throw it right to me but we just sit in my zone and outside the hash and he threw it to me. It was a good job by the D-Line, getting pressure making them throw out the basement window, honestly."

Q: What was it like to see your offense convert so many third downs?

Morrow: "That was a huge moment in the game, just being able to control the clock, keep 9 [Drew Brees] off the field, and allow the defense get some rest so we can call it there and keep our pass rushers fresh so they could rush. Keep the corners fresh, so they could run. It was a big part of the game allowing our defenses to be rested and obviously controlling the clock. It's huge being able to support them like that."

Q: Can you describe how you refreshed you felt on defense?

Morrow: "I don't know if I can put it in words. I think the honest truth is the first couple of drives, they were able to keep them all. Like they were converting on first downs. They ran the ball well. I think they had eighty something rushing yards in the first half and they ended with, I don't know how many yards, but it wasn't plus eighty afterwards. Being able to get off the field. Three-and-outs, penalties helped us. We had 100 and something



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yards in penalties that helped us as well. So getting stops and like I said, keeping our offense keeping drives alive that helped us as well. Getting stops really helps everything, honestly.”

Q: Do you take it personal knowing that the Raiders might have been the underdogs coming in?

Morrow: “To be honest with you, I didn’t even know we were underdogs. I was just playing. I mean, we know that we’re a good team, obviously. We know our good offense. But I don’t think anyone paid attention to whether we were the underdog or not. We just wanted to go out there. Monday Night Football, first game in our home. Our new home Stadium. We wanted to put on a show, a performance, to solidify who we think we are. Obviously, it goes from here, right? You got to build on it. But no, I don’t think I paid attention to it. I just decided to prepare and come out and play the best we could.

Q: What was the message that the coach gave to you guys on defense during half time?

Morrow: “The message was to play with more energy. You know, when I hand you wings and you don’t play with a lot of energy, you don’t play well. We got guys like Johnathan Abram. We got guys like Maxx Crosby. We got those young guys who are really the catalyst of our defense, they really get us going emotionally. Obviously with the big plays. You run around and make plays. You know he just said keep the energy up. And JA [Johnathan Abram], he went out there and made sure we stayed on with our energy, communicating. He went out there and basically stayed on his energy, just communicated on the back end. Honestly, it was just energy. Just keep our energy up. Don’t let them win. We know we’re in a different situation as far as no fans and stuff like that. We kind of came off starting slow last week so we just wanted to come back in the second half and keep our energy consistent.”

Raiders RB Jalen Richard

Q: Were you surprised to get the call again after the fumble on the first carry? How excited were you to get a second chance at that?

Richard: “There is always a doubt when you make a mistake out on the field. We always talk about snap and clear. All of my teammates and coaches were behind me, next play, next play and I am happy that the coaching staff and my teammates have faith in me, to give me that play again. I made up for myself.”

Q: What does getting this win today mean to you?

Richard: “This is a big confidence booster. That was a great team. A really good team who had a really good plan for us coming in (inaudible) Kept fighting, we stayed in the game and hopefully we can build upon this. It was our first time playing in this stadium this year and to get our first win for the organization. We just want to keep steamrolling and take it one week at a time. We will enjoy tonight but get back focused on the Patriots in the upcoming week. We have a short week. We have big dreams and goals of making it to the Super Bowl. We are just going to take it week-by-week.”

Q: How much were you thinking about the passing of your family member during this game?

Richard: “A whole bunch. I wrote her name and rest in peace on my shoes tonight. I’ll probably take those to the funeral and set them next to the casket or give them to my uncle Pete or somebody. She was battling some hard issues and already had some liver issues and couldn’t get on the heart transplant list. The doctors gave her a couple of months, but it took a turn for the worst. I was blessed enough to talk to her about a week and a half ago when she called and broke the news to me. I got a call last night that she had passed. So I really didn’t get to talk with her again, but she is in a better place.”

Q: What were the Saints doing early on to give you trouble?

Richard: “We knew that they were going to come in and they throw many different looks at you and that is exactly what they did. They were mixing up the coverages, mixing up the blitzes. We got blitzed so many times. We just



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tweaked our plan a little bit, stayed with the run game and took our shots when needed. We have a lot of tough gritty guys on our team and that is what showed tonight. We just toughed it out.”

Q: Can you talk about how you guys performed despite all of the losses you had on the team especially the offensive line?

Richard: “They performed great. Did you see the rook [John Simpson] tonight? I think that he played like 60 something snaps. That is the thing, that is a test to management, coaching staff, making sure that we have the depth that we need and guys coming in when their name is called to make plays, produce and help the team win. Obviously, we are having some issues along the O-Line, but every guy that is behind those guys that don’t start, us as a team, a coaching staff, believe in them 100 percent. They just plug-in play. When we get those starters back, we will get them back, but in the meantime these guys are handling their business. Kudos to those guys.”

Q: What is it about the Saints? You have been here the entire time Derek Carr has been here with head coach Jon Gruden, do you see him growing into that role having total control of this offense?

Richard: “Definitely. Coach’s offense isn’t easy. I can only imagine how it is for the quarterback. When coach Gruden came in with his offense, it forced me to become a smarter football player. I had to mesh with his offense so those little hiccups and stumbles along the way that you might have saw from us as an offense those first two years with Coach Gruden, you are seeing now how everything is coming together. DC is much more comfortable he knows the plays and he is a lot more in tune with the things going on and he and coach has a nice gel together. Talking about things with DC and you see them come to the sideline and they work together to figure it out and from there make their moves. He is looking great and this is not the end, but it will definitely get us going and keep moving.”

Q: How was Coach Gruden reacting on the sidelines to those hard runs that the running backs had?

Richard: “He is always pumped. Whenever he sees a good play, you see the Chuckie comes out. His face turns red, he gives that little stink face, and he starts swinging. He is amped man. He is a cheerleader too. He wants to see us out there. That is what I love about this coaching staff. They all get pumped like they are playing. That makes you want to go out there and have more fun. We have to be our own cheerleaders this year. Obviously, we don’t have our fans, so we have to be out there peppering each other up and it is really cool to see the coaches cheering us on as well.”

Raiders TE Darren Waller

Q: Can you describe the chemistry between Carr and you?

Waller: “It started right when I first came back to the team in 2018. In Bible studying environments, just me being open about things I was going through, and working with me and not judging me in any way. I feel like from there it was a thing where I didn’t want to let him down, and I wanted to be there for him because I knew he was there for me. It’s been there ever since. It kind of developed from there, once that was there it was kind of easy to translate to the field. Hanging out and playing card games together, things like that carried over to the field and we just put the work in.”

Q: Describe how you still managed to get many catches knowing there was many options.

Waller: “Our offensive balance right now is amazing. We could see it coming from training camp and once we first got together as a team and actually started doing something, you could tell that there is a lot of guys that deserve to have opportunities to get the rock because they’re going to make things happen. Like Zay Jones, I mean you can just go down the line, like Bryan (Edwards), and Henry (Ruggs). I’m just thankful that I can be part of that group, part of that balance that they can count on to make plays whenever I’m called upon. Whatever the numbers look like, that’s cool with me. As long as our balance is there and we keep attacking, keep the defense on their heels, that’s all I want.”



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Q: Did you hear your song play throughout the game and after the touchdown?

Waller: "Yeah, I would hear it after the first downs. I don't know if my mind was elsewhere after I scored a touchdown but I would hear the music after the first down. It doesn't even feel real."

Q: Thoughts on Carr's time in the Gruden system?

Waller: "His confidence is growing so far being in the system. It's a lot of volume in our system, a lot of stuff that he needs to know. I don't know how he knows it all, all the checks, and things like that. The time he puts in and the brain power to remember that stuff is impressive. You can tell that he has confidence in us. His presence in the huddle was great before but now how he commands guys to do things and everybody just follows his energy is impressive."

Saints Head Coach Sean Payton

Q: What flipped the script during the game?

Coach Payton: "I think it was two things. We didn't possess the ball enough offensively, and defensively we couldn't get off the field. We're going to look at third down, we're going to look at time of possession, at the turnover right before the half and we're going to look at a number of things. We have to do a better job coaching. I don't think it's going to be a real pleasant film to watch for some of our star players as well."

Q: What do you think has been off with Drew Brees the last two weeks?

Coach Payton: "We got to be precise with what we're doing in the passing game, route wise. I'm just saying the last two weeks have been average at best offensively. That starts with us, it starts with me, and we have to be better. We ran the ball a little bit better tonight. We're still not protecting the way we're supposed to, we're not functioning well enough and taking advantage of the opportunities we had. We'll look at that, our third down numbers were better. I'm sure our red zone numbers were a little better. We had some penalties situations, and in that one drive we had three or four penalties that I lost track."

Q: Can you talk about the challenge it was to stop Darren Waller tonight?

Coach Payton: "To let one of those guys get into our defense is our own fault."

Q: Was there an issue in particular with not getting off the field?

Coach Payton: "We have to look at the tape, but you have to credit Las Vegas. Those guys did a great job. They got in and out of plays versus our coverage looks. One by one, they made the plays when they needed to, especially in the last half of that game. In the third quarter and fourth quarter, our third down numbers were poor. We didn't do a good job in stopping one of their better players."

Q: Can you talk about what could've caused the penalties on defense?

Coach Payton: "There weren't just defensive fouls, there were more than just defensive fouls. Obviously, we're not going to win when we have that many, we have to get that cleaned up. I thought we played poorly in the secondary."

Saints QB Drew Brees

Q: General thoughts after this one?

Brees: "Yeah, we didn't get many possessions, right? We got about seven possessions if you don't count that last



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one. So, I think we knew how valuable the possessions in this game would be. I felt like we started the game off well, put together some good drives, three scoring drives. The turnover at the end of the half was unfortunate because I feel like it took points off the board from us, a field goal at least, and it gave three points to them. If there's one thing I wish I could take back from the game, it would be that. We had a lot of mental errors. I felt like we weren't playing as fast and maybe as confident. I felt like we ran the ball well. Really, for the most part, you know penalties, at the end of the day if you look at the stat sheet it hurt us. I think offensively we really just had one drive where it really set us back. We had two holding calls, an illegal block in the back, put us in a third-and-20 situation. I think that was our first drive of the third quarter. But, you know, you look at what they were able to do offensively. I think at the end of the half and then in the third quarter, obviously, I feel like they did a great job of possessing the ball. I think they had 36 minutes of possession time, we had 23, 24. So, listen, we know what wins football games and we know what makes it very difficult to win football games and obviously we made way too many mistakes out there in order to win that game."

Q: Can you expand on the interception and what you were seeing on that play? Was that intended to go to Deonte Harris?

Brees: "Yeah, I had to throw it a lot earlier than I wanted to. Bottom line is, I shouldn't have thrown that ball. That was either a bad decision or make a much better throw, but at the end of the day just checking out. I didn't have the time that I needed to really make a good read. I should have just dumped it to Alvin and moved to the next play."

Q: How different is it for you with Michael Thomas not being out there?

Brees: "Well, you know, I say the big adjustment was just having to move some guys around. Just moving guys around. Tre'Quan [Smith] basically was playing a lot of Mike's [Thomas] snaps. Then, you had new guys at Tre'Quan's position. So, obviously we're very multiple with what we do, with our personnel groups, with our formations and plays and everything else. You know, just honing in on where everybody kind of fits in the best and how we can execute better as a result of that."

Q: Did you guys feel like you're in sync right now?

Brees: "You know, every drive in this game was very valuable because we ended up getting only seven of them. If one ends up as a turnover, where we could have gotten points, and the other one results in three penalties that takes us out of field goal range and didn't allow us to get points. Two out of seven possessions, should have resulted in some points. In a game like this, those are valuable. You got to have it. You just have to have it. Are we totally in sync right now? No, we're not. We're not even close to what we're capable of. We did some good things tonight, early on, but just wasn't enough for the few opportunities we had. We need to take better advantage of that."

Q: Is some of that stuff effected by no preseason? Are you guys still working into shape because you didn't have the preseason?

Brees: "I don't know if the preseason, what difference that makes. You know, typically the starters play one quarter in the preseason. Sure it would have been nice to have that. But listen, we have some new faces. We have just got to get back on track. I think, we've got to put to get what is going to be consistent execution. I would say we are just inconsistent right now."

Q: I feel like asking this question a little bluntly because it is a popular narrative that there is a sharp decline from your performance. What would you say to counter the narrative that you don't feel like you're starting the season showing decline?

Brees: "Well, my job is to execute the offense. So, I've always evaluated myself on being a good decision maker. And so, at the end of the day, I'm going to throw the ball to the open guy, move the ball down the field, score points, help us win football games. That's my job. My job is not to have the most air yards, or throw the ball down



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the field the most, or anything like that. My job is to help us win. My job is to help put everybody around me in a position to succeed and that's all I'm focused on."

Q: Just in your own evaluation, what's something you'd want to clean up?

Brees: "Again, I feel like we just need to be more efficient. We have a wealth of stuff that we do within the framework of our offense. You know, we called a shot play, or two, today and just got the wrong coverage on both of them. What could have been big play opportunities, big throws down the field had to be checked down. One was a 10-yard check-down completion and another one was something close to that as well. Again, at the end of the day it is our job to get the ball down the field and score points. However, we do that, we do it."

Q: Just curious what you thought of Tre'Quan today filling in for Mike?

Brees: "Listen, I thought he did a great job. I think we all see what he can do when he gets the ball in his hands, just the run after the catch. Obviously, Deonte Harris some more opportunities today. I think we need to continue to find ways to get Emmanuel Sanders more involved. There was an opportunity, or two, there, just thinking back, I'm sure after I watch the film, we say 'a few more touches, a few more catches.' Listen, we got a lot of guys. I think we just need to hone on where everybody is fitting in the best and what will allow us to really execute at the highest level."