



NEW ORLEANS
SAINTS

POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES
GREG BENSEL + SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS CLEVELAND BROWNS
SUNDAY, SEPT. 16, 2018 • MERCEDES-BENZ SUPERDOME
SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- With the win, New Orleans improves their record to 1-1 and it marks the franchise's 350th regular season win, the first regular season win with Gayle Benson as Owner. The Saints return to action on Sunday, Sept. 23 when they play the Atlanta Falcons at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Kickoff is set for 12:00 p.m. CST. The game will be aired on FOX (WVUE-FOX 8 in the New Orleans area).
- Today's win over the AFC Browns gives the Saints their fourth consecutive interconference win. The last time the Saints had four straight interconference wins was when they swept the AFC North slate in 2011.
- The win, moves New Orleans' all-time record against the Browns to 5-13 and gives the Saints the first win over Cleveland since the 2006 season-opening 19-14 victory at Cleveland Browns Stadium and their first home win against them since a 25-20 victory on October 14, 1990.
- The Saints currently have a streak of 258 regular season games without having been shut out, dating back to a 26-20 win at the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on September 6, 2002 at Raymond James Stadium, the longest running current streak in the National Football League.
- Head Coach **Sean Payton** has 113 career victories (regular season and postseason), putting him in sole possession of 39th place on the all-time list surpassing John Madden.
- With the win against Browns Head Coach Hue Jackson, Sean Payton now has regular season and postseason wins against 56 different head coaches.
- QB **Drew Brees**, started the game on a perfect seven for seven passing. Brees completed 28-of-35 passes for a total of 243 yards, two touchdowns and a 114.6-passer rating. Brees played in his 251st career game today, moving him into a tie for 41st in NFL record books with Atlanta's Mike Kenn (1978-94). He also started his 250th career game today.
- In setting up K **Wil Lutz**'s game-winning 44-yard field goal, Brees completed two-of-four passes for 50 yards, including a 42-yard connection with WR **Ted Ginn Jr.** for the 42nd fourth quarter/overtime game-winning drive of his career.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** received the start for the second consecutive week and rushed for 46 yards on thirteen carries and a fourth quarter successful two-point conversion. Kamara also finished the game with six catches for 53 yards for a total of 100 total yards from scrimmage.
- WR **Michael Thomas** finished with a team-high 12 catches for 89 receiving yards and two touchdowns. Thomas' two touchdowns marks the 17th time Brees and Thomas have connected for a touchdown. Thomas moves into a tie for seventh place on the list with WR Devery Henderson in Brees touchdowns connections. Thomas also set an NFL record with 28 receptions in the first two games of a season, surpassing Andre Rison (26-1994).
- Ginn hauled in the Saints longest catch of the day with the reception he turned into a 42-yard gain in the fourth quarter. Ginn Jr. finished with four catches for a total of 55 yards.
- TE **Benjamin Watson** recorded three catches for a total of 19 yards, becoming the 14th player in NFL record books among tight ends with 500 career receptions.
- LBs **Demario Davis** and LB **A.J. Klein** both started led the Saints defense with a total of nine tackles each.
- DE **Cameron Jordan** played in his 115th consecutive game today and overall, the second-longest games played streak for defensive ends behind Carolina's Julius Peppers. He finished the game with two tackles and two sacks. Jordan became only the fifth Saint with 60 career quarterback takedowns, joining linebacker Rickey Jackson

(115), defensive lineman Wayne Martin (82.5), linebacker Pat Swilling (76.5) and defensive end Will Smith (67.5). Jordan has now dropped 26 different quarterbacks in his career in the regular season. With Tyrod Taylor added to the group.

- DE **Sheldon Rankins** recorded the Saints' first sack of the season, creating a takedown for a one-yard loss. Rankins finished with five total tackles and two hits on the quarterback.
- CB **Ken Crawley** finished the game with four total tackles (three solo), including a fourth down stop in the second quarter.
- S **Marcus Williams** recorded two tackles and an interception with a 22-yard return, late in the fourth quarter, marking the Saints first takeaway of the season.
- QB **Taysom Hill** had a 47-yard kick return midway through the third quarter.
- Lutz drilled a 31-yard field goal and a game-winning 44-yard kick put the Saints ahead 21-18 with 55 seconds left in the contest.
- P **Thomas Morstead** punted four times for 179 total yards (44.8 avg.) with a long of 56 yards and two inside-the-20-yard line. Morstead now has over 25,000 gross punting yards for his career. Morstead played in his 144th career game today, putting him in a tie for 15th place on the club's all-time games played list.



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SAINTS HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON

(Opening Statement) “The first half defensively we played well, and offensively made too many mistakes. We missed assignments, which shouldn’t happen, and we missed throws, fumbled the ball. Everything that keeps the opponent in the game. Second half we managed to move the ball better and I (did not) like (how) we handled the final series defensively and we gave them a chance for a field goal. We found a way to win, but have a long way to go to improve and become a better team.”

(On Michael Thomas’ play and resilience later on) “Two weeks in a row. I like his resilience, but I like the ball too. Our guys had that, and as coaches we need to get a number of those things cleaned up or we will find ourselves, against a better team, on the losing end of a game like that.”

(On team’s resolve) “I was impressed with that. I was encouraged. I think the one thing we are able to do is play from behind and come back and get into a game. We got the win and I’m encouraged by that, but I’m also excited to get back and look at the tape for division play coming up.”

(On resiliency of Will Lutz to miss a 44-yard attempt early in the game) “It was a big kick he hit and a couple of big hits their guy didn’t hit. That ended up being the difference too.”

(On Taysom Hill returning kicks) “It was something we had looked at during the week. I thought their kicker hit some deeper kicks but we got the one out past the 40. It was a good return. He’s explosive.”

(on his concerns about the team after the first two weeks) “The turnovers first, it has been twice a game. We had (only) one takeaway. So we’re minus three on the year after two weeks, so that bothers me. The mental errors bother me. The situational football towards the end of the game...We’re in an outside man technique and we let a guy catch a pass and get out of bounds to set up a field goal (attempt). Those things bother me. Those are things we have to be better at.”

(on if there’s a spark missing) “You find that during the work week, honestly. It’s not an angel, sprinkle dust, or anything like that. I think you find it during the week and improve the details. You find it in the details and generally in our game the wins happen Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. The preparation and attention to detail (have to happen in practice and meetings) and (then) you have a good week. There are some things that come up where we’re not looking for a spark, to turn the ball over. So we have to coach better technique. It is what it is. That is the one thing about our game, you get a chance to lay it all out there over three hours. I said to the (guys), I’m encouraged we won but let’s not kid ourselves. So tomorrow will be important for us. We are in this early part of the season, year after year, where your opportunity to improve happens the most in this first month. So we have a lot to do to improve.”

(on defense being led by Gregg Williams in Cleveland) “I think he did a good job. They always give you challenging looks. I think they have some good young players that played well today.”



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CLEVELAND BROWNS HEAD COACH HUE JACKSON

(Opening statement) "Tough loss. The guys battled. One thing that I know about this team is that they're going to give me everything that they have. We had some opportunities to finish the game and we did not get it done. We've got another game right around the corner so we don't get to lick our wounds for very long. We've got to move on from this. We'll get New York (Jets) here on Thursday to our place back at home in front of our fans. We've got to regroup real quick and get ourselves ready for another home game."

(On the defense) "I thought that the defense all day, for the most part, did some great things. You hold that offense (the Saints) with those players that they have over there to what we did (is an accomplishment). I don't know what the final stats were. I thought that we were controlling the line of scrimmage at times. I thought that we controlled the passing game at times, so I thought that (our defense), they did some good things."

(On the offense) "Obviously on offense we've got to become a little bit more consistent so that we can sustain things and finish with touchdowns."

(On the special teams) "Special teams, obviously, is something that we have got to get better at. We had some chances and missed them. We've got to grow from that. We have got some work to do. I get it and you guys get it too."

(On what he told the team after the game) "Our players, as I told them afterwards, 'There is a good team in that (locker) room.' There is no doubt in my mind about that. They are a good football team in that room. We've just got to make sure that we are doing the right things all of the time to give us a chance to win."

(On how tough it is to lose a game that could have been won) "It is tough. This is tough. Last week's (game was tough). We've had our opportunities. Again, the game kind of turned; we missed some kicks; (threw an) interception, they (the Saints) score. That's what happens in these types of games."

(On what he said to Zane Gonzales after the game) "I told him to put his head up. He's still one of the guys in that room. Obviously, that is going to be what everybody says, the kicks. We make the kick here and we make the kick in overtime, and before we even have a chance to get to overtime and we would be feeling differently. So, again, we missed them. We have work to do. We've got to get better."

(On if Gonzales kicked well this week in practice) "Yes, he did. He kicked well in practice. It didn't make it here in the game today."

(On if the team has time to find a new kicker before the next game) "I don't know that. We will address all of that once we get in (the office) tomorrow."

(On the play of Antonio Callaway) "Great for Antonio. Those are the plays we truly believe that he can make."

(On not having Josh Gordon) "The Josh (Gordon) situation, let's talk more about that tomorrow. I don't think that (for) our team that was a determining factor in this game at all. I think that we can play better. That is like losing a player to injury. He didn't play. We made the adjustments. We've got to continue to play better."

(On the hard play of the defense) "Playing their tails off. I'm proud of them. Honestly, there are some plays that they are going to want back and plays that I want back for them. I think that the guys are competing and competing hard. I think that the whole team is competing. I just think that we have to continue as a team to keep doing the right things offensively, defensively, and special teams."



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DREW BREES QUOTES

(On how Coach Payton said you guys won, but he is not all that overjoyed over the overall play) “Neither am I. It wasn’t a very good performance by us. At least in the first half, I could point to three, four, five, six different plays where we missed a pass on an open guy on a touchdown or we missed an assignment that would otherwise have continued a drive or gotten us points. The turnovers, it was really sloppy football. It was not sharp. We came out in the second half. Don’t convert on two third and ones on our first two drives in the third quarter. Then (we) find a way in the fourth quarter, which was a great team effort, says a lot about our team to come together to make plays and have a sense of urgency. We drive down, get a touchdown, (The) Defense comes up with an interception and we get another touchdown. Then go down a kick a field goal late. It really shouldn’t come down to that, and I think that if we’re talking about playing our best football, then today was not that. There’s a lot of things we need to work on.”

(On when you think about the end of the game, you guys have done that so many times, where there was maybe a little bit of relief kick in, that you could get it done?) “Listen, these are games that define your identity a little bit. These are games where, maybe you did not have your best stuff, but you found a way. I believe we are going to have plenty of better days where we are hitting on all cylinders. When we’re making plays. To know that you can shake off whatever it was that was going on in the first three quarters and have that belief system in place amongst the team on offense, defense, and special teams. Hey, somebody is going to make a play, I don’t know who it is, but somebody is going to make a play. Put yourself in the right position and it’s going to happen and believe that we’ll find a way to come back and win this game.”

(On how they want everybody to talk about this Cleveland team and what the streak was) “There are a lot of different pieces to that team this year to last year. I’m not sure what happened last year, but I just know that when I turn on the film, I see a team that is going to win games. I think they have got some talent on offense. They have talent on defense. They played us tough. We had some opportunities that we didn’t take advantage of. We left a lot of points out there, moreso than I think I can remember from us as an offense. We’re walking away from this happy that we got the win, our first one this season, happy that we came together as a team to get it done at the end. But there’s a huge sense of urgency for our improvement now as we move on to next week.”

(On why the team’s been off a little the first two weeks) “Well I would say that we’ve just been a little inconsistent. So we need to be more consistent.”

(On if there’s a difference when playing in a different way or multitude of ways but also playing consistently offensively. Last week, racking up 40 points. This week a little bit low scoring, if there are different ways to play a game) I feel we left two touchdowns out there in the first half. If you tack that on, it puts us in our range. We have lofty expectations for us offensively. Ever since I’ve been here, every time we touch the ball, we expect to score. Whoever’s number is called, we feel confident we’ve got guys who can make plays. Whoever the defense decides to take away, we’ve got guys and we’ll find the matchups and exploit the weakness. The opportunities were there today, we just didn’t capitalize on them.”

(On the second touchdown to Michael (Thomas), if if they gave him a look where he knew immediately that “this is where we’re going”?) “They were cheating on to him. I still just felt that like we had a place where I could throw it and he could make the catch.”

(On how does coming back like give him and the team confidence) “These are the wins that help build that confidence and identity. As poorly as we played in that first half in that game, we missed opportunities, we still found a way. Everyone made plays when we needed to. But we also need to understand that that wasn’t good. That’s not our standard, the way we played the first three quarters offensively. Our defense played really well. Offensively that wasn’t our standard. We’ve got make sure that we take advantage of the opportunities when we get them.”



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RB Alvin Kamara

(On his play in the fourth quarter) "We just started running the ball. I feel like we have the best offensive line in the league. We got some good looks. They handled their business upfront."

(On the sluggish first three quarters) "We have to hold on to the ball. We shot ourselves in the foot. We aren't blaming anybody. We know what the issue is and we just need to get it corrected."

(On the ugly win today) "It is a win. A win is a win. We are going to go get it corrected. We will watch the film tomorrow. Get it corrected and move forward."

(On if they are stopping themselves) "We are shooting ourselves in the foot. It's a faceless opponent. We don't care who we play. We are playing against the Saints. We know how we prepare. We put on film what we can do. When we do things like fumble the ball, then it puts a damper on what we are trying to do."

K Wil Lutz

(On his performance) "It's about bouncing back. It wasn't the best performance. You can't miss two in a row and survival mode is a bit of a real thing. Everything went smooth (on the final kick)."

(On being the hero or the goat in this league in terms of a tough day for Zane Gonzalez missing two field goal attempts and two PAT attempts) "It's a nasty, nasty business when it comes to that. I hate it for him. He's one heck of a kicker. I know him personally. He's done an amazing job every time I've been around him. I really hate that for him. It is the nature of the business. (Yet) I am really glad we got the win."

(On feeling pressure for the last kick) "It's a big kick. When you miss (one earlier), it is always in the back of your head. You always have to go out and make the next one. I'm pretty sure whenever I miss one that I come back and make the next one."

DE Cameron Jordan

(On today's game and how it turned out) "That's one that you go into knowing they are a team that balled out with the Steelers. Going into this game, we were facing Tyrod Taylor who led the Bills to the playoffs. He's a quarterback that's a threat when he is in the backfield. He can do a lot of things with the ball. I feel like we played a solid first half (on defense). We came back and got the win."

(On Cleveland not being the same team as last year) "You add in Jarvis (Landry), Carlos Hyde. They've upgraded for sure on offense. I don't know their situation (on defense), but they have a potent offense."

(On their resiliency) "You have ultimate faith in Drew (Brees) and the offense. We have the confidence to come back. I'm still not happy about some things. At the end of the day, you still have to do your job. I feel like we let a big play happen at the end of the game that could have cost us. We're happy to get the win, but at the same time we have a lot to clean up."

CB Marshon Lattimore

(On Marcus Williams' fourth quarter interception sparking the defense today) "It was huge. That is what we needed. We've got to get turnovers. Our offense is rolling (in the fourth quarter), but our defense has to step it up. They put 40 points on Tampa Bay, but we couldn't stop them. It was a little bit of the reverse this week."

(On giving up the big play at the end of the game and how it has to get cleaned up) "It is what it is. We have to get that cleaned up. We got the win."

WR Michael Thomas

(On having most receptions through two games in NFL history) "I knew about it. Sometimes it's hard to miss when you get reminders of it. I feel like we won today and that's the biggest thing. I was able to contribute."

(On being consistent with Drew Brees) "We work the game preparation through the week. We get great coaching. Our start (is in) watching the guys in the room in being really detailed and knowing my assignment."

(On the turnovers) "It's unacceptable. It's on us. It's not on anybody else. It's on us."

(On coming back from the turnover) "You just have to respond. I feel like I was being tested a little early trying to extend a play. You just want to make a play for your team, but you have to be smarter."

(On an ugly win) "A win is a win. You can't undervalue winning. At the end of the day, it is hard to win in this league. They played a really good team last week that they tied. It was a battle and we won. We will correct our mistakes and get better."



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BROWNS PLAYER QUOTES

QB Tyrod Taylor

(On how hard it is to win with missed kicks) "It is tough, but the game doesn't boil down to just that. There are areas in the game that we could clean up in our phases to get better and the scoreboard would look different. We don't want to point fingers or anything, we can't do that as a team when there are areas we can all clean up and get better at. We have to look at the film and obviously get ready for Thursday's game."

(On the touchdown to Antonio Callaway) "The play we had called was meant to grab the safety's attention with Jarvis' (Landry) route across the field and he was able to do that, I know he was one-on-one with the corner outside. When you see there is a one-on-one down the field, you expect your guy is able to make it and give those guys an opportunity to make a play."

(On finding out about Josh Gordon being in the process of not being a member of the team moving forward which the team announced yesterday) "I don't think it had any impact in regard to this game. Away from this game, of course you lose a brother who's a teammate. I hope everything works out for him in the long run, obviously, things haven't worked out well for him, but I'm going to keep praying for him and hope he's on the right track. It's tough, but at the same time we have guys like (Antonio) Callaway, (Rashard) Higgins, Jarvis (Landry), who are ready for those opportunities. We knew going into this game that he (Josh Gordon) was going to be ruled out, so it wasn't like everything just surprised us. Of course, we lose a ton of talent, always it is tough since he is a special talent, but at the same time tough decisions get made that you do not have control over. We will be praying for him and his well-being and hope everything works out."

(On Antonio Callaway stepping up) "He knows the opportunity that is in front of him. He stepped up to it today in a big way. Of course, it wasn't in a winning effort by us, but he came in on a bunch of drives today and we saw this as a way of building confidence moving forward."

(On showing his team that he is a leader) "I think that is just a true testament to this team, to never give up and keep fighting. I have to keep continuing to keep playing ball that way that I know how and things are going to go good and things will go bad, but you cannot let that waiver your confidence, you have to keep going out there and try to make plays. I was able to do that with our team and give us a chance to do that."

K Zane Gonzales

(On missing two extra points, today after only missing one in his career) "There are little issues going on, but I am not going to make any excuses about that. I just missed it and I will just move on."

(On what happened to him during the missed kicks) "Today, I'm not going to lie about it. I snowballed and was just pulling them and that last one I just pushed it over, but like I said there are no excuses for it. I get paid to make those kicks and I have to make them."

(On what he was saying to himself) "I was cussing myself out in my head. I was really upset about it, but like I said, it is on me one hundred percent and I can't be too mad at myself and I can't blame it on anyone else. It sucks because we were so close to that win and it has been so long and I just let everybody down."

WR Jarvis Landry

(On his thoughts on what to say to Kicker, Zane Gonzalez) "Make the field goals, make the field goal."

(On playing in the Superdome after growing up in New Orleans) "It is a good feeling, I had a lot of emotions and definitely in the beginning of the game. Just seeing the crowd, pretty much every time I looked in the stands I saw somebody I knew, so you know it was a really good feeling."

(On the Saints defense today) "They made the plays when they needed them the most and they bent but didn't break. Hats off to them."

(On how the team keeps moving forward) "Look at the tape and evaluate it. We have to see where we can get better, what areas we can get better on. Continue to play as a team and find a way to win."

(On the late touchdown to Antonio Callaway) "that was awesome effort. I was actually running right, right there as well and I thought it was overthrown. I thought Tyrod (Taylor) was throwing it to me and it was overthrown, then I looked and I see Antonio hit another gear and put his hands out and make the catch and got his feet in. That was big time, big boy football and that is what we expect him to do. We are going to need a lot more out him this year, just like that."

DL Myles Garrett

(On his thoughts on today's game) "A loss is a loss. All of them sucked."

(On what they did to shut down the Saints offense) "Tackling well, make sure they weren't getting any yards per carry or getting any deep balls. We were holding command pretty well."

(On what they did against the Saints offensive line to get to Drew Brees) "We did alright, but could have done better. There is always room for improvement. I feel like we were getting after him (Drew Brees), putting pressure in his face and trying to get our hands up and getting in the passing lanes. He was throwing short and we were tackling him and making him work for each down."

(On his thoughts on Josh Gordon) "It is a business. He is one of your family members, but at the end of the day you have to have a short memory in the NFL. He was a part of it, now you need someone else to fill that role, whether it is one of our guys here or somebody they are going to bring in. You still need to win at the end of the day, no matter what the odds are."

S Jabrill Peppers

(On his thoughts on today's game) "It was tough, but we could have done things better on our phase to come out with the win, just didn't execute."

(On the last few drives for the Saints) "We just got to overcommunicate. We did have a dropper on one and then the other one was just a good ball. It is Drew Brees, he is going to have a couple of those, but I think we definitely did a good job, mixing up the looks and making his day hard. They put up 40 last week and only 21 against us, so it is what it is."

(On the team getting over the hump of coming up close to winning) "It is definitely tough, especially when you that you are better than both of the teams you just played, who everyone else thinks are good football teams. Don't get me wrong they are good football teams, but we just have to execute when it comes down to it. They did and we didn't and that resulted today in a three-point loss. Back to the drawing board, get it out of our systems and Thursday night football awaits us and we need to come out with the win there."

(On his thoughts on the missed kicks today) "It's not all on him, we all have a job to do. We have to execute in our phase, we had a couple of penalties that killed us, a couple mistakes on offense that killed us too. We have to play complimentary football, that is all it comes down to and I think the Saints did a good job at playing complementary football tonight."