



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS ATLANTA FALCONS
SUNDAY, DEC. 6, 2020 • MERCEDES-BENZ STADIUM
SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- With the win, New Orleans' record improves to 10-2, putting them three games ahead of the 7-5 Tampa Bay Buccaneers for first place in the NFC South, who have a Week 13 bye. It also gives the franchise their fifth winning streak of at least nine games, their third under Head Coach **Sean Payton** and second in the last three seasons. The Saints have also clinched their fourth consecutive playoff berth for the first time in franchise history. With a win on Sunday at Philadelphia, they would clinch their fourth consecutive NFC South title.
- The win gives the franchise four consecutive double-digit victory seasons for the first time in franchise history.
- The win improves Saints Head Coach Sean Payton's record against Atlanta to 20-8, making the Falcons the first opponent he has 20 victories against. The win also gives Payton a 10-4 road record against Atlanta. A win over Falcons Interim Head Coach Raheem Morris gives him a 5-3 all-time record against Morris, and retains his regular season winning record against 51 head coaches.
- New Orleans improves their road record to 5-1, giving them winning road records in three consecutive seasons for the second time in franchise history after Payton and the Saints first achieved this from 2009-11. It also gives them a 3-1 record at Mercedes-Benz Stadium, giving them their third consecutive road victory at the facility.
- Offensively, New Orleans racked up 424 yards in the win with 217 net passing yards and 207 rushing yards on the way to scoring 21 points.
- Quarterback **Taysom Hill** started and completed 37-of-27 passes for 232 yards with the first two touchdown passes of his career and a 107.0 quarterback rating while carrying 14 times for a career-high 83 yards, leading the Saints on three scoring drives resulting in three touchdowns. He is also the first Saints quarterback to win his first three starts as a Saint.
- Hill's 364 rushing yards this season are the most by a Saints' QB in club history, surpassing Aaron Brooks' 358 in 2001.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** led the team in rushing with 88 rushing yards and a touchdown on 15 carries while also catching two passes for nine yards. Kamara joins Roger Craig as the only players with at least 3,000 rushing yards and 2,500 receiving yards in their first four seasons. He also joins RB **Pierre Thomas** as only the second Saint with at least 3,000 rushing yards and 2,500 receiving yards. Kamara now has 51 career touchdowns, moving into a tie with TE Jimmy Graham for fifth in club record books.
- WR **Michael Thomas** led the team in receiving and caught nine passes for 105 yards. Thomas eclipsed the 500 receptions mark for his career, reaching the milestone in an NFL-record 69 games. Thomas surpassed Anquan Boldin and Julio Jones who each reached 500 receptions in 80 games. Today marked Thomas' 21st 100-yard receiving game, surpassing **Eric Martin** (1985-1993) for third place in team history.
- WR **Tre'Quan Smith** and TE **Jared Cook** each caught touchdown passes from Hill in the first half.
- Beginning after a first quarter touchdown against San Francisco in Week 10, the Saints' defense went a club-record 14 straight quarters without giving up a touchdown until Atlanta scored in the fourth quarter today.
- LB **Demario Davis** played in his 140th consecutive NFL game on Sunday, having never missed a contest in his nine-year NFL career. Davis led the team in tackles with nine and now has over 300 tackles as a member of the black and gold.
- DE **Trey Hendrickson**, DT **David Onyemata** and DE **Carl Granderson** each recorded a sack against Falcons' QB Matt Ryan.
- Hendrickson now has 10.5 sacks on the season and becomes the first Saint besides DE **Cameron Jordan** to have double-digit sacks in a season since 2014.
- Jordan finished with two solo tackles and eclipsed the 600 tackle mark for his career.
- Onyemata now has a career-high 6 sacks. Onyemata, Jordan and Hendrickson are the first trio of Saints defenders to post at least 5.5 sacks each since 2006 when DE **Will**

Smith had 10.5, DE **Charles Grant** 6 and DT **Brian Young**, now the team's pass rush specialist coach, had 5.5 quarterbacks takedowns.

- FS **Marcus Williams** finished with seven tackles and one pass defensed.
- DB **P.J. Williams** finished with two solo tackles, his 25th career pass defensed and one fumble recovery
- LB **Kwon Alexander** recorded three solo tackles and a team-high two passes defensed.
- K **Wil Lutz** converted all three extra point attempts and joins **Morten Andersen** (1985-89) as only the second Saint to have 100 points in five consecutive seasons.
- P **Thomas Morstead** played in his 186th regular season game on Sunday, moving him into a tie with T **Stan Brock** for fifth place in club record books. Morstead punted five times for 199 yards with a 39.8 gross punting average and a long of 49.
- The Saints have not surrendered 100 yards to an individual player in 55 consecutive games in the regular season and postseason combined, the longest streak in NFL history.
- The Saints extended their NFL-leading streak to 299 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.

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Head Coach Sean Payton

On what the Saints have done to improve in the red zone defensively over the past few weeks:

“Well, look, I think the first thing, it starts with defending the run. Those were big stops we had in the game, forcing the field goals. That was the difference in winning and losing. Obviously, it's fitting the run correctly and then playing your red zone defense. It might be two or three different calls you're playing but getting real comfortable with the route combinations.”

On QB Taysom Hill's performance on Sunday and his ability to convert on third down:

“I think his third downs all game were strong. I thought his performance was strong. He made a lot of throws. I don't like the position I put him in late in that game with the turnover, but that's what I saw. I thought, man, we converted a number of third downs. I don't know what our final percentage was. I think we were 9-something, 9-13. I thought he played well.”

On the blocking of the offensive line on Sunday:

“Yeah, look, it's a tough run front. There's a lot of movement. Those guys do a very good job. They're well coached. They play with leverage. And man, they make some of the stuff you want to do very difficult. I was proud of how we just kind of hung in there though and grinded and battled it out and I thought that ended up being part of the difference, the time of possession, I think was significant, especially in the first half.”

On CB P.J. Williams performance at cornerback on Sunday:

“I think he did well. It's great to have that depth. When you're out one and you're out another, a lot of times, especially against some of the receivers that we saw today, that could be challenging. I thought he competed his tail off though.”

On clarifying what he meant by he didn't like the position he put QB Taysom Hill in at the end of the game with the fumble:

“Well, I don't like my call there. I think it was on second down. And where we're at in the game, yeah, I just, every once in a while I'll have regrets on the situation and that one certainly will be one of them.”

On whether Hill's fumbles are something that's easy to correct:

“Well, we're talking about two topics here. The turnover down in the red zone was when he was trying to -- we just need to, like I said, handle that situation better. The ball security one, he's a runner, all right? That has to get fixed and, look, he'll start figuring it out, but, yeah, that obviously when we're in the four minute is real important.”

On what happened on RB Todd Gurley's seven-yard loss on 3rd-and-2 near the end of the game:

“Look, I thought, man, the play skipped outside and sometimes when that happens on that scheme, and I know the scheme, it goes to the corner, I thought we kept our leverage well. We tackled well. And he's someone that's dangerous if he gets outside. You see that happen with backs, but that was a significant play.”

On whether there's a reason the Saints are 8-0 without QB Drew Brees over the past two seasons:

“No, listen, these -- look, it's the position everyone folks on, but, man, our team's playing well and man, we're fortunate to have depth at a number of positions and that's including quarterback. So I'm proud of how we played, we knew it was going to be a tough game, playing a team like this the second time around in two weeks, the numbers aren't really good for the team in the past that have won the first game, when you look back on 15 years, 10 years, any study you want. So, but, yeah, relative to -- I just think we're doing a number of things that give us a chance to win, obviously there's some stuff that we have got to clean up.”

QB Taysom Hill

On his first touchdown pass and his comfort level in the offense:

"I don't care as much as people might think about statistics and all the stuff. I care about winning football games. I know there have been a lot of conversations about getting your first touchdown completion, but as long as we're winning football games, I'm happy. So, I was certainly happy about it because I knew it was going to help us win. I was happy for Tre'Quan [Smith] he ran a great route and that was a late add in the week. It was one of those things that makes Coach [Sean] Payton, Coach Payton."

On the importance of converting third downs on Sunday:

"I don't know what the stat was, but I certainly was aware that they were big. I was really happy with our game plan coming into the game on third down. I think our coaches did a phenomenal job with putting us in situations to be successful on third down. I would say that there was some funky looks that I was not expecting on third down but we had practiced it and sure enough we got it. Some of those were big conversions."

On whether this week's game plan made him more confident in throwing the ball compared to last week's:

"I have a lot of respect for Matt Ryan and what he's done in Atlanta and how successful he's been. They have weapons and they're explosive, so as I approached this game, it was a much different mindset for me. I knew that I could, and we needed to, let loose and get some offensive productivity today. It was just a total different mindset for sure."

On whether he thought he was going to have to work a two-minute offense at the end of the game:

"We were. Our Offensive Coordinator Pete Carmichael and I sat down and we went through our two-minute stuff and talked about the stuff that we liked and we were getting prepped to do it if we had to."

On whether there is something he can target as a cause for turnovers as a runner:

"We're obviously trying to get a first down, run the clock out. I have to put two hands on the ball in that situation. Guy came over, made a good play and topped down, ball out. I'm disappointed about that and certainly something I need to fix. I think it really just boils down to two hands on the ball."

On what he saw on his 43-yard scramble:

"It was man-to-man. It's interesting, in the first half, we were getting a lot of two-man on third downs. So, as a quarterback and as a guy who can run, you're kind of licking your chops when you see that. I was aware of it, I don't recall if that was two-man but it was man-to-man, no one was there for me, so I was able to escape the pocket and make a good play."

On the importance of WR Michael Thomas playing with confidence:

"Michael Thomas is phenomenal. He's a big, strong, physical receiver. Such a security blanket for a quarterback early in their career. I know that dude has fight on every play, he's so big, strong and physical that if you make the right throw, he's open. I appreciate how hard he plays, how competitive he is and I love playing with him."

On how comfortable he has gotten and his development from his first start:

"As I mentioned earlier, at the end of the day, I'm happy that we've gotten three wins. That's the statistic that I care most about. As far as my overall development and the process, I feel like I'm becoming more and more comfortable in operating the offense and I feel like there are so many ways I can continue to get better, which is encouraging when we're moving the ball, we're playing football games. There are still places for us to get better at. Overall, I'm getting more and more comfortable."

On whether he felt he attempted a pass on the play that was ruled a sack-fumble:

"I'm obviously disappointed about that play as well, we had points. It was one of those things where I was trying to make a play and really, my thought process was to avoid something bad from happening by just throwing the ball away and in turn, something bad happened. I know that it was reviewed and they said it was a fumble, but my mindset was just try to throw the ball away and give us an opportunity on third down. In hindsight, I obviously wish I would have just taken the sack, kicked the field goal. It would have been big points for us."

WR Michael Thomas

Was Taysom Hill quicker on the trigger this week? Did you see him getting rid of it faster, being more decisive? Talk a little bit about what you've seen in his development in three weeks?

"I've just seen a guy come in and handle the situation very well. He's improved week in and week out. He's getting more comfortable, obviously, you can see that. And you can tell a guy that loves football and just wants to win. So, whenever you have a guy like on your team, we just want to help him and make him right and complement him and make his job that much easier when he throws you the ball."

What's the chemistry sort of been like with you and Taysom (Hill)? Are you starting to develop that chemistry?

"Yeah, whatever he asks for me to do, however he wants me to run it and wherever he needs to be, when my number's called I'm trying to be there and be exactly where he needs me to be. So, we've just been working on that in practice. Like I said, he's improved week in and week out. Sky's the limit for him, because he's the guy that wants to learn and (is) willing to get better. And I love that about him."

Can you describe what you saw on that, I think it was a 3rd and 17, you ran it right to the sticks and Taysom (Hill) kind of stuck it on you? Can you describe what you saw in that play?

"We knew the situation. During the week we practiced third down and Coach (Payton) right when we come to the huddle, he always tells us, know the down and distance, know what we got to get on the field. So, when your number is called, and the play presented itself we're still trying to get some more plays and we're still trying to get first downs to move the chains. So whatever it takes, you've always got to get your depth and make sure you get it. You can't just cut off the route short or not be where the quarterback needs you when it's time to make a play. So, I just ran a play that came in when they called and execute it to a high level. And me and Taysom (Hill) were on the same page. And I knew what it was, it was have to have it third down (to convert)."

Can you just talk in general about how good it feels to win nine straight games despite the fact you guys have had some significant injuries, some games that have been tight that force different kinds of wins, just feeling good about winning nine straight and actually clinching the playoffs today?

"Yeah, it's definitely a blessing to be in this situation. I feel like it's the culture that we've built since I've gotten here. We've slowly built it. And we demand it, we demand it now. We demand success, we demand excellence, we come into it, home or away, we're coming to win games, we're not just coming here to play the team we're going against. As long as we keep that mindset, with the coaches that we have, and the skillset we have on both offense, defense and special teams, we're a very dominant team and everyone knows that."

Did you guys see anything different in the coverage this week compared to the first time you played them? It seemed like maybe third down, they defended a little bit differently, but did they throw a lot of different stuff at you guys from the first game to this game?

"On third down they played two man. The first week they play a lot of man, more so than two man. You know, those guys played right and left, but you notice 24, he traveled this whole game. You know, played two man, I want to say every down on third down, at least when I was in. So we have plays to beat two man and we have a great offensive coordinator that knows how to dial it up. So, we don't really panic in those types of situations. We just go out there and execute the play that's called and try to make the best out of it and move the chains."

LB Demario Davis

We've talked a lot about your red zone defense all year when it was something you had to improve. And then when it's been great, but like, how rewarding was it that when you guys absolutely had to have that red zone stop, where it made the difference in this game that you guys were able to deliver?

"Coach harps on it all the time that the good teams down the stretch are the ones that can be efficient in the red zone, whether it's on offense, or it's on defense. And so, we know it's important to get where we need to go. So it was important for us to get a stop in that situation, you never know when you're going to be in it. And when you're there, you just have to be able to make the plays and it was fortunate for us to make the play there."

Why do you think you guys have gotten so much better in that area? Is it as much a mindset as it is anything technical?

"There's a lot that goes into it. It's a very detailed game, you have to be able to execute at a high level. And sometimes it's on the offense. They just make great plays. Sometimes, defense just gets the best of them or there's nowhere to go with the ball when you get pressured. And it's a number of reasons that allow you to play effective down in there. Your eyes have to be right. You have to know what concepts are coming and it worked out well for us today."

When the defense is playing as well as it is over the last few weeks, how much fun is it? And how much more sort of loose can you play when it's going so well?

"Anybody that's watched us play knows, like, we're a very energetic group. We like to play with tons and tons of swag. And the only way that you can show that swag and play with that energy is when you're making plays. I think it's a credit to a lot of the guys individually each week that guys are out there trying to make plays. And so, when the ball comes their way, they just try to make it. And it's just great when guys are making plays. And we have a group of guys that get excited for the other guys that are making plays. And so, it's just a great brotherhood to be a part of and we're flowing right now. We've just got to keep it going."

Atlanta had that kind of goal line situation down there? I think they were at your 13 (yardline) with two minutes left, you made both the tackles on Todd Gurley, can you just walk me through what you saw in those two plays? The second down and the third down?

"Yeah, first of all, (Todd) Gurley has been a phenomenal back in this league for a long time. Atlanta, we knew, Atlanta was using him a lot in the red zone, he comes alive in the red zone. They had had some success on that drive and running the ball. They were running the crunch concept that we call a cross concept with the tight end comes across, and kind of exchange the gaps. So they had had some success in that, while we were expecting pass, they had did that. So, just coming down, you know, stretch. It's kind of trying to think what the offensive coordinator will call. He's going to run the plays that he's had success on. He hasn't had a lot of success today and those were the ones. And so, that second down, third down, the first one, I think he didn't actually do the crunch play, just ran like a regular run play. And then he tried to come back to it. And I think it was Chauncey (Gardner-Johnson) that came back there first, and then knocked it back and then I was just able to come across the top and make the tackle."

ATLANTA FALCONS

Interim Head Coach Raheem Morris

On the final four or five minutes of the game:

"We gave ourselves a chance at the end. We really had a chance down there on the 12-yard line. We knew we were going for it, we were going to give them all four downs and we would have an opportunity to try to win the football game, hopefully end up in our two-minute defense and let us win it there, but it didn't work out that way. Matt threw a nice throw on the fourth down and gave Julio a chance. The ball fell incomplete. It could have been a call there, potentially, but it wasn't. It is what it is, and those guys did a great job. You got to give the Saints credit. They fought through an ugly tough football game, exactly what you're supposed to do to win games on road."

On whether he was OK with RB Todd Gurley rushing three consecutive times in the red zone on the second-to-last drive:

"Todd is one of the better red zone runners in the game and he both got a first-down run and got a really good gain there. The second one, we like him not to bounce it. Things happen that way. You want to go downhill and try to get more yardage and try to force the first down right there, give us more turns. We were not able to do it. We got to execute better there. We've got to do a couple things better there to be able to win."

On RB Todd Gurley playing sparingly in the first half but playing at the end of the game:

"We're playing it situationally right now. He's battled with some things, like all of us at this time of year. So situationally, like I talked about him being one of the better red zone runners in the game and certainly wanted to go him towards the end. Ito got banged up somewhere in that quarter, I believe. I can't remember exactly when, when he went down in the field in the turf and he went inside. So we had a chance to get Todd out there and get a chance to try to win that football game and we were not able to get it done."

On scoring one touchdown in two games against New Orleans and whether that's related to play calling and scheme:

"I think this team has only given up one touchdown and I can't tell you how many quarters against a bunch of people. You got to really give the credit to the defense, first. We'll have to go back and evaluate our stuff like we always do and find out what we can do better to try to be more successful versus this defense. But you really got to give Dennis and his crew and his defense and all those guys over there across the ball a lot of credit."

On whether he has confidence in Offensive Coordinator Dirk Koetter moving forward:

"I'm very confident in our team just in general and then we never separate anybody when talking about team. The confidence that flows through us in order to go out there and dictate terms, how to win the game that we need to do, we have a lot of confidence in that. We did not do that today. Those things every week will always be looked at, they will always be addressed, but they will always be judged, and you can always play Monday morning quarterback. We refuse to do that here. We will always come out ready to game plan and go to our next opponent."

On the reason the Saints defense has had success on third down this season:

"Again, their D-line with their ability to create rush, with the ability to stop the run, when they're allowed to play two-deep defenses, they're allowed to play some two-man, they're allowed to play some trap. Their DBs are very opportunistic. They make plays on the ball at a high level. They did great job with us on third down, and these guys are a really good football team. They're a really good defensive team, and just all around they play a great team game together. Hats off to Sean."

On what happened on the 3rd-and-2 play near the end of the game or whether he needs to watch the tape:

"No, I know they made some kind of movement inside. Gurley seen the bounce look and he took the bounce look. You don't really want to take the bounce look in that situation. He did. He reacted as a football player would do. They were able to get him down around his ankles and get a big-time loss and create us in a 4th-and-9 situation."

On whether they knew they would go for it on fourth down on the second-to-last drive of the game:

“We were in four-down mentality right there. It was the at the house, you go win that game right there and you put that thing away and you finish it off on defense with the ball in your hand or you finish that thing off on defense getting a big-time stop, so that was the mentality for us on offense to go for it.”

On whether the offense did enough to be more creative and less predictable in the play calling in the two games with the Saints:

“Obviously not, we didn't do enough on either side of the ball, offense, defense, or special teams in order to win these football games. And when you come out and play these type of games you got to do more everywhere division games, touch ones, this thing went down to the wire, the last one got out of hand in a very similar fashion towards the end. I was proud of the bounce back and how we resolved and how we were able to get back in that thing and have a chance to win, but you like to get these things in a better fashion for us.”

On why the offense struggled to get in rhythm at the beginning of the game:

“We kind of talked about this, we got to go down and we got to score touchdowns when we get the opportunity. Koo has been money for us, there's no doubt about that, but when you're playing a like this you got to get the ball in your favor, get some points, get it going, not let them be as one-dimensional as they want to be, with their play action pass and their ability to run the football. That allowed them to control it all the way towards the end, to the end there. And then we were able to get some momentum going we got the ball back, had a chance to go score and try to win that thing, just didn't work out in our favor again, like I said.”

QB Matt Ryan

On the team's offensive performance:

“We certainly didn't play well enough. We needed to be more productive particularly in the first half this week and walked away with too many field goals and not enough touchdowns. It's disappointing any time you play like that but hopefully we can be better next week.”

On what the Saints defense was doing to get off the field on third down:

“I think they're a good defense, that's for sure. I think part of it has to do with the type of third downs we were in. We needed to be in more third-and-shorts to give us better opportunities and we weren't in those. We needed to play better. The combination of that makes it for a tough two games against them.”

On the wide receivers not being able to create separation with Saints defensive backs:

“I think as players you have to look what you can do better. We all have to do that. I think when they get pressure and make the ball come out before, it allows for guys to be in tighter spaces than if we had some more time. It's a combination of being a little better on the outside, a little better playing, a little better up front and me being a little more accurate. I think that's probably the way I see it.”

On the play calling on the second-to-last drive:

“We were productive on the first play. It got us in to good position, second-and-short. We were not productive with the last two runs. It's tough. Our job as players is to execute the play calls and to do our jobs and make them work. We didn't do a good enough job there.”

On his fourth down throw targeting Julio Jones:

“I just tried to give Julio a chance in the back. I didn't know if I could hold on to the ball any longer than I did. I just tried to give him some air and give him a chance. I probably just needed a touch more air. In those situations, you have to put one up and see what happens.”

On whether the offensive talent is being underutilized:

“I don't think we played well enough, for sure. I don't think we played up to the standard that we're capable of and I think everybody needs to look in the mirror and find out what are the things individually we can all do better to make us better as a unit.”

On whether he has confidence in Offensive Coordinator Dirk Koetter:

“Yeah I do. I’ve got confidence. Dirk does a good job of putting the plan together and putting us in situations to be successful. I think like every week, there are some things he would do differently and there’s things we’ve got to do differently as players and make plays when the situations present themselves. That’s how I feel at this point. I think we’ve got to find out a way to get the job done. We’ve got four games to go and hopefully we can be the most productive all year in this last quarter.”

On trying to make adjustments following the previous matchup against the Saints:

“Number one, we wanted to be productive and make first downs on first and second down. I think for the most part, we didn’t do a good enough job of that. We needed to be more efficient first and second downs and create explosives that way. When we did, we kind of got in to drives and were moving the ball well. When we did not, it put us in tough third down situations with one of the best third down defenses in the league.”

On the final play of the game:

“Calvin [Ridley] did a great job of getting out of bounds and giving us a chance there at the end to have a final throw at it. It’s one of those things, you try to put it up and give your guys a chance and hope the ball bounces the right way. Unfortunately for us, it didn’t.”

On the officials not leaving one second left on the clock at the end of the game:

“That’s tough. You’d love to have another second, another go at it. The rules are the rules and you have to play by them.”

On trying to attack the Saints’ secondary down the field and whether he saw anything different from the Saints defense today than the previous matchup:

“A few wrinkles here and there from them. For the most part, it was similar to what they’ve been doing all year. I thought we had some good chances to be aggressive and take some shots down the field. We hit on a few. We didn’t hit on all of them. We knew going into it that we had to hit at a high level in order to be successful and so we just fell a little bit short of that.”

WR Julio Jones

On the final play of the game:

“If it had touched my hands I would have definitely caught it. I got hit when the ball was coming down. If it had touched my hands I would have caught it. It would have been a different outcome.”

On the 4th-and-9 play on the second-to-last play of the game:

“I had a corner route on that play. Matt [Ryan] just got rid of the ball. When I came out that is why I was looking for it to go to the pylon. I was going to the pylon. I wanted to keep the corner underneath me to make a play on the pylon, but he left it inside. Timing and a lot of things like that, those plays gave me an opportunity to make a play on it.”

On who is to blame for struggles offensively:

“I mean all of us. We just have to go. At the end of the day I got to go watch film and see if it was the timing, offensive line, us getting out of our breaks faster, identifying the coverage. It is everybody. We just got to go look at the film tomorrow. It is on all of us at this point. It is no single person that is accountable for this. I feel like it is on all of us. We got to go watch and see what we can get better at and get better as a unit.”

On the team’s mentality going forward:

“We just got to keep battling and keep playing. At the end of the day this is what we love to do. We sacrifice a lot for this game. We are built to fight. We want to fight and we will continue to fight.”

On scoring one touchdown against the Saints this season:

"We are too good to only have one touchdown against them. We just have to take advantage of more looks and things like that. As far as this game I will have to get in there and watch film tomorrow and see what we could have done better in this game."

WR Calvin Ridley

On the feeling after the game:

"It hurts. I mean we definitely want to get a win versus that team, the Saints. It hurts. We got to get that win right there. We got to score on the goal line. I mean even earlier in the game, score early and we won't be in that position."

On his personal performance in the second half versus the first half:

"I did not make the plays in the beginning in the first half. I believe I had a touchdown I should have had. I got to make that play. There was a go ball on the left. I have to make that play and a couple of others. I have to do better."

On the progress over the past month and the mentality going forward:

"I have seen a lot of good stuff out of us. Coach Raheem [Morris] has done a tremendous job with us. With the last four games he will not let us think the season is over. He is going to have us thinking the season is still going and we still have a chance to do whatever we want to do. That is just how he coaches. We just got to play hard. I mean for our pride and for the city."

On the Saints winning six out of seven meetings:

"I wanted the win right there so I could talk a little trash. I do not talk trash, but I wanted to because they started talking to me. I cannot say too much because we did not get the win, but I wanted to."

DT Grady Jarrett

On what led to the Saints offense having success on third down:

"There are some things we need to review the tape on. I do not want to prematurely speak, but obviously we got to do better and get off the field."

What held the defense back from getting a fast start:

"Referring back to the first question, just some converted third downs in critical situations and drives being kept alive. We just got to be ready to get off the field. Like I said earlier in the week, we have to respond and try to get off on a better start."

On the effect of the time of possession differential:

"That is definitely the game they wanted to play, control the time of possession and control the ball so they can keep the game close and run the ball with the quarterback situation they have going on. All in all we played the game the way they wanted to, which we did not want to do. But we were still in position to win the game. It is not all bad from this game, but we did not want to lose this game. We still fought all the way to the end and were in position to win in the end."

On the impact of the fumble recovery in the red zone:

"Whenever you can get turnovers like that it is always good. It will give your team a spark, your defense a spark. We were in a spot where we had to make a big play and a big play was made. We were able to get the ball back."

On the Saints winning six of the last seven meetings:

"It is pretty obvious. I am on my sixth year here now and dropping games to them is tough. Nobody is going to feel bad for us. We have got to there and execute and try our best to come out on top. I do not like that stat at all."

On the mentality of the team going forward:

“Whenever you get the opportunity to play this game you put your best foot forward. Always have the mindset that the best is yet to come. I believe that. I think my best football is ahead of me and I think the best football is ahead of this team. I am looking forward to finishing strong.”

LB Foye Oluokun

On what led to the Saints offense having success on third down:

“We just have to do a better job on our details on rushes and coverages there. If the play does get extended, plaster them more and cover them tighter.”

On the difference between the two halves on Sunday:

“I have to see what plays were called and I have to see how the second half went on film. We played with a good energy. I liked the plays that were being called. We just executed them and made them come alive.”

On the effect of the time of possession differential:

“I am expecting to play like that now. If our offense does well, I think our defense has that mentality that if the offense does well that is a plus. I am expecting to go out there and playing all game. I think it does well with our defense when we have adopted that mentality. We are not putting everything on the offense and they can ball out.”

On the changes made in the second half:

“We wanted to win, and they could not score any more. We put that in the air and made sure we went out there and gave it our best effort. That was the standard, they were not going to score anymore.”

On the mentality going forward and the previous progress of the team:

“Progress is always a work in progress. We always have room to grow so whatever progress we were making there sometimes will be bumps in the road. We can always improve on whatever we were working on.”