



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS DETROIT LIONS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2023 • SAESARS SUPERDOME
SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- The New Orleans Saints fell to the Detroit Lions 33-28.
- With the loss, the Saints are now 5-7 overall. New Orleans returns to action on Sunday, December 10, when it hosts the Carolina Panthers. Kickoff at noon central time and the game will be regionally televised on FOX.
- The Saints tallied 362 total yards of offense while allowing 347 to Detroit.
- After being outscored 21-0 in the first quarter, the Saints outpaced the Lions 28-13 the remainder of the game.
- QB **Derek Carr** completed 17-of-22 passes for 226 yards with one touchdown and one interception and a 105.5 passer rating before exiting in the fourth quarter (concussion protocol/shoulder/back).
- QB **Jameis Winston** came in relief of Carr and completed 2-of-5 passes for 41 yards.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** tied the Saints franchise record with his 52nd rushing touchdown in the third quarter. He broke the record with a one-yard plunge in the fourth quarter, passing Mark Ingram II. Kamara finished the afternoon with 51 rushing yards and had 58 yards receiving on six receptions.
- Kamara surpassed WR Marques Colston (2006-15) for the most yards from scrimmage in Saints history on a third quarter 13-yard reception. With a 109-yard performance Sunday, the running back is now at 9,807 total yards from scrimmage.
- TE **Jimmy Graham** caught his 87th career touchdown, moving into a tie for 17th all time with Pro Football Hall of Fame WR Andre Reed.
- QB **Taysom Hill** scored a one-yard rushing touchdown in the third quarter for the 27th of his career. He moved into a tie with former Black and Gold RB Tony Galbreath for sixth place in club record books.
- Hill led the Saints in rushing with 59 yards on the ground on 13 carries. He surpassed QB Archie Manning for the most rushing yards in Saints history not by a running back. Hill also added 15 receiving yards on two catches and one special teams tackle.
- WR **Chris Olave** tallied 119 yards on five catches, leading the Saints in receiving yards. It was the seventh 100-yard receiving game of Olave's career and fourth on the season. With a club-best 890 receiving yards on the season, Olave is 110 receiving yards from joining Colston (2006-07) and WR Michael Thomas (2016-17) as only the third Saint to open his career with back-to-back 1,000-yard receiving campaigns.
- CB **Paulson Adebo** and LB **Noah Sewell** tied for the Saints team lead with eight tackles apiece.
- LB **Zach Baun** knocked down Lions QB Jared Goff for his first career sack, also adding one special teams tackle.
- Signed to the active roster on Thursday, S **Johnathan Abram** led the special teams units with two tackles.
- All four of the Saints' scoring drives were at least 60 yards downfield, including a 13-play, 84-yard drive on their first touchdown in the second quarter. They also had scoring drives of ten plays, seven plays and 12 plays. They scored touchdowns on all four of their red zone trips.
- New Orleans went six-of-12 (50 percent) on third down attempts.



POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

DETROIT LIONS VS. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2023 • CAESARS SUPERDOME SAINTS HEAD COACH DENNIS ALLEN

(Opening Statement) “Not happy that we lost the game but was encouraged by some things. We got punched in the mouth early on in this game, and I thought our guys fought back and battled back. Obviously, we understand there are no participation trophies in our league. We are going to take the loss. We’re going to own it, but there were a lot of things I was encouraged by in the game. Obviously, we have to still play better.”

(On if there’s precedent to sit Derek Carr due to injuries) “I think both of those are totally different situations. They’re both totally different situations. We’re not getting into what we did last year and what we’re doing this year, alright? Look, Derek’s in the concussion protocol right now. We will evaluate that as we go.”

(On if Carr’s concussion is potentially serious) “I don’t know that. (Carr) is going in on evaluation for a couple of different things, but he is in the concussion protocol. Look, I did not mean to shut down your question, but you know obviously, with injuries you certainly have to pay attention to that. I’m not getting into the business of comparing things from one year to the next.”

(On mounting concern regarding Carr being in concussion protocol a second time this season) “Anytime you have a concussion, it’s concerning. There is concern with some of the injuries (Carr) has suffered. Just like we do all the time, we’ll go in and evaluate where he’s at physically. Then, we will go from there.”

(On the difficulty of the atmosphere with the Lions fans) “How can you not? It was noticeable, and that’s our job to change it. I was proud of the way our guys fought back, got back into the game and gave ourselves a real opportunity. At the end, we just couldn’t get it done.”

(On the early deficit) “You have to give those guys some credit, right? They’re a good team. They are second in the league in offense. They took the ball right down the field on the first drive. We missed a tackle on one run play, which created an explosive play, and they scored a touchdown. With our backs against the wall, we turned the ball over, and they were able to score another touchdown. Now all of a sudden, you’re starting the game down 14-0. We didn’t start well. We battled back. We scratched and clawed and got ourselves back into it. We’re going to keep swinging and keep chopping wood. I told the team, ‘Look, we’re eventually going to break through’.”

(On if Derek Carr’s performance was motivated by the atmosphere) “I wouldn’t be able to answer that question. Obviously, we’re all prideful. We are all competitive, and want to perform. I thought after he kind of settled in a little bit, I thought there was a stretch where he played really, really well. It was unfortunate he got injured.”

(On if the team’s identity showed throughout the game) “Yeah, our guys fought. We were not perfect. I didn’t like the execution early on. I thought it got better as the game went on. I did see explosive plays down the field, which I thought we could potentially create. I saw some things I liked, yet there are a handful of plays that end up costing you the game. Those are the plays we have to eliminate.”

(On the struggle defending Sam LaPorta) “(LaPorta)’s a good player. They have a lot of good weapons. There were some times where we made a conscious decision to take Amon-Ra St. Brown out of the game, and when you do that and devote more resources to that, it opens up some other areas. He’s a good player. They’re a good offense. They move the ball on a lot of teams. That was probably the big reason why – we devoted a few resources in other areas.”

(On the team’s confidence after another loss in a one-score game) “I don’t think there’s anything eroding the team’s confidence right now. We are going to keep chopping wood. That is the only thing you can do in this league. We’re going to leave the naysaying to everybody else outside of the building. We’re going to focus on what we have to do to try to improve in those areas so that we can

eventually breakthrough and win some of these one score games you're obviously talking about. We're obviously close, and we just have to keep chopping wood."

(On the Saints fumble at the start of the fourth quarter) "From the shot I saw, it looked like as Derek (Carr) was coming out under center to toss the ball and James Hurst is pulling and reaching, it looked like he hit the ball."

(On blocking out the noise) "Nothing positive comes out of being doom and gloom. Obviously, you need to make the corrections that need to be made. Then, you have to try to accentuate the positives and minimize the negatives. That's what you have to be able to do. We keep swinging, and eventually one of these turns our way. We make the play at the end of the game that gives us an opportunity to win the game. Then, you develop some confidence from there. That's where we are at as a football team."

(On the positive takeaways) "I think our guys just got over on the sideline and realized you just have to keep fighting. You really have two choices when you are in that situation. You can take the easy way out and you can give up, wave the white flag with a loser's mentality, or you can keep fighting. Our guys chose to keep fighting. Look, we battled back, and we gave ourselves a chance to win against a really good football team. We didn't get it done."

(On the halftime message): "That exact message. That exact message. Keep swinging."

(On if the last play by Detroit surprised him) "No, no. That's kind of been something they've been ready to do in those situations. You're in a situation where you can't let them run it, yet they can take the ball off of the line of scrimmage and throw it. They made a play in that particular situation."

(On the strategy with Derek Carr and Taysom Hill) "I think it was always part of the plan to utilize Taysom (Hill) in some of these plays. Then, I think as the flow of the game went on, particularly early on, I thought there was some success with some of the things we were doing with Taysom. We probably utilized him a little bit more. I thought we had a big opportunity with a big play downfield with Taysom in at quarterback, too."

(On if it is a tough decision to play Jameis Winston over Taysom Hill as the backup quarterback) "Our plan has always been if anything happened to Derek (Carr), Jameis (Winston) is the quarterback, and we will use Taysom (Hill) in the same role, we've always utilized him in."

(On if the quarterback scenario remains the same going into next week) "That's one thing we are going to look at."



POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

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QB TAYSOM HILL

(On the way the team responded to an early deficit) “Yeah, for sure. I think that shows signs of character in your team. What are you going to do when you get down early and face some adversity? I thought guys battled gave us opportunities to win that game.”

(On losing a game that was close) “It’s frustrating. I think these guys have been around this league for a little while you realize how competitive this league is and you look at games when we had a couple turnovers that cost us points and you start making mistakes like that when it’s as competitive as it is. That’s hard to do. It is frustrating. I think there’s a lot of good things that you can take from a game like this. We already talked about the character leadership of this team and one thing I know about the same is there’s no giving up in the locker room. Everyone’s going to keep fighting.”

(On if he feels they have run out of time) “I think as you look at sports world and life and everything else, I think you realize you control what you can control. As we look forward, our mindset goes to next week, and what are we going to do to win next week. That is all we can control. Make sure we put ourselves in a situation at the end of the season that we have an opportunity to get to the postseason.”

FS TYRANN MATHIEU

(On if keeping spirits up is in jeopardy) “No, I do not think so. I think with the kind of guys we have got on the sideline, coaches who have been in this league a long time. I think a lot of us have kind of seen it all. I wouldn’t say we were discouraged, you just got to find a way to band together and pull together, which I thought we did for a good part of it. And then, like I said, towards the end, we just couldn’t come away with the plays.”

(On his message to the fan base as a New Orleans native) “Obviously it was disappointing. I think we all need to play better. I think growing up in the city, it’s no secret that we’re all invested. You know what I mean? They have a right to apply pressure, so to speak. But at the end of the day we want a family, we want community and it’s going to take all of us.”

(On if being from New Orleans makes it more emotional with the way the season has gone) “This season hasn’t gone nearly the way we wanted it to go. There’s a sense of urgency. After a while you run out of opportunities, right? You just got to find a way to stick together. We got a lot of good players, got a lot of good coaches. I keep saying this, but we got to find a way to always believe. I think today was probably a good example of that. We down early, 21-0, the crowd is not into it, yet we still believe in each other and put ourselves in a position to possibly win the game. I’m proud of that and encouraged by that. And then I am proud of the way our fans came back towards the end of the game. We needed that. I think they had a good impact on us defensively because we were able to put together three, four drives where we were on and off the field. We one team, we one family and, like I said, we got to give them something to be proud of.”

QB JAMEIS WINSTON

(On his message to Derek Carr) “From my position I’m always lifting Derek up, but from the city’s position, I agree with Tyrann. I believe that we got to give them something to cheer for. I know that can be difficult at times, but he was very resilient, he answered the bell. But to the fans, we function off of your support. I know that we got to come in and give you something to cheer for. But just know that you and you impact us because we’re trying to lift you up. We’re trying to put on the show for you. So your support, your cheering, the inspiration that you give us is... This is why we do this. We do this for you. We wouldn’t have a job if it wasn’t for you all. So I just encourage all y’all to get behind us. That’s what this city’s is about. This city’s about resilience, this city’s about building and staying together. Despite our record, despite what’s the situation that’s going on, we got to stand together. Because the only people that can fix this is us, and that’s y’all included. That’s the fans. That’s the team. And that’s it.”

(On the amount of Lions fans) "It doesn't matter about them. I'm talking about us. I'm talking about who we are. We're the Saints. And since I've been a part of this organization, we have always found a way to overcome any type of adversity and we always stuck together because that's what it is. It's a southern love. That's the New Orleans love, right? That's that gumbo, a bunch of different mixes, putting together in a pot and you make something beautiful and we still have opportunity to make something beautiful. We just got to have our fans support, faith. As a team, we have to go out there and put on the show, do our job. I have to do my job better. Everyone has accountability in this and we're going to continue to increase and speak life and push forward."

(On Alvin Kamara's historic day) "Everything that we do goes through him. He's the best player on our team. And that's what he expects, that's what we expect out of him. I'm just grateful to be his teammate and I'm proud of him. I'm proud of how he comes to work every single day. When you are in the locker room with a Hall of Fame guy they can just do whatever they want to do but he comes with an approach he shows up on gameday and puts on a show for all of us."

C/G Cesar Ruiz

(On the loss) "I feel sick. I obviously don't feel good. It sucks because we feel like we should have won when everything is right there and front of you and you don't. I don't feel good."

(On if it is more frustrating since the game was close) "I think it is really frustrating because you want to win. It doesn't feel good."

(On if they needed more time) "You only get 60 minutes in this game, so you have to make it happen in those 60. I don't think we needed more time. Getting down by 21 early is not good. Obviously, we showed that we can come back from that. If we didn't put ourselves in that situation, then this conversation could be different. We just have to lock in. We can't let those things happen."

(On what clicked in the third quarter) "We just came out and was ready to go. There weren't many mistakes out there. We were moving the ball and doing what we had to do. Ultimately, we were moving the ball well and doing what we had to do. That was it. There was nothing that really changed. We just got into a rhythm and was ready to go."

G/T JAMES HURST

(On the turnover) "To be honest, I didn't know it happened. I didn't know what happened until I got to the sideline and they told me that I hit the ball. I don't know where it hit. I'm assuming some part of my hand or knee or hip. It was a play to the right, so we were all going that way. I'm not entirely sure where it hit though. It just can't happen. It was a timely turnover at the back end of our field. It's a huge negative play for us."

(On if it's bad luck) "It's never happened to me before. I don't know exactly what the coaching point is, but a turnover is a turnover is a turnover. They got the ball and scored a touchdown on that drive. It's bad. It's no excuse. It just can't happen."

(On battling back) "You are happy about some things like the way that we finished the game and the way we battled back. At the end of the day, the business is wins and losses. In a situation we are in where every game feels like a playoff implication, it's really tough to start a game like that. It's great to see us crawl back in and have a chance to win the game in the end, but 21-0 so early in the game is a tough way to start."

(On if he hears the boos) "It's all white noise to us. We are getting the call and the play, getting the personnel group in and trying to communicate out there. We don't really notice it."

(On the details) "The lack of details is what gets you beat a lot of times because everyone is so talented across the league. It's such a tightly contested league. When one little detail is off, then that's a turnover, a missed assignment, a missed block or something like that. It is what is most important at the end of the day and we all know that. Our coaching staff does a great job (to) make us understand that there are two, three or four details that matter on this play. It's really important and I think we know that."

DT KHALEN SAUNDERS

(On Detroit getting out to a fast start in the game) "They came out and executed very well. The first drive for a touchdown was good execution. The second one, they got a turnover in prime scoring position and that helped them. Credit them, they came out and executed well. With that being said, a lot of it falls on us. They are not the first team that came out and started fast against us. We've started really slow for several weeks. I do not think that is how good they were and executed. I think it was about our troubles starting fast because clearly throughout the game you could see that we were evenly matched. Regardless of records, it was an evenly matched game and a contested game all

the way through. I even told (Jared) Goff that I had respect for making that last play because that really won it. I have to give him his respect there. I think we just have to start out fast.”

(On if it is deflating falling short) “I think that is the NFL. It is becoming more and more rare of an occasion to have blowout games. One thing I learned early in my career is that you have to play all four quarters. I think it is weird to say that we are good at playing all four quarters. We just have to start better. If the first quarter can be like our last three quarters, then I think we would have a lot more wins. We just have to focus on starting faster. It is apparent that we can finish as strong as anyone in this league. That’s just the NFL. The saying any given Sunday is the truth. Look at the Broncos and how they turned it around. You have teams like the Bills who are a really good team, but their record might not reflect it as much. It is an any given Sunday league.”

(On what hinders the team from getting out to a fast start) “I do not think it is any one thing specific. We just have to pre-plan for what they are going to do a little better. Once we see it a few times, then we know what our defense is capable of. It is just having the looks scouted a little stronger that way we can start out faster and continue to do what we have been doing to finish the game.”



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Opening comments: “Heck of a win. It’s not easy coming into this place to win. That’s a prideful team (the Saints). They came out and fought. I love the way that we came out early in this game. They (Saints) made some adjustments; and then we had to make some adjustments. I was proud of our defense getting two takeaways. I thought that Sam LaPorta was huge today for us. I thought that he really did make some huge plays. I thought that we did a great job of taking care of the football. We had two takeaways on defense. That’s got to be our recipe. I thought (Jared) Goff there at the end, that’s a critical, critical pass and (Josh) Reynolds on the catch....It’s not easy, not easy to win. Here we go. We’ve got nine wins with five to go.”

(On his confidence in the offense to throw the ball late in the game) “Absolutely. That’s our guy (Goff). That’s what he does. The line was protecting well today. I’ll be honest, I felt like we were getting some separation in some areas, and LaPorta was really showing up. And, again, like I said, Reynolds made a heck of a catch there (at the end). Look, in the critical moments, our offense finished it out for us.”

(On if there is any concern with the team staying focused after leading big early in the game) “No. It’s like, how often do you get to come out and it’s just like, bam, bam, within whatever that was, you’re up 21-0. We had some things that we wanted to do, particularly offensively, and defensively, for that matter. We had a good feel of it, and they (Saints) made some adjustments, which we thought they would. So, then it comes down to one play here and one play there; we are an inch away from breaking another one. It was a chess game going on, you know? D.A. (Dennis Allen), look, he’s a good defensive coach; and those guys play hard. It’s a prideful team. Look, it wasn’t ideal. You don’t always want it to be that way, but, my God, to be able to hang in there (was good). They (Saints) were able to come back, and we just answer back, and we were able to close it out. That’s a hell of a win. I am not going to take that away from us.”

(On how intentional the rushing attack was early in the game) “It was very intentional, very intentional. Our offensive line was going to set the tone for today; and they did that. We were able to hang in there. We competed. It’s what it’s all about. We’re in the month of December. Here we go.”

(On the status of Frank Ragnow) “Nothing. We won’t know until tomorrow. At first, coming off (the field), it sounded like one thing. Then, after the fact, it sounded like something maybe a little bit different. One was not as good. One sounds more positive, so I won’t know until tomorrow until we are able to do a scan.”

(On if resilience is a hallmark of this team and the importance of responding well after a loss) “I think it’s very important. I think that that is what this league is all about. I think that the teams that are able to respond after you lose a tough one...to me, it’s not easy to gain confidence after losses, but I think you have to be able to do that. (You) have to understand your own errors and understand what you have to clean up. And, then you don’t want to have to lose that way again, or like that again, or from that again. We bounced back. I am not surprised, knowing the guys that we have, the coaches that are in that locker room, the players that we have. I am not surprised. I would tell you that that is some of the best practices that we have had all year was what we had the last three days. It was competitive. It was intense. It was fiery. Look, we can’t always do that. There is going to be times where it’s going to have to be a walkthrough. We’ve got to start doing things a certain way, but it was good to see them come back and be ready for this game.”



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QB JARED GOFF

(On how it is to play for a coach that puts the ball in your hands on critical moments) “Yeah, I knew we were going to have to make some plays there at the end to kind of seal that thing and obviously love it. Yeah. So that’s what we’re that’s what you look for and made plays when they mattered. Yeah.”

(On his comfort level with TE Sam LaPorta) “Yeah, as comfortable as anyone I played with and for a rookie, it’s pretty it’s pretty tremendous. I mean, I compare him directly to what [Amon-Ra] St. Brown was doing as a rookie as far as you know on the field and off the field and type of pro he is and knowing his assignments. Rarely does he have a rookie mistake. Very rarely. It’s such a reliable guy and a guy that I count on in those crunch times. And I know he’s a clutch player.”

(On the ability of this team to bounce back after losses) “Dan [Campbell] talks about all the time, I mean within our building we know what’s right and what’s wrong, what we need to get better at, what didn’t work. We don’t ride the roller coaster. It’s just you know, one game after another and it’s a testament to him [Campbell] and our team of being able to understand when losses happened that you know what are the points to improve and emphasize on. And then, you know, typically you get a better result next time.”

(On if it’s difficult to keep the energy high and maintain a 21-point lead) “Well, it’s hard to score on every drive, right? Like you’d love to, you know, but yeah, when you’re able to get up three scores really early like that, it’s huge. And it puts them [Saints] on the heels a bit. We’ve been in those situations this year and we know what it feels like so yeah, puts them on their heels and they were able to scratch back really nicely though in the second half and make some plays to make it a close game. That’s when we had to kind of step up and close the door.”

TE SAM LaPORTA

(On being trusted to have his number called in big moments on the last drive to seal the game) “Yeah. When there was, what four or five minutes on the clock we had a three and out. We did not feel good. We felt like we kind of left our defense out there to dry. They’re certainly capable of coming up in big situations. They made a great fourth down stop and then we knew that when we went back out there, we wanted to finish with the ball in our hands. We did that so we converted those two big third downs and was good way to end the game.”

(On his confidence level as a rookie being trusted on a big stage) “I think it creates a lot of momentum. Each week is certainly a new week but you feel good about what you’ve done in the past and the rapport that you have built up with your teammates, with Jared [Goff], with the entire offense. So you got to keep the momentum going and keep rolling. Keep rolling through December.”

(On when he reflects on the rookie season he is having) “After the season ends. Yeah, you don’t want to get caught up in all that. It just kind of muddies or clouds your vision for the team and the success we hope to have moving forward. I think I am surrounded by a lot of great people. Great teammates, great coaches, great support with my family and friends. So, they just tell me to do what I love. I love playing football. It’s not a chore, it doesn’t really feel like a job. You’re just out there with your buddies running around. It’s great that we’re having success. It definitely helps and makes you want to work harder when you’re having success and adding value to the team.”