



# POSTGAME NOTES & QUOTES

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

## NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AT MIAMI DOLPHINS SUNDAY, NOV. 30, 2025 • HARD ROCK STADIUM SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- The Saints lost to the Dolphins 21-17 on Sunday, falling to 2-10 on the season. They return to action next Sunday when they play the Tampa Bay Buccaneers at Raymond James Stadium with a 12:00 p.m. CT kickoff. The contest will be regionally televised on CBS (locally on WWL 4).
- Rookie QB **Tyler Shough** finished 26-of-38 for 239 yards and two touchdowns, one interception and a 91.9 passer rating. Shough also rushed for 18 yards.
- Rookie RB **Devin Neal** got his first start of the season filling in for Alvin Kamara and posted 47 yards rushing and three receptions for 23 yards.
- WR **Chris Olave** added four receptions for 47 yards, including a 17-yard touchdown grab. It was the 15<sup>th</sup> of his career and his fifth of the season, tying his career-high from 2023.
- WR **Devaughn Vele** had his most productive game as a Saint, posting a career-high eight grabs for a career-high 93 yards and a touchdown. He also contributed on special teams, recovering an onside kick.
- TE **Juwan Johnson** was reliable for the Saints offense again, racking up five receptions for 39 yards. He now has 54 receptions for 576 yards in 2025, setting new career-highs in both receptions and receiving yards.
- LB **Demario Davis** led the Saints defense with nine tackles (five solo).
- DE **Cam Jordan** finished with four tackles and two sacks, taking the team lead with 6.5.
- The two sacks pushed Jordan's total to 128 for his career, passing Pro Football Hall of Fame LB Derrick Thomas (Class of 2009) and tying Pro Football Hall of Fame LB Rickey Jackson (Saints 1981-93 and 49ers 1994-95) for 17<sup>th</sup> all-time.
- Jordan also recorded his 30<sup>th</sup> career multi sack performance against Miami, a feat only 20 other players have ever accomplished in NFL history. It was his first multi sack game on the road since 1/1/23 at Philadelphia.
- DE **Chase Young** and DL **Bryan Bresee** both added sacks for the Black and Gold. Young moved into second on the team behind Jordan with five takedowns.
- CB **Kool Aid McKinstry** finished with three stops, a tackle for loss on fourth down and his team-leading third interception of the season.

- DB **Terrell Burgess** added seven stops (three solo) to lead the Saints secondary, in playing in place of an injured Justin Reid.
- K **Charlie Smyth** made his first regular season appearance for the Saints on Sunday and drilled a 56-yard field goal in the fourth quarter to go along with a successful onside kick.



## **MIAMI DOLPHINS QUOTES**

*Sunday, November 30, 2025*

*Postgame – New Orleans Saints*

### **New Orleans Saints Head Coach Kellen Moore**

#### **Opening statement:**

KELLEN MOORE: Great game. Obviously a really good game of back-and-forth football. I loved our guys' resiliency, the way they battled and keep sticking into it. I thought all three phases came up with some plays as the game went on. And so ultimately we didn't do enough, didn't get it done at the very end. Loved the way our guys battled and it was an unfortunate ending, but there's stuff to learn from and grow from during that game so we'll continue to grow.

**Do you feel Tyler really got some rhythm when you guys went into that hurry-up in the second half, kind of playing with that pace?**

KELLEN MOORE: Yeah, I think once we were able to get some first downs and get some efficient runs on first and second down and playing some positive-yardage situations, the tempo obviously is a byproduct of that and you're able to play with more tempo.

**And just overall, how Tyler was able to respond from that first half where you guys couldn't get anything going offensively, and then being able to get things going in the second half.**

KELLEN MOORE: Yeah, I thought, credit to our guys, the way they battled. The second half, I thought our guys responded really well in all three phases. There's a lot of positives there. Obviously we didn't start the game the way we needed to to put ourselves in better position.

**On the pick-two, can you just take us through that play? What kind of led Tyler to, did Devaughn Vele fall or was it the wrong read? What did you make of that play?**

KELLEN MOORE: Two-point play. False start. So now it's a two-point play from the 7. Obviously your play kind of has to change there. Obviously 'Ve' (Devaughn Vele) is trying to run a shallow cross, build as we go and get into the end zone. I thought the defender, Minkah, made a phenomenal play, kind of jumped underneath on the route and was able to pick it off. We were close. Obviously it's a challenging two-point play when you're going from the 7. I thought the DB made a phenomenal play. Obviously we'll look at it in detail and see if we can give ourselves any other cleaner opportunities, but the guy made a really good play.

**What were your thoughts on that play call on fourth-and-1 at the end?**



KELLEN MOORE: Obviously it didn't work, so obviously going to evaluate it just like any other play. So it's frustrating. Didn't get it done. We kind of got the second-and-1, took a shot. Third down, took a pass. Fourth down, just tried to get our first down because we still had our timeout in our pocket. We weren't able to advance it and get it done.

**What did you make of Charlie Smyth's debut, and just for him to have the moment that he had?**

KELLEN MOORE: Charlie, I thought, kicked really well. Big-time field goal. The onside kick obviously was really well-kicked. Phenomenal kick there and put us in a position to have a chance at the end.

**What led you to go with him over Cade York?**

KELLEN MOORE: Just let the week play itself out. Evaluate those guys. Obviously he's got time on task with the whole operation. And he was ready to go. He did a really nice job.

**We've been kind of waiting for that Devaughn Vele daily breakout game, and it felt like it happened today. Just watching him being able to make those plays, was that kind of one of those where it was like, finally we get to see him kind of operate and do his thing?**

KELLEN MOORE: He's played a ton of snaps obviously for the last few weeks. The ball just hasn't gone to him necessarily. He's had a few targets here and there, so I thought that's what we've seen of him throughout this entire year, and that's what we're excited about and what we're going to build with him. So I thought he made some really big-time, contested catches in some challenging situations. He had a really good day.

**What do you think changed for the offense in the second half? Was it the tempo primarily? What got you guys into a rhythm?**

KELLEN MOORE: I think it's getting positive plays on first and second down that allow you to play in tempo. Obviously we all want to play in tempo but you can't play tempo going three-and-out. It doesn't provide that opportunity. I thought we got physical runs in that first drive coming out of the half. We got some 4-, 5-yard positive runs that led into some situations where we earned first downs. Played with tempo, that drive progressed well. There's certainly a path there that we need to try and replicate more consistently.

**You mentioned the three phases playing well. Defensively after giving up the opening drive touchdown, you were able to hold them to field goals, like almost felt like it was a bend but don't break approach for what the defense did, right?**

KELLEN MOORE: I thought the defense did a really good job of hanging in there. I thought, yeah, that first drive, obviously they made some plays. The response was really good and they made a few



plays here and there and obviously were able to force them into field goals, which I think was the key to giving us a chance.

**Does seeing Charlie's leg strength throughout camp and all this time, his first kick was a 56-yarder, just having that confidence in him to actually try that, was it something you saw based on his time with you guys?**

KELLEN MOORE: Yeah, Charlie's earned this opportunity. We have a lot of confidence in him. He's worked at this thing for a number of years now. He's prepared himself really well. We have a lot of confidence in him. He obviously has the leg to make some big-time kicks. That was a challenging situation, but it was a situation we needed to get some points there and he drilled it, and it was a phenomenal kick by him.

**What did you make of Tyler today overall?**

KELLEN MOORE: Obviously, like any day, like our entire team, we're going to have good plays. We're going to have plays we want to have back. I love and appreciate the way he battled and responded all game long, as far as facing some adversity early. And made some big-time plays, made some big-time plays. The two touchdowns were really a little bit off-schedule plays, and those happened in this game. That's what happens in football. I thought he made some big plays there.

**How concerned are you over the slow starts on offense?**

KELLEN MOORE: Yeah, we've got to start faster. Yeah, that's the bottom line.

**I know we always talk about moral victories and obviously the ultimate goal is to win, but to see what your team was able to do and stay in this, is there something you can take and move forward from what happened in this game?**

KELLEN MOORE: Every game has things we can take from it, both good and bad. The way our guys responded, the way our guys battled, I love and appreciate that. It's not easy being down at halftime like that and not having any points on the board and feeling like you're not quite clicking. I thought our guys responded in all three phases. I loved the energy and the juice. We came up short in the end, but there's going to be plenty of things to learn from this.

**I think Cam Jordan either is tied or leads you guys in sacks. What do you make of the season he's having and for him to be in this position at kind of his age and everything that's happened the last few years?**



KELLEN MOORE: Cam's done a really nice job. He made big-time plays in this game. He's made obviously a number of plays the last few games. He's just been a very consistent player. I love the presence he's brought to us.

**Was Justin Reid's (injury) anything serious?**

KELLEN MOORE: It was a knee and we'll see how it progresses. We'll get more of an update tomorrow.

**What made you guys go with, you started Jordan (Howden) there, then moved Terrell (Burgess) in? Did he provide a calming presence or anything?**

KELLEN MOORE: Both those guys we feel good about. They're both veteran guys. They know what they're doing. Both those guys will play in there and earn opportunities.

### New Orleans Saints QB Tyler Shough

**What did you take out of a game like that and what did you make of it?**

TYLER SHOUGH: I was just really proud of our resiliency throughout it. We started off too slow. Just got to shore up some of that execution-wise. I was just kind of proud how we battled the whole way. It just sucks losing and we have to find little ways to keep getting better. I think we're progressing well. Just got to shore it up.

**What are the emotions like where you guys are down after the touchdown, the two-point attempt, and then the onside kick? How do you kind of keep calm in that situation or were you not calm and how were you at the time?**

TYLER SHOUGH: I was good. I think everybody had the same mindset. We get an opportunity, we're going to go out there and attack. I think defense, special teams-wise, they did a really good job and we've got to find a way as an offense to be complementary that way. Just like I said, I was proud how we stayed even keeled and battled the whole way. It sucks whenever you're not starting the way you want to, but I think we had a good mindset. That was kind of the attitude -- it's going to pop; it's going to break open. We're executing not well, but I think everything was there and we saw it and knew we were going to get our chances.

**Do you think the tempo helped in the second half?**

TYLER SHOUGH: For sure. For sure. I think being able to attack and kind of get them on their heels. Obviously I think we were moving it well, operating well. And just kind of find how we can duplicate it. To be able to play fast but also change the tempo sometimes, I think it's stuff to build off of for sure.



**Talking to Devaughn Vele about the big day he's had and just the connection that you two have had to build since he's got here. Just assess how he played today and how he was one of the big targets for you?**

TYLER SHOUGH: He came up big. He came up big. For him, he's super smart. I think he has a great feel with his routes. I think he does a really good job. He's catching everything -- some of the ball placements I would have liked to have been better and he's making big-time catches. I was really proud of him. I think there's stuff to continue to grow off with all those guys. I think a lot of guys stepped up -- Mason Tipton, Dante Pettis, Kevin (Austin Jr.), Evan (Hull) and Audric (Estime) have kind of been thrust into a new role and I think everybody responded that way and we just kind of have to figure out how we can be more dialed in on some of those scenarios. But I was really proud of Devaughn (Vele) just because I think he's such a key player for us.

**Walk me through that two-point conversion.**

TYLER SHOUGH: I mean, it just sucks because I had everything we wanted there and he made a really good play, just kind of undercutting it. I would have liked to, maybe put it out in front a little bit more, but had to get it out of my hands. Just a really good play. Obviously a roller coaster of emotions there, but it's part of it so yeah, it sucks and we'll find a way to kind of get it in there.

**How about the other interception?**

TYLER SHOUGH: Yeah, it was just miscommunication. Was going in the whole way. Broke out, and I thought he was going to take one more step or keep going. It just sucks. We were driving the ball and just had a miscommunication with him but proud of how he continued to fight back.

**Is it a choice kind of thing? Either you hadn't worked on that specific scenario enough or you had two different thoughts on it?**

TYLER SHOUGH: No, it's just kind of a miscommunication. I'm reading his body language and throwing it to the spot and he made a good play and jumped. It just sucks. I think there's nothing -- obviously you want it back, but it's kind of part of it and we've got to find a way to put it on him, but at the end of the day, you're going out there, playing and we'll learn from it.

**You guys have had a lot of games this season that you point to the way you finished or the way you guys stuck in there. But you've also had a lot of games that you've said I wish we could start faster. How do you square those things individually?**

TYLER SHOUGH: That's the goal. That's the battle. I think just starting off being better on those first downs and then just kind of finding that rhythm. And I think for me, just seeing it well but finding a way to just get it done on those key third downs and we're going to do that. I promise you that. We're



going to do that. I think there's a lot of stuff to progress and build off of. But just learning from it and kind of continuing to really emphasize that, that's all we can do. And when those opportunities come, we'll take advantage of them.

**Saw you on the sideline earlier in the game, I don't want to say kind of hyping people up but obviously talking to a lot of them. What was your message at that point? What were you trying to convey?**

TYLER SHOUGH: It's going to happen. It's going to pop. I think we were seeing it fine. We knew what we were getting. We just had to be able to just -- we're that close on like some of them. And I think you just can't get down mentally. That was my whole thing -- just stay even keeled. Shoot, the last couple of minutes it's like this. You've just got to be able to operate. And I think we did a really good job of staying focused and just going out there and attacking. So stuff like that's going to happen. Maybe you're not starting the way you want to, or there's going to be some things here and there. But that was my message and kind of continue to do that. Just we're doing some really good things. How can we just be consistent that way? How can I relay that message to all the guys and that was what I was trying to focus on.

**That last series before the fourth-and-1 keeper, on third down, did you go into that thinking, I'm looking for one option and throw it away if not?**

TYLER SHOUGH: Where we kicked the field goal?

**No, the final fourth down stop. On third-and-1, you rolled right and chose to throw it away, when I think Chris (Olave) wasn't open?**

TYLER SHOUGH: Yeah, I would like to just pop it on him. I think he did a really good job there and they kind of collapsed on him from the outside, but my mindset was, third-and-1, okay, I know I'm in fourth down, the last thing I want to do is take a sack and end up in a really tough situation. So knowing that we had that opportunity was just kind of put it on him or throw it away. So obviously looking back at it, I think we can get it there. So that's on me, but I think at the end of the day, we'll get it done.

**With second down, was shot play the first read on that play, that's the first thing you were hoping for or it was if they reacted a certain way, you decided to go to the end zone to Chris Olave?**

TYLER SHOUGH: Yes, just shot play, for sure. Just trying to attack and take advantage of it. And obviously super close, but, yeah, that was a mindset, especially down there and when we're kind of getting them on their heels. We'll figure out a way to get it done. It just sucks thinking back right now, obviously.



**What did you think about Charlie's kick there?**

TYLER SHOUGH: It was ice cold, ice cold in his veins. I think that's tough, whenever you're sitting around the whole game, you're trying to stay warm. I think he did a really good job just coming in. I think the team saw that, just his neutrality, even in the kicking competition throughout the whole week. He came in there and made a really tough kick because we've got to be able to convert on that. We knew we had to get points. I was really proud of him stepping up there.

**For him to have the onside, too, what does that say about him?**

TYLER SHOUGH: I see him practicing every single day, him and Grupe, all those guys, they were dialed in on their craft. I just give credit to them and the whole special teams just stepping up really big there because that's a huge play, like I said. Defense did a really good job all day. We've got to find a way to complement on top of that, but Charlie was a huge deal for us.

**He seems to be a very popular guy in the dressing room as of late. Is that accurate or just based off the players' body language, especially when he obviously made a 56-yard in the rain, pretty tough stuff and then executed like an inch-perfect onside kick?**

TYLER SHOUGH: I think just who he is as a person, I think that's why we love him. I think how he operates every single day, just coming to work, I think you've got to respect that and who he is. You never know what he's saying sometimes. You might have to hear him say it twice, but he's got a great attitude. I think he's coming in there, he's got that dawg in him, for sure. I was proud of him. Like I said, we've got to get some more PATs for him, get some more PATs.

**New Orleans Saints DE Cameron Jordan**

**(Take me through those two sacks that you had in that first quarter?)** – “In that first quarter, I think Bryan Bresee had a middle interior push pressure, I thought he was going to get it. I was playing tight end screen because it felt like the tight end was light through him. Really it was a cleanup. First was cleanup. If one's for free, you've got to go earn one, so the second one I had to go earn. Rushed from the interior spot on a rookie guard and you've got to take advantage of them when you can. You knew he was going to bite, already playing for it, so then it was all about just collecting, making sure you don't trick it off.”

**(After that opening series, what as a defense did you guys kind of focus on and figure out to kind of just hold them to a point where they're just kicking field goals and this game is still manageable where you guys can still get back into it?)** – “For whatever reason the last 12 games, our first or second series is the one that we have to worry about, and then we sort of settle in as a defense and



play really well for the entire game. You'd like to say that we've got to start off strong the first drive, they end up with a touchdown after that, it was field goals, field goals, and you look up and you're like, 'Damn, I wish we could take some of those back. I wish we could've got the interception from 'Q. Riley' (Quincy Riley), wish it led to points, that would've been a big swing right there. I keep saying it's got to be on our defense."

**(You talked a lot about how fast QB Tua Tagovailoa gets the ball out, but it seems like you guys were able to make him hold it today. What were you guys doing well in that regard?)** – "The first half, yeah he was trying to look for those deep field threats, of course you've got Waddle, Cedrick Wilson is over there now with a couple of trick plays that they've got. Darren Waller had a big catch. You knew he was going to take some shots and we had to take advantage. Then he got back to doing what he's been doing the second half and that's getting the ball out quick and after that they sort of had a lead and were able to rely on (De'Von) Achane."

**(You lead the team now in sacks. What do you kind of make of that after the last few years you've had?)** – "Hard work and effort, the ability to mesh well with my d-line as well as knowing who you're rushing with. I've said it now for now two years, God has blessed me with immense talent and I'm overly grateful for everything he's given me and I'm blessed enough to play on a talented d-line and then we have a coach that gives you opportunity, you've got to take advantage."

**(What does it mean to you if anything to earn the incentives in your contract?)** – "I'm not going to lie to you, that's not my goal. My goal is to win. Sitting at 2-10, the team has always incentivized some part of my contract. I've never once played for those incentives, although they'll be great I'll say without getting into the politics of the contract. Give me what I've got for services rendered and let me continue to ball, and accordingly I think we've got young guys that are doing just that, whether that's Chase (Young) in pass rush, (Carl) Granderson is excelling at dropping and he's not getting enough recognition for how he's been able to take a lot of his drops and he's the best dropper out of all of us, as well as the way he's going in between the tackles at times in our third down package and rushed at a high level. You've got Nate Shepherd who's been playing his butt off this year. There's a lot of guys on our d-line that make you want to elevate your play, so the fact that if you say sack leader, well I've been the New Orleans Saints sack leader for a couple years now, so just continuing to push the envelope."

**(Obviously you've been here forever and you know what it takes for a group to win, how close is this current edition...)** – "The fact that I've come up and say we're a tenacious team, we're a team that keeps fighting. When you're fighting an uphill battle, you have to eventually reach the top of the



hill. We're taking shots, we're swinging and you just wish they would fall in our favor and they haven't for whatever reason this year. A game like this game, a game like last game hurts because you've seen guys make these plays. You've seen it be fourth-and-1 and get the first down or you've seen '12' (Chris Olave) go up and get the ball – once he went up in the air, I was like, 'That's a touchdown.' Surprised that he didn't but that's the type of player that he is. He's made 50-50 balls not 50-50 as he's fighting two guys off of him, that's just how impressive '12' has been this year. You've seen (Devaughn) Vele come alive. I mean for whatever it is, we have talented spots, we just have to be more consistent. I keep saying we have to start fast and yet we haven't had one game where it's like OK, we blitzkrieg somebody, we put two or three touchdowns up then we're looking back. It's always been all right, we've got the lead. The only time we've won was when we had a lead early. We've yet to have a lead and lose it."

### New Orleans Saints CB Kool-Aid McKinstry

**(Take me through that fourth down, the tackle from behind the line of scrimmage, just kind of what you saw and kind of how that play unfolded?)** – "I kind of let the edge split on that play. I kind of just trust my instincts and kind of just ran up the edge and hoped that I could get the guy before he could get to the line of scrimmage, just try to trust my speed to make the play."

**(Did you feel that urgency? It was a stop you guys needed and you saw kind of what unfolded afterwards.)** – "Yeah, I knew it was a play that we needed. We knew if they got the first down, it was going to be very hard to win the game. Coach made a good call and we executed."

**(Defensively, I know after that opening series where they kind of marched down the field and scored, you guys were able to all but just hold them to field goals, kind of keep them in it. What did it say after that first series how that defense as a whole responded after that?)** – "After the first drive, like you said, we gave up seven, I feel like we settled in. I feel like we do a good job of being connected on defense. We talk about connection, we talk about being there for each other, we talk about playing for each other and that's what we relied on. We didn't let that touchdown just break us apart, we let that touchdown bring us together."

**(Did you kind of see for your interception that play develop the entire time?)** – "Yeah, I'd kind of seen it based off the call we were in. I kind of had my eyes on the backfield so I kind of seen him lunging from the start of the play."



**(You guys were down 16-0 at half and to get it to a point where you're a 2-point conversion away from tying it up, what does that say about the kind of fight and character that this team is able to show?)** – "Just know we're coming, man. Just know we're growing, we're working every day. Every day we're in the lab, every day we talk about who we want to be and that's the team we want to be. Of course we want to win, of course we want to jump out in front, but we want to have that chemistry and that connection to be able to fight. We pride ourselves on not giving up. We pride ourselves on not giving up, we pride ourself on finishing and being tough."

### **New Orleans Saints K Charlie Smyth**

**(How did it feel to wait as long as you did and then the first [field goal] is a 56-yarder?)** – "I suppose you're kind of waiting all game and then the way the game was going, we needed two two-point conversions if we scored a touchdown, so we were curious if the opportunity was going to come up. Ultimately, you just have to stay ready and then they kicked a field goal to up 11 so we knew that we might have needed one at some stage. The boys did a great operation and I was just happy to be able to knock it down."

**(Was your family able to make it up [from Ireland] for the game?)** – "Yeah, so I found out on Friday. I think if we had to wait three or four more hours, I don't think it would have been possible. I think they traveled 23 hours because they flew to Chicago and the flight got delayed because of snow and then they flew down into Miami. It was awesome to see them. I've got more people here, my coach, my girlfriend and her family, and Connor here as well. I have a really good support network."

**(Just to get to the field goal, a 56-piece field goal, is there any range where you don't feel uncomfortable from? Rumors are you had a big leg in camp and you have been hyped up quite a bit and you looked completely relaxed and comfortable going in there.)** – "Whenever you are in that situation, those juices flow, you just can't replicate that when you're kicking on your own. It's all about feeling out into something that is going to be a positive impact on you, so I use that to swing harder."

**(Speaking of positive impact, you may have hit the most accurate onside kick of the season so far. How did that feel, what made you prompt to set the ball up the way you did?)** – "We did a scouting report on the Dolphins today and we saw Riley (Patterson) doing that and we practiced it during the week. We caught our own hands team off guard. Me and (Devaughn) Vele had a discussion about it and we went for it and Vele did a great job, everyone did a great job. It was nice to be able to recover that."



**(What did it mean for you to get the opportunity? You came over to the states to play ball and it took you 18 months to get there)** – “It took a long time and it obviously means ‘I feel ready, I feel ready.’ But the coaches, they know what they’re doing. They’re really, really good. Obviously we didn’t envision it being like this because Blake (Grupe) has been so good and I have learned so much from him. Tuesday was strange emotions because you saw your opportunity potentially coming up but then seeing him out was tough because we’re friends. At the end of the day, you get your head right and I was buzzing and then on Thursday, it was kind of a big day and I kicked really well. I was just excited to get the opportunity and to be honest, I’m kind of hiding it a little bit, I was absolutely buzzing.”

### **New Orleans Saints WR Devaughn Vele**

**(What’d you make of your day today and what kind of worked really well for you?)** – “I feel like there’s a lot of ups and downs. Early on I gave up a strip-sack, obviously that killed momentum to the offense but we fought our way back. I give credit to a lot of the guys fighting through. Obviously we didn’t get the result we wanted, but there’s definitely a lot of things that we can build off of and learn from this.”

**(Walk me through the touchdown in the back of the end zone there and just kind of what you saw, how it unfolded just from your perspective?)** – “We were in two-minute mode. Obviously guys are getting pretty tired, but we kept playing, kept fighting. Tyler (Shough) made a hell of a throw, he put it up there, gave me an opportunity to make a play and came out on the positive end. Those are the kind of things that we can definitely build off of. We’ve got guys in that offense that once we get our bearings down and limit the mistakes that we’re making, we can definitely take strides forward.”

**(What do you think was the contributing factor of why the offense kind of got it going after the first half where nothing kind of was happening?)** – “You hate to say it but we started rallying once we realized we’ve got to step it up. Defense was making plays and we weren’t capitalizing on those. Obviously we want to start fast, start early, not have to get it going and be fighting our way back. Like I said, I appreciate the grit of a lot of these guys on the offensive side for us fighting back, we’re going to keep building off of this.”

**(Can you just take us through the two-point attempt? What did you see and how was that play supposed to develop?)** – “Obviously that’s devastating, that could have been a big play, big swing, lead it to a tie game. The defense just made a great play. Obviously, I could’ve done something more. That’s all we can think about, we’re going to watch the film and see what really happened but I put



that on me. I can definitely help Tyler (Shough) out and help the offense and help everyone making those kind of plays.”

**(On the onside kick there, did you feel like you were fine, it was clean or were you kind of surprised when there was a review and how close it was in the review?)** – “Yeah, I was surprised, I thought I was already passed the 10 (yards) when I touched it and when we watched the review, I was kind of hurting a little bit when I saw it was short but luckily it touched the guy so we got lucky on that one, but I’ve got to make sure I’m past 10 yards next time.”

**(Is that how the play is kind of designed to go, where you get up the sideline and kind of field it there? Is that the idea?)** – “Yeah obviously we gameplan depending on how teams block it. We knew that the one, which is the position I was playing, they don’t block him so we knew we had an opportunity. All the guys on the inside were going to hold up their guys and credit to Charlie (Smyth), he came in and stepped in in a big way, put the ball right where it needed to be and we were able to make a play off of it.”

**(K Charlie Smyth said you’d only practiced that play a handful of times. What was your confidence level going in there?)** – “Like I said, I was still relatively new when I got here so I didn’t know too much about Charlie but one thing about him he’s always been working hard, you see him behind the scenes always practicing. I’m so happy for a guy like that that’s been working that hard to finally get his moment on a big stage and be able to convert like that. It’s awesome.”

**(What are the emotional swings like of you guys are down, you score a touchdown, two-point return then you have an onside kick. Are you freaking out inside as that’s going on? How do you process that emotionally as a player?)** – “There’s a lot of emotions that are processed in the game, but at the end of the day, like I said I’ve got to give it to these guys, these kind of games you can really tell a lot about a team. Obviously our record is what it is, but one thing I will give credit to is we’ve got some dudes on this team. Most guys would quit, give in, kind of cave in and don’t even try, but one thing about this team is that we’re going to keep fighting. It’s a pride thing and I’ve got a lot of respect for the guys in this locker room.”

**(How did you see QB Tyler Shough in the second half take control of the game a little bit after obviously just weren’t going well in the first half?)** – “I would say from the get he was like that the whole time. It wasn’t like one of those things of, ‘Oh, we need to get going.’ He was on us from the get, even when we were making mistakes. He was telling us that we’ve got to get things going, trust



in each other and keep building. That's a credit to his leadership and how he's stepped into that role, I've got a lot of respect for that guy."

**(Your chemistry as quarterback-wide receiver, how has that grown over the past 10 weeks or so? Because obviously you came in late after camp, didn't have a lot of time on task.)** – "It's been good. Obviously we talk on the side and in practices when we see things, we communicate with each other what works, what doesn't work, how we feel, how I run routes, how he sees it, so there's a lot of communication going on and we understand that's what we have to do if we want to get to where we want to get."

**(Is it rewarding to have a day like you had today given kind of your slower start to the season?)** – "I bring this up a lot, I'm a very competitive guy and at the end of the day I want to win games. I'm grateful today I had a career day for myself, but at the end of the day I want to win games. I see those stats as a team effort rather than individual effort, so I'll always give credit to the o-line and Tyler (Shough) and everybody making the plays that we did make today. But at the end of the day, we want to win games and that's the purpose of us being here."

**(Is there a level you need to convince the quarterback trust you in those tight window throws where it's like yeah, I'm going to throw you the ball, you've got to win it – do you have to earn that as a receiver?)** – "I see it as that's his job, I'm not going to tell a guy – I don't play quarterback in the NFL so I'm not going to tell him how to do his job. I've just got to make sure I'm doing what I've got to do and if he sees the opportunity and he takes it, I've got to make sure I capitalize on that."

– DOLPHINS –



## **MIAMI DOLPHINS QUOTES**

*Sunday, November 30, 2025*

*Postgame – New Orleans Saints*

### **Miami Dolphins Head Coach Mike McDaniel**

#### **Third straight win. What does it say about the resiliency of this team?**

MIKE McDANIEL: I think it says everything. I think it's third straight, four of (the last) five. There have been different formulas in the whole process. You think you have the right type of guys, but you don't know until you know. It takes a galvanized group of people, I'm talking about from just the locker room and the coaching staff being able to reach those players, to be able to pull that off. I think it does say everything about the guys that we have on this team because it's easier said than done, for sure. You try not to – especially when you're preaching, for me, conviction over perfection to the nth degree to the team – you try not to get caught up in the style of victory because the idea is to end the game in the stadium with more points than the opponent, and winning football games, you have to learn how to do it a multitude of ways. So when you're able to win, you learn from the negative, the positive, and the bottom line is we have more reason to stay together, more conviction, more belief every single time that you're in the victor's column. I'm very proud of the group and I think it does say everything.

#### **One constant, it seems, is RB De'Von Achane, and now he has 1,000 yards in 12 games. Can you put into words what he's meant to this team?**

MIKE McDANIEL: We were relying upon him to not just be a good player, but to take a step in being a leader, and I think it's not just his play, he's much more vocal. We align him everywhere and ask him to do a ton of jobs, and he takes pride in being very, very on top of all his assignments, and that allows you to do a lot of different things and keep people off of the scent of how you're using him. He also does a lot of work without the ball. We send him on fake jet sweeps a ton to get other people involved and understanding he receives a lot of attention. I think the thing that makes De'Von great is that he's not satisfied. He is confident, but he was frustrated he didn't have two touchdowns with that pass in the second quarter, I think, and that's what you need from your best players. So I think he's taken a huge step forward in his game. He was already a dynamic player, but I think you're seeing a lot of confidence in him. He's making players miss a ton, but he's also getting some dirty yardage driving the pile, which is a big part of winning football. I can't say enough great things about Von (De'Von Achane). He's a very talented player, but more importantly, he's a hard worker with that talent, so you're seeing the residuals of that.



**In that same vein, how have you and your staff really emphasized establishing the run over the past, let's call it, month, I think. In your four wins, you're averaging like 170 yards per game on the ground.**

MIKE McDANIEL: It's something that we've always wanted to be able to execute, but there's a difference in want and being able to execute it. I think a big – a gigantic part of it is the tonality with which our offensive line is playing. They're really attacking people and giving us opportunities to have some space for the ball carrier. They are doing a very good job at not wavering in confidence, playing all sorts of really good players. That's a salty veteran defense that plays a physical style of football, and particularly in the last month, I've seen the most physical football that we've had since I've been here, and that's resulted in more opportunities and more yards on the ground. I think the Saints had a really good plan. They were very pass committed, and I think they had re-routes on Waddle every single snap, but when you do that, you're removing a run defender. So it's important that, when guys get a ton of attention, that you make them pay. Guys did a good job staying true to that, which accounted for some yards. We have some things to clean up, as you always do, but particularly we do have things to clean up in the run game situationally. We started better at the beginning of the season than we've had. So guys are hungry because they want to be able to end the game with the ball, and you've got to do that running the ball a lot of times. Good and bad, but overall the offensive line and the backs have – and really all the core blockers. We've gotten some really good receiver blocking as well in the last month. So that all plays into it. We'll look to continue that against a team that will try to stop it.

**S Minkah Fitzpatrick's two points proved pivotal. Without them, the Saints could have tried for a long game-winning field goal after the onside kick. Your thoughts on the madness at the ending between that and the onside kick?**

MIKE McDANIEL: We talk about it. It's been a while, maybe a month or two, but the rare pick safety on a two-point is – it was the second time that I've been a part of it, but the first time I was on the right side of it. We had one 2016 where Eric Berry took one in a critical moment that proved the biggest differential. So it was gigantic, especially after he took an unbelievable undercut angle. He was doing it from the slot position, where nickels usually play. So it kind of speaks to who he is – competitive greatness, being your best when your best is required. He took an undercut angle, utilized his great ball skills, and he didn't hesitate for one second, which has really helped after the onside because they had to get in the end zone and that changes everything. Big time players make big time plays for your team and he came through for us.

**You touched on the Saints' game plan, but what made it difficult for QB Tua Tagovailoa today? Then also the second half, what was the reason for the dropoff in the offense?**



MIKE McDANIEL: Ultimately in the pass game, there were some plays that weren't made that I wouldn't say Tua played his best game. There was some stuff that was him, like the pick. He could have thrown it to Darren Waller, but he also had what De'Von (Achane) would call a very catchable touchdown pass that he dropped. We had another drop – I think Julian (Hill) had one. These are big time plays that you got to come up with. The guys know that. I did feel in the pass game, unlike the run game, I felt the bye week a little bit. That was a little frustrating, but we've got to get – the whole point is you hope to find the things that you need to improve on in a win. I think there was a multitude of herky-jerky. I think we had a good drive in the third quarter or was it the fourth – I can't remember – where Tua hit number three in progression on back-to-back plays, and then we missed Darren (Waller) in the end zone. I haven't seen (the film) – I just saw it live, and I'm 60 yards away, so I can't attribute that directly to the necessity of the layered ball or if Darren (Waller) should have been able to field that and kept his feet inbounds. So before I see the tape, I just know it was a little herky-jerky in the pass game. There were some plays made in the second half by Tua, but there were some plays that we'd like to have back. That's a collective for sure. There will always be plays that you want to do better on. The key is that we continue to work and get the best concepts for him that he's convicted, and then being able to build on some of those progressions that we had in the second half. At some point we're going to have to execute in the near future because in the NFL, if you have success in a phase or success in running the ball, people will overcommit and you'll eventually need to pass to win. I think that will be a big thing that we'll be working on this coming week.

**Are you aware your defense on that two-point conversion, they didn't get the call in because there was some issue with the headset?**

MIKE McDANIEL: I was aware. I was going down to call a timeout, and then the conviction of T-Dot (Tyrel Dodson) – the coaching staff thought he did ultimately get the call. There were some headset issues at the end of the game. That wasn't the only snap. But I was aware of trying to get the call in, and then we all interpreted – I think it was on the false start or the interception – that we were convinced (he got the call). I was about to call a timeout, and then at the last second a couple coaches on the headset said, 'no, he got the call, he got the call.' So then I walked back. I was aware of the issue. I was not aware that T-Dot (Tyrel Dodson) called his own defense. But I think realistically, like we've said from the beginning, it's less about the play call and more about the conviction of the entire group on how you're playing it. So that's a Mike linebacker that's prepared and a defense that believes in him.

**You limited the Saints to under 100 yards rushing today. What did you like out of the run defense?**

MIKE McDANIEL: That was one of the keys to the game for us defensively. We knew there had been a lot of very tight games that they either won or came within one score or 10 points as a result of



bleeding the clock out and committing to the ground. We knew that they hadn't won with less than 100 yards rushing. So I'm happy that the guys – you could see the intent. You could see the ownership of gap responsible football and guys were hitting. There was probably, outside of the third quarter, I think it was the exact picture of what we were trying to execute going into the game.

**How do you keep the locker room focused despite winning three straight and how do you assess how practice habits have evolved the past few weeks?**

MIKE McDANIEL: That's easy. Every inch that we've gained as a football team has been done with an urgency that has nothing to do with feeling ourselves. I think the confidence is beneficial for sure, but I don't see guys really having their workflow affected because that's what has created the momentum in and of itself. You get a little more worried about win streaks at the very beginning of the season because you don't know the gravity and despair of multiple losses like you do when you start behind the eight ball. So I think that's the main thing is guys, through the leadership council and the captains, not wavering at all. That will be emphasized, but generally this team responds to points of emphasis. Then the second question?

**About the practice evolution forming habits.**

MIKE McDANIEL: And that's been the main thing that gives me confidence with that because guys have really gone above and beyond. We've always been a hard practicing team, but with the intentionality to the details of things that decide winning and losing – penalties, I think in this game we had three. That's a result of preparation. The conviction that we had both pre-snap and post-snap and the communication, all those things have really – it's probably the reason why we're standing here talking about winning four of the last five or a three-game win streak is because of those habits. So I look for those to continue to gain momentum as we go down the stretch of this season with five games left that are guaranteed and one opponent that I know of, which is the New York Jets coming. That first thing when I wake up tomorrow morning, that's the only thing I'll want to talk about, but I'll give the rest of the night for family time and victory Sunday.

**Miami Dolphins QB Tua Tagovailoa**

**What do you think needs to go better with the offensive execution in order for a game as this one not to be as close as it was at the end?**

TUA TAGOVAILOA: Of course. It definitely starts with me, starts with my performance with how I distribute the ball, how I operate the guys. I would say that first. But I want to give our defense a lot of praise. I also want to give a big shout out to De'Von (Achane) crossing 1,000 yards, that's also big



as well. Also, I want to shout out some of the friends I made at Joe DiMaggio (Children's Hospital) – Eric, Selena, I see you guys. Just saying what's up.

**Can you expand on just how much RB De'Von Achane has meant to this offense this year?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: Yeah. As I said in past interviews, he's so versatile. You can align him in the slot. You can align him in a receiver stance, in a running back position, you name it. Just the diversity that he gives our offense is what I think makes him very special, outside of the ability to run and catch.

**What was the struggle most of the day, especially second half, when the field goal was the only offense – what was the reason for it?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I would say it reverts back to how I'm playing or how I'm operating for those guys. When I'm able to distribute the ball well, the operation is well and the run game helps with that. So as I said, that starts with me.

**How are you personally handling the momentum of this three-game win streak without being complacent?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I don't think there's room for complacency in the NFL. There's no room for any team to get comfortable, especially towards the back stretch of the season. And for our team, we don't have any room for us to be enjoying too much. We got to dig ourselves out of this hole, but it feels good when you get to come off a bye week. A little rust here and there, but at the end of the day, you get a win, that's always good.

**What are you thinking as all that craziness is happening, two-point try going the other way, then the onside kick, they get the ball back. All you can do is watch and hope the defense gets a stop.**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: Yeah, you hope they can (get the stop) and the beautiful thing is they did. They came through for us. Regardless of what that looks like, we won the game.

**Are you happy – in these three games, you're kind of efficient, not racking up big statistics the game isn't depending on you. Do you like this role?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I like when we win. I think that's the main objective for what I'm supposed to do as I go out there to lead that offense – core one more point or however many more points than the opposing team. So regardless of what that looks like, whether the game is asking me to throw for a set amount of yards or however many touchdowns, I'm just more fascinated with the wins. So I'm glad we got a team win.



**I don't know if I remember the last time RB De'Von Achane didn't catch a pass in a single game. Only one target today. Was that something that New Orleans was doing to take him away in the passing game?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I wouldn't say it was something that they were doing as much as it was going through the progression and just seeing the field in that sense.

**Have you seen a change in the confidence or vibes in the locker room, winning 4 of 5?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: For sure. Guys are always happy when you win, but just the camaraderie that we have in all three phases. The offense goes out there, we get three-and-out, and the defense is coming to uplift it, like 'we got you guys.' Then sort of vice versa, and also with special teams. It's always good when you can get into that rhythm and that flow as a team.

**Offensively you got back two starters in TE Darren Waller and T Austin Jackson. What did you see from them out there?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: Yeah, they were out there competing for us. I think they did a really good job. I wish I had one of those throws back with Darren, but outside of that, I think they played a great game.

**What do you think was the struggle getting WR Jaylen Waddle the ball?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I think they were trying to take him away. I talked a little bit to (Saints Defensive Coordinator Brandon) Staley after the game and we had a little conversation about that as well. That was cool. He had some pretty cool words to say after as well.

**They took that pass into the end zone, that interception. Tell me what happened there.**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: It was just a bad decision. That's all that was. I just got to be smart with the ball.

**What did you think of S Minkah Fitzpatrick's return, going the other way to get two points for the team?**

TUA TAGOVAILLOA: I mean that was a great play by Mink. Does it surprise me? No, I've seen him do that Alabama, and I've seen him do it with us in practice throughout training camp. So to be able to see his hard work show in tough and critical situations in the ballgame, that's who 'Mink' is.

### **Miami Dolphins RB De'Von Achane**

**A thousand yards, what does that mean to you?**

DE'VON ACHANE: It means a lot. It just shows the hard work that I put in, that me and my team put in. It's just a stepping stone of mine, and we've got to keep moving forward.



**How long has that been a dream of yours to get 1,000 yards in this league?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Always, since I first got here. My rookie year, I had the best chance, but I missed five games and went for 800 yards. That's kind of still with me. Like last year, I kind of fell short. So I feel like this year, it was something I really wanted to accomplish.

**What were you thinking late in the game as you were on the sideline and all the craziness is happening, the two-point try going the other way, the onside kick, and the defense has to get another stop as you're watching this unfold?**

DE'VON ACHANE: I feel like as an offense, we have to do better. We don't want to put our defense in that position even though they played a great game. I feel like down the line, if we want to win big games, on offense we've got to step up.

**How do you stay grounded in your success in the spotlight?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Like you said, it's going to be spotlight. A couple weeks ago when we were losing, it wasn't. So it doesn't matter the outcome, we're going to go out and play as a team. We're not going to let the outside – the comments – get to our head, and we're going to go out there and give 100 percent.

**What happened on the touchdown you scored to start it off?**

DE'VON ACHANE: It was kind of like blocked perfectly. I feel like the corner on the other team kind of overran it and it kind of made my job easy. It was kind of like we knew we were going to have a guy unblocked, which was the corner, and him overrunning the play made my job easy, which was go through the hole untouched. It's something you want as a running back. When you can get to the hole and go 5-10 yards untouched, I think any running back can say that's what you want.

**What was the touchdown celebration?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Just a little TikTok dance. I'm not really into dancing, so I asked my teammates what's the celebration this week?

**It was through a dance but – nobody could tell. I was like what is that?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Just some TikTok stuff.

**In the second half, basically one field goal from the offense. What was happening the second half?**



DE'VON ACHANE: I feel like just mistakes. I feel like we've got to capitalize on third down and especially in the red zone, we've got to score points. Our motto is seven-not-three. I feel like we were in the red zone too many times and we didn't score.

**How do you keep the momentum going, winners of 4 of 5, trying to creep back in the playoff picture?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Just win the next thing, next week. Keep building these wins. Like I said, we came out of the bye week. I'm glad we got that out of the way and now we've got to get back into regular football.

**Do you have any other goals in mind on a personal level, like 1,500?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Of course. Like you say, however many yards I can get. It's not like a thing I just want to get 1,000 yards and that's that. If I can get 2,000, that's the thing, a lot of the same. When the opportunity presents itself, I feel like whatever comes with that, that's what it is.

**How would you describe the identity of this team right now, the way you guys are winning? You got 298 yards today, a bunch of high-octane offense winning those ways. What would you describe the identity of this team right now?**

DE'VON ACHANE: I feel like we want to be physical. Like you said, we come down, we come to the line and everyone knows we are going to run the ball and I feel like we've been running the ball great these past 3-4 weeks. As long as we keep that, that's when they start stacking the box, and that's when 17 (Jaylen Waddle) makes big plays.

**What did you think of S Minkah Fitzpatrick taking the two-point back. Do you approve of his top speed there?**

DE'VON ACHANE: Most definitely. He for sure did better than Rasul (Douglas). I think for sure it was going through his mind not trying to get caught because at halftime we all had something to say to Rasul. *(laughter)* He made a play though. That was just Minkah being Minkah. He is a great player in this league, and he showed it.

**How did you change your approach in preparation or recovery this year compared to years past?**

DE'VON ACHANE: I wouldn't say anything really changed. I feel like just us as a group, I feel like we just got better with each other. We got to understanding each other. As far as like, if somebody was to miss a block or something, we try to make them right. As far as pointing fingers, we never point the finger at each other. It's a football game. The other team, they get paid the same we get paid, and



they're going to make plays. So when they do make a play, try not to be down on each other and be down on one another. Just make sure you tell them, all right, we'll get the next one.

**If you had a pitch to the College Football Playoff committee for Texas A&M, what would it be?**

DE'VON ACHANE: For sure we're going to be in the playoffs, but I think we still should be in the SEC Championship. We only lost one game. However that plays out, I feel like – that one loss at the end of the season shouldn't determine they shouldn't be in the SEC Championship.

### **Miami Dolphins LB Jordyn Brooks**

**(You guys had four sacks, the fumble recovery, the interception, what do you have to say about the way you guys performed today as a defense?)** – “I thought it was pretty good. Always areas where we can get better at, but I feel like overall it was a good performance.”

**(I don't know if you know this. I believe you are a few tackles away from having the most through your first two years out with the Dolphins since '94. You could surpass Zach Tomas. To potentially have your name attached to a legend like that and the season that you're having, what does that mean to you?)** – “It's pretty cool knowing that I have a personal relationship with Zach (Thomas). Like you guys know, me and Zach share the same Alma Mater and now playing for the same franchise, so it's pretty cool. But most importantly, I want us to keep winning, so I'm glad that we're doing that.”

**(I know you're a very humble guy, but what inspires, what drives the high-level performances that you've been making each game?)** – “Right here, if y'all can see that – Jesus. Just my relationship with Him. I think everything stems from my relationship with the Lord, as far as how I go about my business, how I lead and ultimately my effort and how I perform. So all the credit to God, honestly.”

### **Miami Dolphins LB Bradley Chubb**

**(Three weeks ago you were screaming, “We believe.” You've guys have won three in a row, four out of the last five. Just talk about the change in this atmosphere.)** – “It really feels like there hasn't been no change, man – the change would be just everybody locking in on the littlest details, man. How we approach the locker room, how we approach the practice field, how we approach the meeting rooms, you know what I mean. I'm not saying we weren't doing that right in the first place but just being intentional with it. Everybody has that same mindset that we could turn this thing around and we just all go out there and believe. When you play 11 strong on each side of the ball believing, it's hard to stop it.”

**(What was going through your head when you saw S Minkah Fitzpatrick on that pick at the end there?)** – “I was trying to keep up with him. I was trying to keep up with him, but he took off on me



and I said 'OK, he's going to celebrate when we get to the end zone,' then he started running the other way. *(laughter)* It's all good though. I'm glad he got that play for us. It put us up four instead of two and made them really had to go get it on that last drive instead of just kicking a field goal."

**(It wasn't the cleanest game but you guys figured a way out to win this game. Just talk about that bend, don't break mentality.)** "Yeah, bend, don't break man. We started off hot in the first half and then as a defense, we've got to figure out how to come out in the second half strong. They got us on that first drive, but we all just had that same mindset, like 'We're not going to let this get away from us.' We just kept going and kept at it. Yeah, we let up a couple of leaky plays here and there, but the overall sentiment is just don't let them in the box. I feel like we did a good job of that and it's just about building on it."

**(Did you sense that LB Chop Robinson was on his game today?)** – "I've sensed Chop (Robinson) has been on his game all season. I've been believing in this dude forever man. How he approaches the practice field, how he approaches everything, I know he's going to go out there and do the things he did today. As we're on the field, we're talking to each other, make sure we're on that right mindset and he's been doing his thing."

### Miami Dolphins LB Tyrel Dodson

**(End of the day, you guys pull off the win. Something you did that I noticed after the game was you made sure to dap up every player in the locker room. Talk about why it was so important for you to do that.)** – "Sometimes in this game, one phase might not be there. That's why it's a team game. Defense came out, plus-two turnover margin and we played as a team today. Everyone wants to say playing as a team is all three phases playing good. A team is when one phase isn't playing good, the other phase picks it up. That's a true team win, and I'm excited and happy for my boys, but now it's in the trash, and we got to keep making a run for it."

**(One of the phases you're a part of – just talk about the defense and how they played so well today, bend but didn't break type of thing.)** – "We have been getting closer over the (past) couple of weeks. We've been carpooling together, making sure Saturday nights we go out to dinner or Thursday nights we go out to dinner throughout the week. This defense is just gelling. 'JB' (Jordyn Brooks), (Bradley) Chubb, me and 'Mink' (Minkah Fitzpatrick), we're just trying to make sure we keep getting closer and closer."

**(You see this proof of concept so to speak. Three straight wins now. Can you compare, I know you guys never gave up, just the demeanor in the locker room now compared to a month ago when no matter what you guys did you couldn't get a win?)** – "I don't think it's changed. I think the demeanor is you've got to win every game in the league because that's how I eat, that's how my family



eats, and that's how everyone else's family eats. You've got to win in this game. I think the demeanor hasn't changed, I think the demeanor is kind is more stern, to answer your question."

### Miami Dolphins CB Rasul Douglas

(Coming off the injury with a bang, that pick, although you didn't get to take it to the house, it had to feel good getting it?) – "Yeah, that part felt good but the last part ain't feel good – I got caught. But it's all good, it's my first game back."

(Talk about the bend, don't break mentality on the defense. Although it wasn't cleanest game, you guys figured a way out to pull it off in the end and get the dub.) – "It was crazy, but we knew at the end they needed eight, so we were like 'even if they get this, they just can't get the two-point conversion.' Then I don't know what happened on the onside (kick), like I still don't know. Like I don't know if they said it hit somebody, but it looked like they caught it early. And then having to go back out there, we all we said was, 'they just can't score.' Like a field goal is not going to do it, so that's our mindset."

(Just talk about S Minkah Fitzpatrick getting that pick-two.) – "Yeah, man, that's just why he's one of those people he is, for plays like that. He's been making a lot those since he's been in the league, since he's been alive, honestly."

(Rasul, were you in on that two-point conversion? LB Tyrel Dodson said you guys didn't even know you guys were just man-on-man.) – "I think the helmet issue was messing with 'T. Dot' (Tyrel Dodson) and he just said 'Everybody, just get a guy,' and that's what we did. Whoever came out to our side, we just played man on them."

### S Minkah Fitzpatrick

**Can you walk us through that pick two at the end?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: We were in -- it was a double. We had a double on 12 and a double on, I think No. 2 to the field. I was in basically zero coverage, my guy ran the shallow, slipped in, and caught the ball.

**Was there any talk with Rasul, like show him how it's done?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: He's definitely getting fined. It was a great play, but he's definitely getting fined for not scoring on that play. *(laughter)*



**Wait, he's actually getting –**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Absolutely. Absolutely getting fined. Within the DB room, we have a fine system, you know what I'm saying? He's definitely getting fined for that one. *(laughter)*

**How much is the fine?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: That's up for discussion. *(laughter)*

**He still made a great play too, though.**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: I dapped him up, but you're getting fined. You know what I'm saying? Because you need as many points as we could get. *(laughter)*

**Today the defense made big plays, pick two, all these things, just getting to the quarterback. What does it say about that group in general that continues to perform in now three wins in a row?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: I really appreciate how much this defense has been fighting. We obviously had a really rough start to the season, and I think what I appreciate most is the fact that even through our downs and our low periods, we were still sticking together. We weren't pointing fingers. We weren't worried about other guys. We were all worried about what we could do better, what I could do better and everybody kind of took on that personality. We uplifted each other when we made mistakes, and we really focused on just getting better over these honestly the last five, six weeks. We've been seeing a gradual incline, and we've got to keep doing that, that same thing these last five weeks.

**Can you walk us through the strip sack and what it meant to you to keep being able to make plays for this team?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I was rushing off the edge. They had a receiver kind of in the chipper area, and I had a one-on-one with him. I beat him. Quarterback held onto the ball a little bit too long, I got to him. That was actually my first NFL sack so that was a big moment. I was pretty excited about that. Like I said, just excited to be out there moving around, playing different positions, and making plays for my team.

**What's the mindset the defense needed going back out there again after you thought maybe you had sealed it? I don't know if you had thoughts, but I think a lot of people did, with the pick two and then the onside kick is recovered and you have to go out for another stop?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: That's just the name of the game, the name of playing defense. No matter how many times that we're called upon, we've got to go out there and make stops. I think really good defenses, whenever there's a change in possession or a turnover, they play really good defense during



those next plays. I think we've been doing that the last few weeks and getting the ball back to our offense.

**Kind of odd that's your first NFL sack.**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Yeah. I didn't blitz a lot in Pittsburgh. Then I had one, and I got called for unnecessary roughness. So it is what it is.

**When you were making the pick two, how fast do you think you were going?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Oh, not fast. I was tired. I was hurting. (Laughter). I looked at the Jumbotron, and I didn't see nobody behind me, so I just cruised into the end zone.

**Were you kind of looking for that sack? Were you wondering when is it going to come?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: No, I mean, whenever you get the opportunity to rush, you just try to do your job. Thankfully on that play, I had a one-on-one with the receiver, a guy who doesn't block a whole lot, and I was able to get to the quarterback.

**Was that your first two-point conversion return?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: I believe so, yeah.

**How have you personally grown as a playmaker over these last few games?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Over these last few games, I'm not sure. I think I've just been trying to do my job at a high level, be in the right position, look at the right things. I think early in the season, the couple plays I gave up, I was trying to see too much. I was trying to look at too many things and communicate to too many people, and I kind of honed in on what is absolutely necessary to communicate and to see. I think I've been playing better because of that.

**Like most quarterbacks, so much is on Tua. I don't know him as well as you do, on a day when he's not at his best, for the defense to bail him out, bail out the offense, especially him, what does that do for you to know today you guys had his back?**

MINKAH FITZPATRICK: Honestly, we don't even see it as bailing him out. It's just doing our job. Kind of like what I said earlier, no matter how many times we get called out there, we have to go out there and do our job and get the ball back to them, you know what I'm saying? Because there's games where he, quote on quote, bailed us out where we were having down games, and they put up 30 points or 35 points. We've got to continue to have each other's backs. The ultimate goal is to be playing complementary football, but if that doesn't happen, we've still got to go out there and execute at a high level.



### Miami Dolphins OL Austin Jackson

**(Tell me about the offensive line this season. There were questions coming in, RB De’Von Achane is a 1,000-yard rusher. You guys have done good with you missing, with OL James Daniels missing. Tell me about the job of the offensive line this season?)** – “Kudos to the guys in the room that are healthy and our offensive line coach. We have a standard where everyone gets held to the same standard, regardless of, draft pick, this, that, whatever the sorts. Everyone has a standard to uphold and he's going to keep you honest and we have a room of guys that don't run from challenges. Everyone embrace a challenge and we all want to work and get better. That's how it gets done. And credit to (De’Von) Achane obviously, that's all really him. We do our job at front, but, I mean, that's the playmaker right there.”

**(Without being able to play, what is your observation off the field in the locker room and in the meetings around the team as to your opinion why the team has been able to stay together and win four out of five?)** – “My opinion? Shoot, I don't know. I think obviously we'd like to be 11-0 right now, you know? I know our intentions have always been there. I will credit the team for never giving up, just like everything going wrong, it's easy to jump into like a scapegoat culture, but I haven't seen that. I've just seen guys hold each other accountable and get better. I think that's kind of helping us turn it around.”

**(So what's the last 10 weeks been like for you?)** – “Hectic. I came back for Week 1. I hurt my toe more. Then I needed a longer rest time from that. And then, you know, getting myself back into shape after resting. It was just a lot of work, a lot of work, but always thankful for the opportunity to get back out there and do my job.”

### Miami Dolphins LB Chop Robinson

**(It was kind of hard for me to tell but on the fourth down play that ended the game, they credited you for the tackle. Was that you in on that one?)** – “Yeah, it was me and ‘T. Dot’ (Tyrel Dodson). I was at the bottom and then ‘T. Dot’ was on top. It was a good call from ‘T. Dot,’ we had a different call out there and then he seen what he seen on film, so he changed it and it ended up working. So if it weren’t for T. Dot, I wouldn’t have been in that position.”



**(Did you know you had stopped them short?)** – “I mean honestly, I was grabbing him and I knew he wasn’t moving. I felt ‘T. Dot’ (Tyrel Dodson) come in too, so I knew he didn’t get the first down and knew the game was over with.”

**(Getting to the quarterback twice, how does that feel for you?)** – “It feels good. I feel like a lot of people forgot who I was and the type of player I am, so just going out there to try to play to the best of my ability and be who I am. There’s nothing I got to do more, that’s what everybody tells me. I don’t have to go out of my zone to be who I’m not, just go out there and play my football.”

**(How nice is it to have support like that within your locker room?)** – “I mean that’s big bro. Since I came here last year, he (Bradley Chubb) was right beside me. He wasn’t playing, but he was helping me throughout the offseason, everything like that just talking about the tackles I was going against throughout the week or even at practice in camp. So just having somebody like that, especially a veteran, you hear around the league a lot veteran guys don’t really care about the rookies, but he was a guy who was in my corner and really helped me a lot last season.”

### **Miami Dolphins TE Darren Waller**

**(What was the best thing about the return for you today, aside from the victory?)** – “I think just getting back there, getting used to the speed of the game, used to the flow, used to how defenses react, used to the adjustments you’ve got to make on the fly. Some of those things when you’re out for a certain amount of time, you’ve got to get back into a rhythm feeling like the small things that make for the big plays. Just those things are valuable as I head back into getting ready to prep for Week 2, it’s good to get back out there and just feel everything again.”

**(What was the last five weeks like for you being sidelined?)** – “Definitely just a chance to reset mentally and to center back on the fact of there’s always going to be different ways that adversity presents itself to me, to everybody in the league. It’s all about – success for me really is how do I handle those and I felt like I handled this one well. I was able to be productive with my rehab, every choice that I made and just hone in on that. Whatever the day presents me, try to attack that and abled me to get back out here with the team and be able to finish strong for the rest of the season.”

**(While it wasn’t the cleanest game, you guys figured out a way to pull it off. It’s the bend, don’t break mentality for this team, just talk about that?)** – “I feel like the offense can definitely pinpoint a lot of small details that we could have done better that could’ve taken advantage of drives, could



have gotten us more points in the first half, in situations throughout the game that we definitely need to clean up. Because it doesn't matter who you play, it doesn't matter what their record is, what our record is, you give teams a chance and hang around in the game, all teams have a guy that can get it done and give their team a chance to win. Definitely salute the Saints for the fight that they put up, but there was a lot of execution things we can do better offensively."

– DOLPHINS –