



**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS MINNESOTA VIKINGS**  
**FRIDAY, AUG. 9, 2019 • MERCEDES-BENZ SUPERDOME**  
**SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES**

- The Saints dropped their 2019 preseason opener, 34-25, starting the preseason 0-1 for the fourth time in the last five seasons. New Orleans will return to action on Sunday, August 18 when they play the Los Angeles Chargers at Dignity Health Sports Park. Kickoff is set for 3:00pm CST and the contest will be nationally televised on CBS (WWL-4 locally).
- The Saints finished with 337 total net yards, including 141 rushing yards and 196 passing yards. New Orleans was outgained both on the ground and in the air; Minnesota finished with 213 rushing yards and 247 passing yards.
- QB **Teddy Bridgewater** started the game for New Orleans and played the entire first half, finishing 14-of-19 for 134 yards and one touchdown. Bridgewater completed passes to eight different Saints receivers.
- RB **Latavius Murray** finished the game with three receptions for 22 yards as well as three rushes for 14 yards.
- RB **Dwayne Washington** led New Orleans in carries, finishing the game with eight rushes for 36 yards, including a long of 12 yards.
- RB **Jacquizz Rodgers** finished the game with five carries for 15 yards and tied for the team lead in receptions, with three catches for 13 yards.
- Bridgewater started the game 6-of-7 for 43 yards on the Saints' opening drive. The 14-play, 55-yard drive lasted 8:12 and resulted in a 27-yard field goal by K **Wil Lutz**.
- Lutz also converted field goals of 52, 26, and 42 yards in the game and added one extra point, finishing the game 4-of-4 on field goals and 1-of-1 on extra point attempts.
- New Orleans' capitalized on Vikings RB Ameer Abdullah's second quarter fumble, which was recovered by LB **Vince Biegel**, driving 79 yards on six plays and leading to an 18-yard touchdown pass from Bridgewater to TE **Dan Arnold**. The Saints failed to convert the subsequent two-point conversion attempt.
- QB **Taysom Hill** played the entire second half for New Orleans, and finished the game as the Saints' leading rusher, rushing for 45 yards on six carries. Hill led New Orleans on three scoring drives and finished with 80 yards on 8-of-14 passing.
- WR **Lil'Jordan Humphrey** scored the Saints second touchdown of the game on a 33-yard reception from Hill. The scored capped off a 5-play, 83-yard drive.
- LB **Demario Davis**, DT **Taylor Stallworth**, and S **J.T. Gray** led New Orleans' defense with four tackles each.
- RB **Devine Ozigbo** rushed for 20 yards on three carries and added a reception for nine yards.
- DE **Trey Hendrickson** recorded the Saints' lone quarterback hit and added one tackle.
- New Orleans DE **Mario Edwards Jr.**, LB **Kaden Elliss**, and LB **Craig Robertson** each recorded one pass defense apiece. Elliss added three tackles, and Edwards and Robertson added two apiece.
- WR/RS **Deonte Harris** returned three kickoffs for 90 yards (30.0 avg) and a long of 34 yards. WR **Cyril Grayson Jr.** returned two kickoffs for a total of 61 yards (30.5 avg) and a long of 40.
- In New Orleans' first game under the NFL's new rule allowing coaches' challenges on pass interference calls, both Minnesota and New Orleans challenged pass interference calls. Vikings Head Coach **Mike Zimmer** challenged for a possible New Orleans offensive pass interference on a reception by RB **Alvin Kamara** in the first quarter and Saints HC **Sean Payton** challenged a third quarter defensive pass interference call on CB **Kayvon Webster**. Both calls on the field were upheld.
- Collectively, Minnesota and New Orleans accounted for 209 penalty yards on 21 penalties.



## POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

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"I thought we did a few good things well towards the end of the first half. I like how we handled the two-minute possession offensively, and defensively turned it around and coming up with a stop. Overall, when you watch that game, and I'm sure we will see it on the tape tomorrow, I think the one thing that stood out were yards per play, yards per pass, yards per rush (where) they were better than us tonight. It will be important to look at the tape and make corrections. I was encouraged a couple of times with our return game, specifically kickoff. We will kind of go from there."

(on Teddy Bridgewater's progressions tonight) "I felt like he was comfortable, and he got the ball to the right guy pretty quickly. There was some command when he was in there. I think that he and Taysom this training camp, I've noticed, a pretty significant difference in how they've performed."

(on Teddy Bridgewater's comfort level since the last regular season game) "I think there is more to it than that. If you look at that game, we had two tackles that had just got there that week (starting). Sometimes when you're playing a game at the end of the season where your seeding is locked up, in fairness to him, I would have done things differently. He's been doing really well."

(on challenging pass interference) "It was fine. I think we are going to be a little bit more conservative. In a preseason game it is a little more easier to throw a flag. I think the feeling upstairs was there was hand-checking by both receivers. Being on the (competition) committee I just know the approach the league's going to take when they're reviewing. They are going to be pretty conservative. They are going to have to see something substantial to overturn it. We're going to get used to it."

(on regular season pass interference challenges) "In a regular season game, depending on when and where you're at in the game, probably in the first half, you'd have to have a strong conviction. It is a lot easier to throw one of those flags preseason week one. I think the one that was different tonight is getting used to, or getting accustomed to, 'hey, we can challenge that.' In other words, on the other side of it you're on the receiving end, say you're on offense and you come away with a completion and it might be offensive pass interference. Getting to the ball quickly and snapping, there are a handful of nuances that we have to condition ourselves to."

(on Deonte Harris) "I thought he had a couple of good runs. You could see his speed and change of direction and the result. I was encouraged with that."

(on Deonte Harris in a game vs practice) "He gained yards. He did a good job. He can run. I will say this, he has been nicked up in practice with a hamstring and it was good to see him back out there. And then not having the amount of time on the pads as some other guys have had, I was encouraged on how he played."

(on punt returner options) "We'll see. It's week one."

(on offensive skill position evaluations) "Honestly, I think it's easier than you think. We grade all 11 on each play and pretty thoroughly. The thing that keeps us from coming up with a clear grade is that players (are) undecided as to what to do. We know the grade isn't going to be good, but if you think he's good enough to do and he didn't know what to do, that's frustrating. Our job as coaches is to try to see him be able to do something at full speed so that we can truly grade his talent. We will grade this game much like the regular season game. Our schedule tomorrow will be like the day after a regular season game. The key will be getting the corrections made so we are not repeating them again next week."

(on perception change in certain areas after seeing guys practice and play in pads) "I think we could tackle better. I think our pad level is going to have to be better. I am sure when we watch the tape there are going to be a number of details that you will want to pull your hair out with and yet, that is why we are watching it. That is why heading into the better part, second full week of camp. We'll wait to look at it and see what we can see."

(on the goals for returning starters) "Our first phase tonight we wanted to get somewhere between 12-16 snaps. There are a few players within that first phase that maybe from an injury (they were monitoring or recovering from) we were short of that. When we get into the second phase, we're looking at about 20-23 snaps. That usually gets you through the second quarter into the third quarter. Then there's some adjustments there. Then there's some subtle adjustments, like if a guy is playing nickel in phase two but he's not in the game because they're not in nickel a lot, then he's going to

play more in phase three. I think the challenge always is the kicking game, but for the most part we were good there. We had one snap missing a player and we'll get that corrected."

(on Cyril Grayson Jr.'s sideline catch) "I didn't have a special look at it. He's doing some good things. There's some other things he's got to really work on."

(on Dan Arnold's offseason and preseason this year and his development) "He's still young (and he is) improving. He played a handful of snaps last year, maybe more than he expected. It is still about getting your confidence to a point. It's born out of past performance. We want to play well, we prepare to play well, but confidence can only be achieved from demonstrated ability. There are a handful of players just like Dan that are working to put together a good game, put together a handful of plays, and have some success. He is real conscientious. He's hard on himself and you keep developing."

(on preseason penalties and attacking mental errors) "I'm sure when we put the tape on there will be a few things that'll jump out. There's generally one or two that are a little easier."

(on how to battle rust and touches with Michael Thomas and Alvin Kamara) "Every year. Again, there's a certain amount of plays."



## POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

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#### QB #5 TEDDY BRIDGEWATER

(on how he would rate his own performance) “I’ll leave that to the coaches. I felt like for me my main goal was to create tempo, create rhythm and try to establish my identity. I think we did a good job of doing that.”

(on his confidence level during the game tonight) “The coaches did a great job tonight of calling plays and the guys did a great job of making plays. We were able to put together some good drives, (some good) scoring drives. Of course, we want seven points instead of three, but however we can put points on the board is a blessing.”

(on the two-minute drive at the end of the first half) “It was a great job by the guys. Our defense did a great job of giving us enough time to be able to drive down the field and score. The guys on our side did a great job of understanding what plays we were calling, getting the signal and communicating, running their correct routes. The offensive line did a great job of protecting and all I had to do was sit back and play. It’s something we’ve been working on the last couple of days – the two-minute. To be able to get to rep two-minute in a game-like situation was a great learning opportunity for a lot of guys and when you look around this league a lot of games come down to the two-minute drive and to be able to get points today was big.”

(on what he saw on the back shoulder completion to Cyril Grayson Jr.) “We just wanted to take a shot. Cyril is a guy who can run. We called the play and I said in my mind, ‘Hey, I have my guy there. I like my guys over their guys.’ I just wanted to give him a chance. I did just that.”

(on how it felt facing his former team) “It didn’t feel too strange. It actually felt like one of the old practice days but in a game-like tempo. Just knowing what those guys are going to do and I still remember some of their calls and some of their looks and things like that. It was kind of a plus for me. It just felt like one of the old practice days.”

#### QB #7 TAYSOM HILL

(on how he felt about his performance) “Overall I felt like it was good. I think like any game or any practice there are plays you would like to have back. I think overall preseason (game) one was good.”

(on how he balances his focus at quarterback in the preseason versus his extended role in the regular season) “It’s difficult. Part of training camp is getting ready for the season. I’m trying to make sure I’m ready to do everything else that I will be asked to do during the season, but I still want to make sure that I’m progressing as a quarterback. It’s not an easy thing to manage. I think early in training camp you want to make sure that you’re taking care of all of your responsibilities and then you make this transition to playing quarterback and you want to make sure you continue to develop that way. It’s still early in my career. I’m still figuring out how to manage all of that. I had a lot of fun being able to play quarterback tonight.”

(on what his thought process is when he sees a man-to-man coverage) “Just like any quarterback in the NFL, you see man-to-man, you’re looking for matchups, what the concept is. Outside of that, if somebody doesn’t win, instead of maybe throwing the 50-50 ball or throwing the ball away, why not try to get a few yards to get a second or third and short situation. That was kind of my mindset. Obviously trying to eliminate how many shots that I was taking but making sure that we weren’t having negative plays. That was my mindset going in to the game trying to avoid the second and third and long situations and get us in to reasonable situations.”

(on if it is easier to get into a rhythm when he has more playing time at quarterback) “It’s such a different mindset when you’re playing tight end or full back or whatever it may be. I might be blocking at the point of attack on a run and so much happens in between the tackles and in those runs and my hands get beat up. It’s a physical game. And then you have to step in at quarterback and have to play the violin. It’s a difficult transition. I think a night like tonight where you can focus on just playing quarterback and going through all your pre-snap reads and all of that definitely allows me to get into a rhythm and calm down.”



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#### Linebacker Demario Davis

“On his goals for tonight’s game: “It’s just important to come out and take things from the practice field and into the game. It’s the first time that it’s live action. There is only one way to play this game, and it’s full speed, so you make sure that you have everything in place to play the game full speed. I try to make sure that my eyes are right. I try to make sure that I am playing the game physical. I try to make sure that I use my hands and technique right. Meanwhile, I try to get all of those first game jitters out of the way in time for week one, so that everything is like clockwork.”

On if the team tried anything out tonight that they can use in a regular season game: “You just try to do your job. I think that whatever you can do to do your job as best as possible, that is what you try and do. If you are trying things out, you try them out in practice before you try them out in a preseason game, the different things that you feel like that you can add to your game and work, you want to try them out in the preseason because it’s a good time to try it out.”

#### Defensive Back Kayvon Webster

On his interference play that was reviewed, but not overturned: “I thought Coach (Payton) made a great call. He was showing he was behind me. I played good technique. I went up for the ball, I looked back with the receiver, both players (going for the ball), played through the hands, it was incomplete. It was a questionable call.”

On if any officials told him what he did wrong in terms of technique following the play: “They just were like, ‘It was a tough call. It was close. They couldn’t overturn it. They threw (the flag) out, saying that it was pass interference.’ We just roll with the punches.”

On if he likes that coaches can challenge interference calls: “Yeah, I love the idea. It’s going to be a lot of game-changing plays with that, challenging for that pass interference. All we can do is keep getting better.”

#### Linebacker Vince Biegel

On his roles tonight: “They had me playing in a lot of different spots, SAM linebacker, on-the-edge, stacking over the ball, playing in space, and then playing some defensive end on third down with personnel on some pass rush opportunities. I really believe in embracing everything. I feel like I have been having a great camp so far. I did some great things tonight; some things I need to improve on. Overall, that’s how you prove yourself on this roster, showing what you can do on special teams, being able to (play) kind of like a player like Taysom Hill, where you can wear a lot of different roles and be able to provide those things for this team.”

#### Wide Receiver Lil’Jordan Humphrey

On scoring his first touchdown: “It was cool. I have a lot more to prove so that I can make this team. It was cool, but I’ve just got to do a lot more.”

On what he needs to get better at: “All of the little things as a receiver. I need to be more detailed as a receiver. Once I do that, I think that I will be ok.”

On if he was able to show anything tonight: “I was able to show my ability to run with the ball after the catch. I feel like I did that a little bit today... That was a main point of my game at Texas was YAC (yards after the catch), turning small plays into bigger plays.”

#### Center Erik McCoy

On how Teddy Bridgewater played: “From what I saw, Teddy did a great job. He was going through his read progressions pretty quick. We did not have any fumbled snaps, so that was a good thing. I thought that he did a great job.”

On his goals for tonight: “Just go out and try to solidify myself as a good player. They haven’t seen me in live action yet. I was just trying to make a statement.”

On his nerves tonight compared to practice: “Coming into practice, my nerves were a little high, but not near as much as they were tonight. This was the first game in the dome, the first chance to really show what I have, so nerves were very high to start this game off.”





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**Opening statement:** “I thought it was good the offense going down to score and overcome a second and twenty. Adam (Thielen) made a great catch. I thought Kirk (Cousins) made some really good plays, scrambled with his legs. I was impressed with the communication among the offensive coaches tonight. We got to do a better job with the penalties obviously. Way way too many penalties. The execution with the extra points and field goals were good tonight, so that was good. We got to attack better defensively, but first time out it was good to find out kind of where we are at and where we need to go forward as we keep going in the preseason.”

**In terms of overall offensive schemes, how did you feel about that? It looked like all the quarterbacks did pretty well, running backs did well.**

“I thought the offense did well when we didn’t have the penalties. We only punted the ball twice. When you can do that and we scored touchdowns in the red zone. So that was a good thing as well. First start, we have a long way to go.”

**Do you see that depth from your running backs when you have multiple guys get long runs especially with Dalvin (Cook) out. How encouraging was it to see those guys make plays down the depth chart?**

“Yeah, it was good. These guys have some talent, they are still learning, they still got some more teaching we have to do with them, but I thought overall they did a nice job.”

**What did you think of Mattison first time out getting a start?**

Zimmer: “Yeah, he ran hard, caught the ball a couple times, he did a little bit of everything, but when you stick to it and when you create some things off play, pass those things tend to open up.”

**What did you see from the young linemen?”**

“It is hard to tell, I know in the middle we need to be better. We gave up too many yards towards the middle so we got to do better than that.”

**“What was the thinking on not using Delvin tonight?”**

“We didn’t want to put him on the turf.”

**“How about (Olabisi) Johnson tonight? He had a nice touchdown catch.”**

“Yeah, he did good. He has done good through camp the last couple times.”

With the penalties, certainly it happens early in the preseason, but is that the main takeaway tonight on what needs to be cleaned up?

**“Yeah, I heard it at halftime and I heard it in the tunnel. Whatever day it is, we need to work on it Sunday, a lot Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday so we need to clean it up.**

**Couple for Irv Smith Jr.. Is that just rookie things?**

“Getting your hands outside the frame work, you lose a guy and grab him. On the perimeter that is easy to see but we got pass interference penalties, holding on the defensive line, holding on the offensive line. It was just not good, so we need to clean that up if we want to be a good football team.”

**On the challenge, I know you didn’t win it, having a chance to see how they will handle the offensive pass interference.**

“Yeah, it was a bad challenge. One of the coaches yelled, in that play typically guys are blocking downfield, so I heard him say that and I didn’t see the replay and I threw it out there. I then looked at the replay, and I said “that wasn’t a very good challenge.” I wanted to challenge a couple of those but I really didn’t get the opportunity to.”

**Overall, how did you feel Irv looked like. I know he had lots of targets and caught 3 passes.**

“He did fine.”

How was it facing Teddy Bridgewater and seeing him again?

Zimmer: “When you are playing somebody it is like every other day. I thought he did well. Threw some nice balls. Glad we were able to get him on the ground a few times. I wish him a lot of success unless he is playing us.”





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#### QB #8 Kirk Cousins

"I just thought I'd start by saying Kevin (Stefanaski) did a great job calling the game. Any time you rotate in that many players or quarterbacks and linemen and receivers and running backs, to have that much sustained success throughout the course of the game really says a lot about the way that Kevin called the game and his ability to put players in a position to be successful. So, he did a great job.

"I was really impressed with our running backs. There was just one impressive run after another. There were so many guys that got involved in the game and made plays. The catch that got us down to the one-yard line I thought was outstanding. Not a great throw, but (Adam Thielen) made a really good catch to bring it in."

"A lot of positives. The only negative I think would just be the penalties. Most of the penalties were post snap and we always talk about pre-snap penalties being the ones we really have to eliminate. The post snap penalties at times you can live with, guys are playing fast and hard. In the preseason you tend to have a lot of penalties called for whatever reason, so we'll clean that up. I thought overall it was a really good start."

"(On being more mobile in the pocket) I was happy to do that. When you get man coverage is when you want to do that, or at least be more aware of it so you have a chance to score. The blitzing linebacker got through and that is what really screwed up the play and I could not see the receiver anymore. I just climbed and thought I could take off with man coverage. It was great to be able to do that. Hopefully we'll be able to do more of that throughout the season."

"The defenses we'll be seeing will become more complex, so as the offense we have to be on the details. It was pretty vanilla tonight and that helped us to look more efficient. At the same time, I was just saying that to be able to rotate that many players through four quarters and continue to have sustained success, I think that does say a lot about Kevin's play calling and about the execution."

"(on his touchdown drive) It was great to get a third down conversion. It was great to get some explosive plays. It was great to get multiple people involved and ultimately come away with a touchdown. I mean, if you're only going to play one series in the preseason, it could have been three and out. So, to be able to score, you can't draw it out much better than that. It's not a lot to build on. We did the same thing last year against Denver in the preseason. You take from it what it is. It was one drive in the preseason. But if you're going to have a drive better to go down and score and be that efficient than do anything else."

"(on coming in for a second series) That's a question for coach Zimmer. I don't really know. I knew it was likely going to be a handful of plays. The longer your drive is and the greater number of plays the more likely you are to be out when it's over."

"(on the new starting center) He was great. I thought he was, as he's been all throughout practice, in great command and really sharp. No concerns whatsoever."

"(on Olabisi Johnson's catch) It was a unique feeling for me because I don't stand and watch on the sidelines much during the season. It was great for me to have that perspective and to see things from the sideline. Great catch from him. And for Sean (Mannion) to be able to stand in there and take that hit after throwing it, that's not easy to do. He had great trust that Olabisi would come down with it, and he did. I believe that was a third down. To also be able to convert a third down's always so important. A lot of good things happening on that play."

#### RB #25 Alexander Mattison

(on scoring a touchdown in his first NFL game) "It felt good to get out there. We've been working all training camp, so to put that all together was awesome. I don't take it lightly because as coach told me, 'it's not easy to score in this league.' It's a great feeling."

(on finding out he's the starter) "Earlier today (coach) said you might take the first series and get some play time in there."

(on being nervous) "Not really. You have the butterflies like every game. If you don't have those then something might be wrong with you. But I put those aside and do my job every play"

(on his touchdown catch) “It’s just one of those plays that we kind of drew up. Every time we ran it in practice it was that same kind of look. So as soon as I saw the safety bite down a little bit, I knew that I would be open. Kirk put a great ball on me, and I just finished the catch.

(on running back depth) “It’s exciting. The whole room has been exciting. To be a part of that group its nothing but love and brotherhood in that room. To see the performance, we were able to put out there it’s showing our hard work’s paying off. We have more to do to continue to grow and get better.”

**TE #84 Irv Smith Jr.**

(on playing on his birthday against his dad’s former team) “It was special. We’ve been competing against each other for so long and got to compete against an opponent and it went well.

“I didn’t know too much about the gameplan. Whatever coach wanted me to do, he did a great job of calling the plays tonight and getting everybody the ball. All of us had a lot of catches. There was a lot of production out there.”

(on the direction of the offense) “I feel like this offense and this team is going to be very special. We’re not there yet. Each day we’ve got to work and focus on something. But the fans and everyone got to see what were capable of.”

(on his 21st birthday) “I went and ate with my family and they had a little surprise party. There were a lot of people and it was really good. We ate at the Palace Café on Canal. My mom made a cake too”