



**POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES**  
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**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS LOS ANGELES RAMS**  
**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 • SOFI STADIUM**  
**SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES**

- The New Orleans Saints fell to the Los Angeles Rams Thursday 30-23.
- With the loss, the Saints are now 7-8 overall and fall behind the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the NFC South standings. New Orleans returns to action on Sunday, December 31, when it takes on the Buccaneers at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa. Kickoff is at noon central time and the contest will be televised on FOX (locally on WVUE FOX 8).
- QB **Derek Carr** finished the night with 319 yards, three touchdowns and an interception with a 67.5% completion percentage (27/40). Carr moved into 25<sup>th</sup> on the all-time passing yards list.
- Carr hit WR **Rashid Shaheed** for a 45-yard touchdown in the second quarter. The completion was also Carr's 300<sup>th</sup> career completion of 25 yards or more.
- The catch was Shaheed's seventh grab of 40 yards or more this year. He finished the night with five catches for 70 yards and a score.
- Carr's three touchdowns gave him 236 in his career, surpassing Donovan McNabb for the 33<sup>rd</sup> most in league history and tying George Blanda for the 32<sup>nd</sup> most in league record books.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** played in his 100<sup>th</sup> career game Thursday, becoming the 63<sup>rd</sup> Saint to appear in 100 contests.
- Kamara caught five balls during the game. His second reception of the night was his 70<sup>th</sup> of the season, becoming the third Saint with at least 70 catches in five straight seasons, joining Joe Horn (five) and Marques Colston (seven). The reception also gave Kamara 500 career receptions, becoming the 17<sup>th</sup> running back in NFL history with 500 catches and moving into 17<sup>th</sup> place on the all-time running back receptions list. He also joins Colston, Horn and Michael Thomas as the only Saints with 500 catches while playing for New Orleans.
- WR **Chris Olave** set a new career-high in receptions with nine in the game for a total of 123 yards. He broke his previous season high of 72 set during his rookie year last year with his first catch of the game.
- Olave crossed the 1,000-yard threshold for the second straight season, joining Colston and Thomas as the only three Saints to have at least 1,000 yards in each of their first two seasons.
- WR **A.T. Perry** caught his second touchdown of the season with a 35-yard score in the fourth quarter.
- DE **Carl Granderson** notched a sack in the second quarter, extending his season total to 8.5 sacks, a career high. Granderson finished with eight total tackles. Granderson has recorded at least one sack in three consecutive games for the first time in his career.
- TE Juwan Johnson finished with four receptions for 48 yards and one touchdown
- DB J.T. Gray forced an eight-yard punt with his rush in the fourth quarter.

## **Saints Head Coach Dennis Allen**

### **(Opening remarks)**

“Obviously, wasn’t good enough tonight. I thought defensively they got after us pretty good. We didn’t get a lot of pressure on the quarterback and even at the times that we did, I thought... look, you got to give those guys a lot of credit because I thought they played outstanding on offense. I kind of knew going into this game that it was going to be a challenge and I knew (QB) Matthew Stafford was playing really good, but I don’t think we played the way we needed to play either. I thought there was too many times where we talked a lot about eye candy early in the week and I thought it affected us on some plays. We certainly have to be better. I have to do a better job with those guys. Offensively, I felt like we moved the ball again, and I felt like there were some opportunities that we just didn’t take advantage of... potential conversions, keep drives alive. I just felt like there were too many missed opportunities offensively. The first drive we’re moving the ball well and end up turning the ball over on downs when we had a pretty good drive going. Anyway, I’ll open it up to questions.”

### **(On the decision to go for it on fourth down)**

“We went for twice on fourth down I think in the first half. We came into this game wanting to be aggressive and knowing that the type of team that we were playing, the offense that we were playing, we knew that field goals weren’t the way to go try to win this game yet we didn’t want to be reckless but we felt like, in both those situations, we felt like we had plays that we liked and unfortunately it didn’t work out. But there was a mindset going into it to be aggressive.”

### **(On what went into the decision to take CB Alontae Taylor out of the game)**

“I just felt like we needed to get (S) Ugo (Amadi) in there and give him an opportunity to go play.”

### **(On the decision to go for an onside kick at the end of the game)**

“I think it was 3:53, something like that to go in the game. We were out of timeouts. Honestly, we hadn’t done a great job of stopping them up to that point so I felt like the onside kick was the right play. We didn’t get it. We were going to have to stop him either way so we went for the onside kick to try to get it and see if we could and go down and tie the game.”

### **(On taking CB Alontae Taylor out and what he saw without him on the field)**

“I think they got him a couple times with his eyes and so I just felt like it was the right move for our team at that point.”

### **(On eye tackling and discipline being something that continues to come up for their team)**

“It takes a lot of discipline to do that and I think there’s been times where it’s been good and sometimes where it hasn’t been as good. I think that’s always been the challenge defensively even on the best defenses I’ve been a part of, that’s always a challenge.”

### **(On how difficult Stafford is to stop when he has time)**

“He’s extremely difficult. I think he’s playing at an extremely high level. Some of the throws that you see him make... I saw a lot on tape that he’s making pinpoint throws off his back foot, under pressure, all those kinds of things. He made a couple of really good throws today. He put it in a great spot. There were times where we had good coverage and they made plays and there were times when we weren’t in good enough coverage and they made place. We’ll go back and look at the tape and see where we could be better. Look, they were better than us tonight.”

### **(On why he thinks it takes almost desperation mode to see things kind of moving with the offense)**

“Yeah, yeah. I can’t answer that question. I don’t know the answer to that. I do know that our guys continue to fight. It can be a little frustrating that you’d like to think you could do some of those things

a little bit earlier in the game. And like I said, we moved the ball at times early in the game. We just missed some opportunities to keep some drives alive. But look, we lost on the road to a good team and now we got to go regroup and get ready for Tampa Bay.”

**(On what his message to the team is)**

“I think the biggest thing is we've got two divisional games left to play and so our focus is going to be on trying to win those two divisional games and then we'll let everything play out from there.”

**(On if deciding to make the onside kick was a tough decision)**

“Yeah, look it was a conversation that we had and I felt like taking our chances on trying to get the onside kick it probably gave us the best opportunity to win and we didn't get it.”

**(On if the performance of the defense was a reason for the onside kick)**

“Yeah, we hadn't done a great job of stopping them up to that point and that's part of what the conversation was.”

**(On if the intent of the onside kick was to kick to try to get a better bounce)**

“Well, look, I mean they're challenging to get in our league now based on the way they make you line up and everything. I think we were kind of hoping they would kind of over shift a little bit more. I think the ball kind of bounced off his chest a little bit. We just weren't quite there to make the play.”

**(On if run blocking an issue today)**

“Yeah, well we didn't run the ball well and we need to run the ball better because we can't just be a drop back passing team or a play action passing team. We need to be able to run the football better.”

**(On what he thinks he needs to do to make the run game more effective)**

“Well, look, we'll have to go back to work at it, you know what I mean? I wish there was a magic formula, but we'll have to go back to work at it and see where we can be better.”

**(On how he thought QB Derek Carr played)**

“Overall, I thought he played well. I think there's certainly some plays that he and we would probably like to have back. I don't know statistically how it finished up. I mean I thought there were some plays that he made and I thought there was probably a couple of plays in there that I felt like, ah, it wasn't where we needed to be. So, yeah, I thought he played okay.”

**(On how he thought QB Derek Carr handled the pressure today)**

“I think he was fine. I think he was fine. I think, obviously, there's sometimes, again, where maybe get through his progression a little bit quicker, maybe hang in there a little bit more. There's a lot of things that go into it, but I thought overall, it was a solid game for him.”

**(On getting WR Chris Olave back and if the pass game was what he was hoping it to be)**

“Yeah, absolutely. You want to be able to spread the ball around. Really when you're at your best is when you can call up a pass play and get through your progressions and get it to the right guy based on the coverage that we're seeing. That's what efficient offense is about and so being able to spread the ball around I think is good.”

**(On if WR Chris Olave was limited)**

“Yeah, I'd say he was certainly not a hundred percent, but I was proud of him for coming in and battling the way that he did. He made some plays. I thought a couple plays, again, that he'd like to have back and we need to have back but I thought overall, there was a lot of good things I saw from him.”

**(On the momentum change after giving up the late touchdown at the end of the second quarter)**

“Well, it obviously was a big play in the game, a big momentum changer in the game. At the end of the second quarter, I made the decision to go for it. I wanted to be aggressive. Obviously, they had three timeouts so to punt the ball away and give it to them, hopefully backed up, but they still got three timeouts in their pockets so again, we weren’t all playing this game to try not to get beat. We were trying to play this game to win.”

**(On the execution of the drive before the 2-minute drive and if he felt flustered or if it was just working against the clock)**

“No, I think that was probably just more against the clock. I didn't feel that at all.”

**(On if he’s disappointed with the team starting slow at this point in the season)**

“We certainly would've liked to have started the game better, played better, finished better but we didn't. I'm not into the percentages though, I'm really not. I'm just focused on... we let an opportunity go by and now we have to get ready for the things that we control which is getting ready to go play Tampa.”

**(On if it’s difficult to regroup after a loss like that)**

“No, we'll regroup. We're still in this thing.”

**Saints QB Derek Carr**

**(On the team played tonight)**

“You have to give credit to them always first. They beat us and we did a great job of fighting back but it wasn't enough. Proud of our guys for that always with the way we executed at the end of the game in the second half. But obviously losing a game by eight points, it hurts because you think about every single play, what could have been. But it's tough. You tip your hat to them, to their coaching staff, to their players and they did a great job.”

**(On the rushed tempo at the end of the second half)**

“We all felt better if WR Chris (Olave’s) shoe doesn't blow up and we got a play there. He made a great decision on the route, exactly what we talked about. He ran a great route and then his shoe just rips apart and it's like, dude not the time for that but nothing he can do about it. I think that then after that, you're trying to make the play, make something happen and both times on the fourth down... I love the aggressiveness. DA (HC Dennis Allen) was very clear on that to the team and obviously against that offense you're not going win a lot of games kicking field goals against them. You play them 10 times, you keep kicking field goals, it's just going to be tough. We knew as offense we needed to execute and there was just a couple. We had opportunities to just, there was a couple. The second one I had to get it out quick and tried to guess where he was going to be and then the first one they just got in there. WR Chris (Olave) ran a great route and we would've had that one, but they made a play.”

**(On how the offensive line held up under pressure)**

“We knew it was going to be tough. We knew it was going to be tough. More so than just (DT) Aaron (Donald) and what he's able to do by himself physically. They make it tough schematically because they know certain things you have to do without getting obviously all into it to make it hard on other parts of your protection. And they did, they made it tough at times, but I thought our guys fought and did a great job of trying to limit as best they could and really in the second half fought really well. That's a tough team to go two-minute kind of tempo against because of what they can do up front and our line kept us in the game and we were able to make plays for them.”

**(On the Rams taking away the run offense)**

"The play actions were good and usually when that's good you would say the runs...It's hard for me to tell because I'm turning my back every time. That would be better for those guys to talk about but after I watch the film, we'll see. But they made it tough. Again, you have to give credit to their front. They did a good job on in certain areas and certain things, but I also thought our guys did good too."

**(On the third down efficiency)**

"It was tough. It was tough at the beginning. There were a couple plays where we were going to have to make some corrections because I was expecting one thing and we got another, but the positive is we've been able to talk about things and then get on the same page and do it better. So some things came up, something came up today that hadn't happened to us yet, and you're like, why today? But it did and we'll talk about that because then we could have had another one there. I think about, there was another one again, simple correction to make. Just sucks that with only three games left, that, ah, man, now we have to fix it now. But we will. We'll be positive about that. But I thought we did a good job of...the plan we loved. And so I thought we got going, started picking them up. We were close again on a couple others. But at the beginning, it was not good enough and that's just simple. It wasn't good enough by us as players."

**(On the mindset of these last two games)**

"Playoff mentality. That's been our mentality, but really like win or go home kind of thing. And so, thankful to be playing meaningful games in December, but we have to do our business. We can't worry about...again I've been in those scenarios. We have 1% chance and all that kind of stuff. I've lived that world and all you can focus on is what you can control. No matter how tough it is, no matter how much you want to watch everyone else, it really doesn't matter at this point for us. We have to win the last two. We have to win our games and it's going to be tough because it's two teams that have beat us. Hopefully everyone's mindset, get some rest, spend time on Christmas with their families. That's always good for your heart and for youramentals as money would say. You just have to keep pushing forward. After that, Tuesday we're coming in and we have to go. I'll be studying on my off time and getting ready for these two games for sure because they're big for us."

**(On the challenge of having to fix third down issues during the game in real time)**

"I wouldn't say it by now and I'm sorry. But that doesn't help you too much. It came up and it's like, dang, we haven't talked about that. When you haven't talked about it, it's a little frustrating. But it gave us an opportunity to say, 'Okay, hey I see you know, we're playing the game. I see what you're feeling, all that.' But, if I'm not expecting it, if we haven't talked about it, it's kind of tough for me to make that decision and cut it loose, especially with not knowing what's coming and certain things into play. So we got better from it and we'll continue to grow. But it's just hard and frustrating when it happens like this late in the year because it's like, dang, we needed that one and so it makes it hard. But I am going to be positive and keep pushing, keep fighting."

**(On the missed play to Rashid Shaheed at the end of the first half)**

"Well, honestly, 99 (Aaron Donald) was in the backfield immediately. And I don't know what happened. So I'm not trying to say why or anything like that. He was there and I saw 'AK' (RB Alvin Kamara) going, so I had to step up and as I was getting hit by someone else. I had to throw it way earlier than I wanted to. I threw it to where I expected but that's not on (Rashid) Shaheed either, because when he's running the route, he sees it and we've talked about what he did but I just didn't have the time to see that, to be able to read that out."

**(On if his arm was hit on the interception)**

"Yes, but I was trying to throw it over his head, seeing him drop, and I was trying to throw it back over his head but I just didn't get enough on it."

**(On if it's frustrating to see the offense play better only in the desperation mode part of the game)**

"I don't know. I felt like for a few weeks here now, minus a few times, I really felt like we've been doing a good job. We've been moving the ball, we've been doing things. Even today, I thought we were moving the heck out of the ball. We had a lot of explosives in the pass game. We felt very confident with all that and that felt good. But the execution of critical situations wasn't there, and it takes all 11 and that's frustrating. Yes, I am human like that does anger me but I'm trying my best to be positive and keep pushing forward because that's all I know to do. Because that's what's going to solve the problem. At the end of games, coach (Jon) Gruden always told me, he said, we're never out of a game and keep that right arm in it so I've always just had that mentality as a quarterback. I kept telling our guys, 'Keep believing, we are going to win, we are going to win.' Boom, we'd score, boom, we'd score. Then you felt the belief rise. But we didn't, we just ran out of time."

**(On how much of a momentum change was it on the missed fourth down conversion at the end of the first half)**

"You're exactly right. It was huge and it hurts. It's hard. We knew we were going to be aggressive in the game. 'DA' (coach Dennis Allen) was very clear with that laying out the plan. If they're doing this and it's going like this and we have got to be aggressive, you can't beat these guys kicking field goals. They're just too good and they are Super Bowl champions and they still got a lot of their guys. And so we knew that, we just felt bad that as an offense we could not execute that for them because then it makes it hard momentum wise and on the defense and we do not ever want to put them in that position."

**(On how much more difficult the passing game is when the running game is struggling)**

"It makes it difficult. Especially with '99' (Aaron Donald) over there, especially when he knows you have got to throw it. That makes it difficult on protection calls, because now they can do certain things because they know you are doing things for him and it absolutely makes it difficult. But I thought we threw it well. I thought our guys, for the most part, were where they needed to be. It wasn't perfect but it definitely makes it hard for a lot of reasons. I am not going to ramble on, but it definitely does stress things especially when you got a guy like that over there."

**(On if he feels the game was too one dimensional)**

"No, I mean I loved our play actions. I think we had, I can't remember off the top of my head, like four explosives in the first half, just play actions. And that's the threat of the way we have been running it, that's the threat. When I talked about that earlier this week, when I turned my back and they have got to make decisions and things like that and guys are winning, I thought that was a big part. I thought that was a good part for us, honestly. But I think it's hard for a play caller. He calls one in a second and 10, there's not a lot of calls that makes it easy. That's not efficient. So we'll look at that. Again, I'm turning my back to those so I don't know what was going on, but we'll look at it and try and correct these things for the last two."

**(On if there were not a lot of plays for TE Jimmy Graham in the game)**

"Yeah, there were a couple times where he could have got it in certain looks, certain coverages or matchups, and ended up getting the ball to somebody else. There was definitely a plan in place for him so I wouldn't say that nothing was there for him. It was just certain looks that the ball just happened to go to other people."

**Rams Head Coach Sean McVay**

**(Opening Remarks)**

"We sure make it interesting, don't we? But I love the resilience of this group. They just continue to show up. Thought there was a lot of really good stuff throughout the course of this game. Matthew

Stafford was outstanding. Kyren Williams did a great job. I thought DeMarcus Robinson and Puka were big time from the very beginning. And I thought the offensive line came ready to go. You could see on the first run of the game the removal that they were able to create. Defensively, we played really well. It was a big turnover by Jordan Fuller and then we gave up some stuff at the end that we got to clean up. There's a lot of things that we can certainly improve upon special teams, but love this group, really proud of them, and it's going to make for a good Christmas. So Merry Christmas to you guys. I'm out of here."

**(On the balance in the run and the pass game)**

"I think they've been great. I think over the last four weeks it's been really good stuff, really since the bye. I just have loved the way that this team has responded and it's been consistent. But players are making plays, guys are comfortable with what we're doing and I think the coaches are doing a great job of putting them in the right spots. And I'm really pleased with that. We've got to be able to continue to reset. We've been really in playoff mode in our mindset since the bye based on being where we were at after the first nine games, but we'll enjoy this one and then we got to figure out how to put together a complete performance against the Giants who you guys have seen, they've done a lot of really good things over this last month."

**(On if Puka has solidified himself as an offensive rookie of the year candidate)**

"He's outstanding. I couldn't be more grateful for the contributions and what a freaking run on the jet sweep, has a bunch of plays through the pass game. You guys have seen it week in and week out. You know, you talk about that balance. You can't have the balance if you don't have receivers that are willing to dig out support and do some of the things that he does. You see around the league, you know, Stroud has had a great year, but this guy is... he would get my vote. And he's really special. But the best part about him is he doesn't worry about those things. He worries about just being a great teammate, continuing to improve his game, and sure love this team. And he's one of those guys that you really love."

**(On DeMarcus Robinson since the bye)**

"I'll tell you what, he's just capitalized on all of his opportunities and he's a guy that's just continued to work. He's a guy that's had production in this league. I thought he was huge in the beginning of the game, made some big-time contested catches. You could see him stepping back to the football. I think he and Matthew have really established a really good rapport and so, really happy for him and really feel really good about our receiving group and the way that they complement each other's skill sets. I think Matthew's done a great job of being able to distribute the ball and I think he's playing as good as he's played. It's been outstanding, his leadership... He's feeling good too. People don't understand how much he was pushing through with the thumb injury, but this guy is a stud. He elevates everybody, myself included. He's playing outstanding, and I wouldn't want anyone else in the world leading our team than him."

**(On his thoughts on the defensive performance and giving up some scoring drives towards the end)**

"I saw that. I thought that was consistent with what they did against the Commanders last week. Here's what I'll say, I'll be interested in what the league says about how they saw that last touchdown. That'll be something that we'll look at. I'm always trying to be educated, not going sit up here and criticize calls, but I do want to be able to get some clarity in regards to how did we really see that one? But I've been pleased. I think Raheem does such a great job with that group. I loved the leadership that I saw from Ernest Jones, Jordan Fuller, Aaron Donald obviously always makes his presence felt. I think Quentin Lake really did a great job of having a huge impact, especially with some big key and critical stops early in the game."

**(On RB Kyren Williams being the first Rams RB since Todd Gurley to rush for over 1,000 yards)**

**on the season and his impact on the game plan since coming out of the bye week)**

“No doubt, we're different when he plays. I mean, you just look at it. I mean, now there's enough inventory and the energy, the production, just the overall work ethic. I mean, there are so many guys on this team that you just say, man, they are exactly what we're looking for in Rams. I love him and I'm really so proud of the way that he responded. And he did that last week in the game. We saw him respond in the game. I mean, you look at the amount of work that we're giving him. For him to be able to get his body turned over on a Thursday night, to have the production that he had, to play with the toughness, it's been outstanding and there's a lot of guys that are in that mold. But Kyren Williams, I'm so happy for him. It's just awesome to see him get his flowers that he deserves.”

**(On the tone he was trying to set with the fourth-down decision at the beginning of the game)**

“Just you know what, I think we felt good about our players' ability to be able to execute. It was a great job by Matthew being able to knife it in there to Puka, make it a tight-window catch. And then I didn't want you guys criticizing me for the opening drive, freaking red zone s—t. So, now you can't ask me those questions anymore, can you? I'm just kidding!”

**(On the growth of the defense under DC Raheem Morris)**

“Outstanding. You know, I think in its simplest form, when you talk about what does a great leader do? He elevates people he's around and situations he's a part of. And that's what he's done since I've been around him. And this goes back to in Tampa, in Washington and in here. He has a tremendous influence on me. He's like a big brother. But these guys, people love playing for him. I mean, when this guy walks in a room, you just feel his presence and magnetism. He's got an unbelievable football acumen. And so, you know, he's done such a great job and he's getting guys to continue to reach and realize their highest potential. It's what great coaches do. And he's checking all those boxes. I love Raheem.”

**(On DeMarcus Robinson and what he has seen out of him recently)**

“Same thing that I've seen the last few weeks, just making plays. I think he and Matthew, their ability to work off-schedule together. I mean, what a play on the third down where he ends up hitting him on the crossing route coming into his vision when Matthew got flushed to his left. There's a real trust and there's a rapport that's being established between those two. I thought it was a great touchdown where Matthew got through a progression, DeMarcus had a good feel for the timing and rhythm and ended up having great back-end line awareness. He's a swaggy dude. You know, we got a lot of guys that are bringing some really good stuff to our team. I just love the way that he's worked. I think it's a real credit to (Receivers Coach) Eric Yarber and (Passing Game Specialist) Jake Peetz and (Offensive Assistant) KJ Black, the job they've done. But DeMarcus deserves a ton of credit and I'm really happy to see him shining.”

**(On his message to the team as they prepare to go across country and face the Giants in another crucial game)**

“Same thing. I mean, we've got to do a good job of, let's enjoy this win, enjoy your families, be able to take a couple days, get your body turned over, and then when we come back on Tuesday we're ready to work with a full focus and concentration on figuring out how we continue to take steps. This was a step in the right direction, but like I talked to you guys about last week, if we don't continue to handle our business, these are all for naught. And so, I don't want say all for naught, but, going towards the goal of being able to try to get yourself in position to be one of those teams that gets a chance to be able to play after the regular season. And so I've loved this journey. We're going continue to enjoy it, but I want them to continue to do the things that they're doing. And then there's going to be a lot of things that we can clean up as well where you talk about finishing an opponent and not allowing it to be close. It didn't need to be like that and we can improve on that.”

**(On if special teams mistakes and missed kicks are a concern at this point in the season)**



“Yeah, I mean, we got to look at it. I mean, I'm always concerned with things that we can improve upon, and so we got to look at it, we got to be honest with ourselves in terms of the totality of what occurred. You know, there's so many moving parts on every single snap and we're interested in being solution-oriented. And so, there's going to be some things that we can look at, we'll clean up, and then we'll figure out what that means as we move forward.”

**(On what has equipped them for a late-season run after expectations that the Rams would not make the playoffs)**

“They haven't really listened to it they've just continued to work. I think it's the epitome of a growth mindset. These guys have just continued to work. They understand that the work works and it pays off. And you got a bunch of high-character people. You got a bunch of great leaders that demonstrate the way. I think there's nothing more powerful than modeling the way. And it's been a lot of fun. I think there's been a commitment to a lot of the values and principles that were foundationally set the right way that maybe I got away from, but it's about these players. I think the coaches have done a tremendous job and I don't think they've really listened to that. And if anything, maybe used it as positive motivation, but we want to be inside out. We're not worried about being outside in.”

**Rams QB Matthew Stafford**

**(On the onside kick and jet sweep run from Nacua)**

“Great catch on the onside kick and a physical run, which was awesome. Our guys did a nice job on the edge and then the extra player was his. He stayed up, stayed in bounds, did all the right stuff. He's a big, physical runner man and showed it there.”

**(On if there was a point in a game where his thumb felt better)**

“No, just kind of gradual. It definitely wasn't feeling up to par really in that Seattle game when we first came back, but it started getting better pretty soon after that and has continued to progress in the right direction.”

**(On what Williams is doing to help the offense)**

“Everything, right? He's doing a great job in the pass game and the run game. In the last five games, he's caught screens for touchdowns. He's made big plays in the pass game. He's ran it great, protects really well. So he's doing all of it and our guys up front are doing a great job of creating holes. Our guys on the second level, our receivers and tight ends are doing a great job blocking down the field and then he's getting extra yards, right? We're getting him to the corner. I think of the first run he had last week that went for 25 or whatever it was. We get him to the corner and he does the rest, right? That could be six yards, but it ends up being 27 and a big play for us. So he brings great energy to our offense, great energy to our team and obviously a guy that can kind of do all of it which is rare these days.”

**(On if he knew Dodgers pitcher Shohei Ohtani was in attendance)**

“I saw him in the locker room after the game. I saw him actually, pregame down to the sideline. Big dude and impressive guy. Obviously, I'm a baseball fan and really an impressive guy, impressive player and it's going to be fun to watch.”

**(On the offense scoring at least 28 points in the last five weeks and if he's having fun)**

“Yeah, it's fun to score. I think we could have had 40 tonight in my opinion. There were quite a few plays here and there that just didn't go our way or we didn't hit. But that's part of it, played a defense that's going to play sticky coverage. Sometimes they're not going to hit all of them. But yeah, there are a lot of points left out on the board in my opinion. So a lot of room for improvement, but proud of our guys the way we came back and finished the game there at the end, which was nice.”

**(On how he's stayed present guiding a young a team)**

"Yeah, I'm taking them right there with them. Every year it's a building process, right? Sometimes you do it different than other years. This year is different than all the other years I've played, but it's fun to go to work with these guys, fun to watch everybody come together, pull for each other, work hard. We push each other every day in practice and then feel ultra-prepared when we come out on game day and today was no different."

**(On what has stood out from the connection with Robinson since the bye week)**

"He's doing a great job of getting open. I'm trying to put the ball in good spots and he's making plays. That's what it boils down to and he's done a heck of a job. He's a fun guy to be around, brings great energy to our team. All the guys on the outside are making plays right now, which makes it easy for me."

**(On where the team stands going into the final two games of the season with young players on both sides of the ball stepping up in games with high stakes)**

"We've had stakes since we came back from the bye. We earned the opportunity to be at this point, in my opinion. So I think we're relishing the opportunity to come out and play every single day. It goes back to how we work in practice. We push each other so that we feel ultra-prepared when we come out here on game day and let it rip. But stakes, whatever that is, we've had stakes since the bye. Just proud of the way these guys have put their head down, gone to work, trusted each other, and it's showing up."

**(On what he attributes to his fifth straight game with two or more passing TD's)**

"That's everybody, right? Anytime we put the ball in the end zone, whether it's through the air on the ground, it takes everybody. Guys up front got to protect, guys on the outside got to win. Our coaches are doing a great job of giving us answers. I felt ultra-prepared going into a game on a short week that whatever they wanted to do, we were going to have answers to go after them. Today was no different. I missed quite a few still chances to put up a bunch of points and throw a bunch. But it takes everybody. Our guys up front are doing a hell of a job protecting, backs doing a great job, and guys on the outside are winning."

**(On what Christmas morning is like with four younger girls)**

"It's a blast. It's a lot of fun. It's a really special time of year. It's a special time kind of in my life to be honest with you, to be able to do what I get to do, still play at a high level and have them somewhat understand what's going on, watch and cheer. Obviously my youngest is pretty dialed in telling me not to get hit, smart girl. It's a lot of fun. I love getting to see them before games down the sideline or whatever it is and wave to them after we play. It's a whole lot of fun. Makes it worth it for me."