



**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AT TENNESSEE TITANS**  
**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2021 • NISSAN STADIUM**  
**SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES**

- The Saints fall to 5-4 after losing to the Titans 23-21 Sunday afternoon.
- New Orleans' record falls to 5-4 with the loss on Sunday and have sole possession of second place in the NFC South, one game out of first place behind 6-3 Tampa Bay.
- The New Orleans Saints defense held the Titans to just 3-of-12 on third down for the game. Forcing the Titans to convert only 25 percent of the time on third down situations.
- The Saints defense only allowed two touchdowns in the Titans five trips to the redzone.
- The Saints regular season record against the Titans falls to 6-9-1, their first loss to Tennessee since November 8, 2015
- Payton's record in the month of November is now 38-20
- The Saints extended their streak to 313 regular season games without having been shut out, dating back to a 26-20 win at the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on September 6, 2002 at Raymond James Stadium. This is the longest running streak for not being shutout in the National Football League.
- LB **Demario Davis** now has 405 tackles as a Saint in his fourth season with the Black and Gold, he recorded 6 total tackles (5 solo).
- Wide receiver/return specialist **Deonte Harris** caught three passes for 84 yards Sunday, while also recording 110 kick return yards and just 4 punt return yards for 198 all-purpose yards. With the four punt return yards, Harris has now moved into sixth in club record books for punt return yards, bringing his total to 658 career punt return yards, surpassing Mel Gray.
- Quarterback **Taysom Hill** threw 2-of-two for 11 yards, rushed three times for 23 yards, and caught one ball for 15 yards in Sunday's performance. Hill now has 913 career rushing yards, third for a Saints signal-caller behind Archie Manning (2,058) and Aaron Brooks (1,410).
- Running back **Mark Ingram II** rushed the ball 14 times for 47 yards and scored his first touchdown for the Saints this season. Ingram also caught four balls for 61 yards. Ingram now has 6,124 career rushing yards as a Saint and is now their all-time leading rusher. Ingram surpassed Deuce McAllister for first place on the club's all-time rushing yardage list. Ingram also took sole possession of third all-time in Saints history after surpassing Deuce McAllister with 56 touchdowns. Ingram's 7,829 total yards from scrimmage as a Saint rank fourth in club record books. With 108 total yards from scrimmage, Ingram surpassed McAllister to move into third in Saints history all-purpose yards. Ingram played in his 109th career game as a Saint, moving into a tie for 36th place in club records with linebacker Dave Lafary and cornerback Fred Thomas.
- DE **Cameron Jordan** played in his 169th career contest today, having never missed a game, moving into a tie with guard Jahri Evans for 11th place on the club's all-time games played list. Jordan posted a season-high five solo tackles.
- Quarterback **Trevor Siemian** went 19-of-34 passing for 298 yards with two scores and zero interceptions. Siemian posted a 104.8 passer rating in the game.
- Safety **Malcolm Jenkins** had four tackles (two solo). Jenkins now has 1,258 career stops.
- Wide receiver **Marquez Callaway** caught his fifth career touchdown pass Sunday, finishing with two catches for 37 yards. Callaway now leads the Saints with five touchdown receptions this season.
- DE **Marcus Davenport** posted three tackles (three solo), two sacks in today's game, which places he and Tanoh Kpassagnon in a tie for team leaders in sacks with four.

## NEW ORLEANS SAINTS POSTGAME QUOTES

### SAINTS HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON

*(opening statement)*

SEAN PAYTON: Disappointing loss. I thought we came in with a good plan. We fought hard. That's what makes it difficult. Just in the end too many little things, you know? A couple of false starts, critical situations. Obviously the turnover, missed PATs, but tip your hat. It was a hard-fought game. Any questions?

**Q. Were you able to tell what happened on that missed PAT?**

SEAN PAYTON: Missed him left.

**Q. What was the explanation on the roughing the passer play?**

SEAN PAYTON: No explanation.

**Q. So --**

SEAN PAYTON: There wasn't an explanation. What do you want me to say? Do you want my opinion on it?

**Q. Yes.**

SEAN PAYTON: No. No opinion on it. Next question.

**Q. Second week in a row. A lot of mistakes, but your team fought. At the end you came back.**

SEAN PAYTON: Thought we had a good plan coming in with this game specifically.

**Q. Mark (Ingram) played --**

SEAN PAYTON: Pretty good with the injury we had. Ty (Montgomery) got hurt early, and that really impacted some of the stuff we were going to do. But I thought, man, I thought he laid it out there.

**Q. The way Trevor Siemian played, seemed like in the fourth quarter he really sort of dialed in. Would you agree with that?**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah. I would agree.

**Q. Did you make any adjustments at the half? First half they had four sacks and none in the second.**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah. There were a couple of things that we fixed. And, look, I thought the guys up front -- you know, we wanted to come in and be balanced and make sure that it wasn't one-dimensional. We just felt like that was going to be the right plan, and so we were able to do that.

**Q. How much did the false start on the two-point conversion attempt at the end change your play calling there?**

SEAN PAYTON: Everything. I mean, significant, from the two, significant.

**Q. Before that, like you switched quarterbacks. Were you thinking about potential run play?**

SEAN PAYTON: We'll see. I'm not going to tell you what play it was. Seriously.

**Q. Not a play, but --**

SEAN PAYTON: Next question. Obviously, it changes the play when you're on the two and you go to the seven.

**Q. Sean, you guys haven't made excuses for injuries all year, but when you're missing guys like you were today --**

SEAN PAYTON: Look, it's the NFL, and that's part of the deal. And I hear you. I thought the way we approached this game, you've got to be able to still play. And that's the one thing we've been able to do, fight through it. So, we'll continue to do that.

**Q. When you're having stuff like that, like pummeled kickoffs and mixed extra points, does it make it harder?**

SEAN PAYTON: I think that makes it hard for a healthy team. Wouldn't you agree?

**Q. Yeah.**

SEAN PAYTON: Yeah.

**Q. What's the process for cleaning up some of those self-inflicted things --**

SEAN PAYTON: Man, it's the attention to detail, obviously. We look at it as coaches, too. Start with me. Pretty soon we start looking at who's doing it. You know, we start evaluating who's making plays and who's not. And it just is what it is. It's our league. All right. Thank you.

## **SAINTS QUARTERBACK TREVOR SIEMIAN**

***(on getting hot in the fourth quarter)***

I think we were probably pretty poor on third down in the first half without looking at anything. But that's my initial thought. We've got to find a way to stay on the field early in the game.

***(on the two-point conversion play)***

I was thinking it was going to have to be a play extension, then I saw the linebacker's back turn on Mark (Ingram), and I thought that was a pretty good chance to get one there. Without having looked at it, I think I've got to give him a better throw and extend the play, and something weird happens.

***(on which read it was for the two-point conversion)***

That was just Mark (Ingram II). That was the first guy on the progression on that play

***(on the frustration on the penalty on the two-point conversion)***

Yeah, it hurts. Obviously down there it gets loud. There's some movement. There's a lot of communication that happens, but yeah, certainly if you convert on the two versus on the seven, it's probably a little – the odds are probably a little better there.

***(on whether something felt different in the fourth quarter)***

Yeah, I think just staying on the field, like I said, if you don't stay on the field everybody says, 'Oh, we're not in a rhythm.' One drop gets magnified here and there, but when you stay on the field, you convert third downs or whatever it is, and you get some trump plays and everybody feels good. But you've got to stay on the field to get more plays and usually get things happen.

***(on any common themes on third down)***

No, I think early definitely challenging us and made some big plays, but just weren't consistent enough.

***(on if the team has been getting in its own way)***

Yeah, I think we can be as good as we want to be. But yeah, I think we're close but that doesn't mean anything.

***(on the difference without Saints running back Alvin Kamara)***

Yeah, he's a difference maker and he's got to be accounted for on every snap. Yeah, I think Mark (Ingram II) played really well, but Alvin (Kamara) changes the game a little bit.

***(on neutralizing the pass rush in the second half)***

I think once they got out there they were playing a little more coverage, and the offensive line I thought played well all day. So, when they're playing coverage, they're not disrupting the timing of the routes and there's a little more rhythm in the passing game. But when they're challenging you and disrupting the timing, sometimes you've got to hold the ball longer and push the ball down the field and that's what it looked like.

***(on playing without injured players)***

I think injuries – you don't want to focus on injuries because everybody's doing the same thing. I think Tennessee (Titans) was pretty banged up too, so at this point in the NFL season, that's why it's the strength of the team and not just individual players. I think we've still got a really good team and we're going to get it fixed.

***(on Saints Head Coach Sean Payton's message to the team)***

Details. Just details we've got to clean up here and there. The game played out how we thought it would, to a certain extent, we've just – a couple of details we've got to get cleaned up. There's not much margin for error.

***(on seeing enough from the team to have confidence going forward)***

Yeah, like I said, we've got a good team. Again, this is the NFL. You're not blowing people out, you're not winning by three or four scores every week. The margin for error is next to nothing and these games, whatever percent of them come down to one possession at the end, and if you slip up on a few details, this is what happens.

***(on the fourth quarter and finding personal rhythm)***

Yeah, I've played three weeks in a row now. So, I feel like I'm a starter at this point, so that part's good, but that part happened organically probably midway through last game.

## **SAINTS LINEBACKER KWON ALEXANDER**

*(on the sequence in the second quarter where the Saints were called for multiple penalties in the red zone)*

It was very hard. We can't worry about what the refs call and stuff like that. We have to be able to stop those guys in those situations. We can do that, we just have to get back to the drawing board and figure it out. We'll be better next week.

*(on the roughing the passer penalty)*

There's nothing I can do about it. I didn't think it was a roughing the passer, but the ref did, so we just have to keep going and keep playing and find a way to get off the field.

*(on what a defender is supposed to do in the roughing the passer situation)*

I don't know what you're supposed to do, just keep playing hard. Hopefully they don't call it the next time. That's all I told him, just keep playing hard, just keep getting to the quarterback. That's all you can do.

*(on not letting frustrations boil over after two straight losses)*

No, we just have to get back to the drawing board. It isn't like we're a horrible team. We're a legendary team. We just have to figure out a way to win, and we're going to do that. Get to practice on Monday, get to watching the film, figure out the corrections, and we're going to get to it.

*(on if it's a bigger job for himself and Saints linebacker Demario Davis to keep spirits up as the team leaders)*

No, I think everybody's still hungry. Like I said, we just have to get back and figure out the corrections we can make and the little things. Once we fix the little things, we'll be better.

*(on if there were a lot of players hanging heads in the locker room)*

When you lose, you're going to see that. It's better when you win, you'll see everybody happy. And when you lose, you're supposed to be mad. You're supposed to hate losing. You just have to take it upon yourself and look at yourself and see what you can do better to help the team and just figure it out.

## **SAINTS RUNNING BACK MARK INGRAM II**

*(on making sure back-to-back losses don't snowball into a losing streak)*

Whether you win or lose, you have to have a 24-hour window, and you have to look at the film and analyze what you could've done better. There's always a handful of plays throughout the duration of a game that make a difference in the outcome. You never know when those plays are going to arise or present themselves. So, you have to be on point and focused at all times because you never know if that play is going to make a difference in the game. So, we just have to keep that in mind. We have a great team, and we have a great standard. We're going to keep pushing each other to be the best we can. We have to learn from this, grow from this, and yeah, it stinks, but we have to learn, grow from it, get better from it, and prepare for the next opponent.

*(on becoming the Saints all-time leading rusher)*

First and foremost, I'd like to thank my lord and savior Jesus Christ. I humble myself so he may exalt me. The same the same spirit that rose Jesus Christ from the dead lives inside of us. So, daily I pray that he will guide me, lead me, and that his spirit will shine through me. I'm just thankful to God because without him I wouldn't be here. I'm thankful for all my teammates, coaches, anyone along the way, my family, my wife, my kids, my parents, anyone who's loved me and poured into me all these years of my life. I'm thankful for them. I'm appreciative of them. I couldn't have done it without everyone that I just mentioned. It's just a tremendous blessing. I appreciate it. Still working for much, much more, but to be able to say that for a storied organization, a prestigious organization that's had a lot of great runners come through and a lot of great runners will continue to come through, it's something to be proud of. So, I'm thankful and I'm blessed. That's just another step in the process. I plan to continue to do a lot more.

*(on the previous record holder Deuce McAllister)*

He poured into me from a young a professional. When things weren't necessarily ideal, whether it was my role in the offense or the injuries, whatever it may have been, he was always encouraging and supportive and I appreciate him for that. I'm honored to be able to take over Deuce (McAllister)'s record. He was a great player. I watched him growing up. He was special. He ran hard, he ran fast, SEC boy. So, I'm thankful. It's a blessing. I'm humbled.

*(on the final two-point conversion)*

I had a chance to get the ball at all times. I'm always prepared to be an option. I released, and the backer kind of widened me a little bit. And when I cleared him, I looked back and saw the ball in the air, tried to get it, and felt like I was going to catch it. I think whoever the safety or corner who fell off, his hands were kind of on top of mine. I initially thought he intercepted it. I looked up, saw it, located it, tried to make the play, felt like I was in position to make the play, I was looking the ball into my hands, and I feel like his hands were just right above mine. Tough game like that, you always think of what you could've done more to help the team win. So, that was frustrating. I wish I could've made that play to continue the game.

*(on what the offense needs to do to get going earlier)*

Self-inflicted wounds. You have to give those guys credit. They're a well-coached defense, well-coached team. They're a playoff team. You just can't have those self-inflicted wounds as far as penalties or whatever it may be. We all have our hands in it. I had my hands in it. Luckily, (Marquez) Callaway bailed me out on the illegal shift, me and Taysom (Hill) there. We all have our hands in it, we just have to be sharp and execute at all times. We have to be prepared at all times cause like I said earlier, throughout the game there's a handful of plays that present themselves that can change the outcome of the game.

*(on if stopping self-inflicted wounds is especially key with so many important players injured)*

Of course, those guys are all irreplaceable, tops of their position in the league. But, I think we have a great team that has a next-man-up mentality. We want to make those guys proud while they're healing and getting healthy, and bring victories home so they can get healthy and continue our push to be great and continue our push for a championship. It's especially important when you're missing guys, it's especially important at all times.

*(on throwing the record-breaking ball to the sideline)*

I think, when I came in at halftime, a couple of people mentioned, 'You're like a yard or two away.' So, after I did it, I knew I had gotten over one or two yards, and I just threw it to the side. Unfortunately, I was able to kind of count them up. People were counting for me, I wasn't necessarily counting them up, but I just knew coming out of the half it was only two yards or something. It's not a big deal. My main focus is on doing the best I can to help us win. But I think someone just mentioned it to me, so that first run of that half I just threw the ball to the side so it didn't get lost in the shuffle.

*(on his plans for the ball)*

I'm just going to frame it. I have a lot of jerseys over time, a lot of pictures, different things over the years, and one day I plan on having a nice setup. That should be the centerpiece of it.

**SAINTS DEFENSIVE END MARCUS DAVENPORT**

*(on what details to get back to winning are)*

More practice, more attention. Those are just some of the things we have got to get back to. We have just got to find ways to win and do all that we can to get back to our details.

*(on the roughing the passer call on Saints linebacker Kaden Elliss)*

I didn't really care about it, actually. For the most part we just have to play. We can't control the call. We have just got to play. It is just kind of up to them to make the calls. We don't get a choice in that. It's whatever. We have got to move passed that.

*(on if Kaden Elliss did something wrong)*

I had already moved passed it.

*(on balancing playing full tilt to the tackle knowing those calls might not go your way)*

You don't, you just play. That's it. You just continue to play.

**SAINTS LINEBACKER DEMARIO DAVIS**

*(on paying attention to details)*

It's a day by day process. I think that is a part of our culture, part of who we are, just attention to details. It always has been. For the most part, I think we have a good group of guys who try to do that day in and day out.

*(on the roughing the passer call on Saints linebacker Kaden Elliss)*

I saw it. I am certainly not going to be the guy that criticizes referees. I feel like they have a tough job and they are doing the best they can. From a defensive perspective, understanding what took place on that drive specifically, you get an interception and that is points on the board where that's a great thing if you can hold them to three. You end up allowing that drive to continue and then get another one with the pass interference on me. Those were two bang-bang plays. Certainly, you get a chance to hold them to three or you get a chance to be off the field and hold them to zero points when they got down to the red zone. So, as a defender who takes pride in trying to keep the opponent from getting the least amount of points as he can, that goes against of what we kind of want to happen. I certainly understand the referees have a tough job. Sometimes you are on the other side of that and you are happy and you are not necessarily caring about if it was right or wrong, they call it on the other team you are celebrating. I think the refs have a tough job, they are doing the best they can. I try to control what I can control and leave the rest to them.

*(on what Kaden Elliss was supposed to do in that situation)*

It was a bang-bang play. You do the same thing and the next time maybe they don't call it. You do it one time they may call it, one time they don't. You see it lots of times in bang-bang situations. I guess we have got to a point where you see a play like that and you just kind of wait and see, are they going to throw the flag or not? Because sometimes, you know, even though it doesn't look like a flag they could throw it right there and vice versa.

*(on what happened on the pass interference call against him)*

Same thing, a bang-bang play. The guy was trying to force himself across my body and I could see the quarterback looking at him. When you are on the outside as a defender, naturally you are going to try to jump back across, and it's a bang-bang play. It happens a lot more with cornerbacks when they run slant routes. I've been in that same situation many times. Many times they don't throw it, but there have been a few where they have thrown it. It's just tough because that is a situation where points are involved. When it's in the middle of the field it is less impactful, but when you have got a chance and that's third down, get off the field, You allow them to get a first down at the one or two-yard line, it drastically impacts the game.

*(on how to make sure this doesn't continue to happen)*

I appreciate the fact that our team responds to adversity the right way. We do a good job of not letting one game turn into two games. Guys will be right back to work and try to figure out how they can get better at their process, they way study film, the way they practice, the way they detail their work. That's one thing I appreciate about coming to work with this team. We have just got to find a way to get better. Each man has to continue to own their responsibilities and areas they can improve and come better next week.

*(on if it is his job to rally players up as a leader of this team)*

No, I think we have a good group of guys. It's very hard to win in this league. We have won a lot of games here and we don't take that for granted. We know what it takes to win and we know how to handle adversity. In a game like this you credit the other team for making more plays than you, you get back to the tape and figure out what you have got to get better at. There are some things we need to clean up and fix them and move forward. It's a lot of football left to be played and you take it one game at a time.

## **TENNESSEE TITANS POSTGAME QUOTES**

### **TITANS HEAD COACH MIKE VRABEL**

*(on the team's resiliency winning the game today)*

Well, hopefully at some point in time it's not going to be necessary to have that to be in a position to get a huge turnover on the kickoff, take advantage of it, and then we just – we didn't give them credit, they fought and battled just the same way we did. Give Sean (Payton) and that football team a lot of credit. That's a very good defense. So, we'll have to play better. But I do as always appreciate our core group that fights and battles and finds a way to make some plays there at the end.

*(on if the Saints' two-point conversion play was what he expected it to be)*

Well, they jumped. So, I think we were expecting something with the quarterback. And then they jumped and then probably bunched us up. And again, the quarterback has got to make some decisions and I don't blame him. That matchup with (Mark) Ingram and the linebacker had been something that they had hit, and so we were able to cover him and keep him from scoring.

*(on if finding a way to win is what the NFL is all about)*

Yeah, we've proven that over the course of three and a half years that some days they're going to be really good and you're going to have your fastball and everything's going to be clicking, and some days it's going to be a

little tougher sledding. And certainly that was the case today. But they know how to win. They do know how to win. I'm thankful for that.

***(on if past experience facing adversity helped the team today)***

These seem like the same questions that you guys ask us all the time. Sooner or later you guys will have to watch and figure out that's kind of -- the more you do something, probably the better you get at it or the more comfortable you get at it. Again, we don't plan them that way. We don't. We hopefully don't panic. When you don't make a big deal about something, they probably don't make a big deal about it. So, we all have to be prepared for these situations in every game that come up. And two-point conversions, onside kick, Nick Westbrook(-Ikhe) did a heck of a job there to recover the kick there at the end. I'm sure there will be a lot of great efforts and a lot of stuff that we'll have to correct.

***(on players like linebacker Dylan Cole stepping up and making plays)***

I say it when they come in on Wednesday. And I tell them at the team meeting, (indiscernible) could come up and answer these guys, you know what I mean? You're expected to be ready to play in the football game. Will you, Dylan (Cole)? You're on the practice squad? I don't know that, but you're expected to be ready to play. And if you get everybody to prepare like that, with that idea, then there's no surprises or there are no scrambling on Friday when somebody goes down or somebody decides that they're not available. So that's how we try to approach things. On Wednesday there's a really good chance that I'm going to say the same thing at the team meeting at 8:00. Everybody that's in here this week is going to be expected to play in the game. We'll find the 48 guys we think give us the best chance to win.

***(on if Dylan Cole is an example of the next man up mentality)***

Yeah, and again Dylan (Cole) is somebody that I go back with in Houston and had factored on special teams and defense and then just ran into some injuries. We had him in, worked him out. Had him on the practice squad and had him ready to go before last week's game, and then wanted to be able to try to utilize his skillset. Looked like he really factored on special teams and so that will probably give him some more opportunities.

***(on the performance of wide receiver Marcus Johnson)***

Huge. It was huge. It was what we needed to see from Marcus (Johnson), I think Marcus needed to see a little bit of that for himself. But had a really good game for us.

***(on two delay of game penalties)***

I think just we get in that long-yardage situation. I wasn't very excited about taking a timeout on third-and-15 or whatever it was, and we have to be better in those situations. Ryan (Tannehill) felt like he had the one under control. The official didn't see it the same way. And I trust Ryan with the snap count and making sure we understand it the same, that we see zero and the official looks down and then if he sees the ball still there, he calls it, and so that's what happened. But Ryan felt like he had the situation under control. And I trust him a lot of those times.

***(on the performance of the running backs)***

I think there were some really positive plays. I thought we hit a few good runs and that they hit the right hole. Ran hard. I'll have to take a look and see what the blocking looked like. I know that D'Onta (Foreman) made an unbelievable play. Well blocked. He made a great catch. And a great job on that screen play. That was a huge play.

***(on the opportunity the defense provided the offense with the short-field situations today)***

To be able to take those turnovers -- this is a really good defense. Playing against these guys, preparing, we knew we'd have to outplay their defense. I felt like we were kind of even with them. And then probably we gave a little bit away there late in the game with some X plays, changed field position. But our offense has done a nice job. We need to continue to do a better job in the red zone and taking care of the football. But if you can do that and take care of it and not turn it over and do a nice job in the red zone, you have a chance.

***(on wanting to improve on the sloppiness)***

The sloppiness is things that we're going to -- the efficiency in which we run our offense. The efficiency that we have on first down, whether we run it, whether we throw it, protection, blocking at the second level, defensive communication, being able to -- when you get into a situation where you're playing a lot of guys, those are new guys sometimes next to each other, that the communication is there so that you're trying to avoid mistakes by communicating to somebody that's standing three or four feet away from you. And just not feeling like you're by yourself out there, that you've got 11 guys to work with and to function with. And we did that a lot of times and then there were times where I felt like we were scrambling a little bit.

***(on the positives of today's game)***

I saw a team that got some turnovers. I thought we played well defensively early. I thought we threw the ball efficiently early when it was tough to run the football. And I think that whether that was running, trying to invest in completions, I thought we protected our quarterback early. Now, some of those things changed. Some

of those things changed. And give credit to their defense. But offensively, I felt like Ryan (Tannehill) had time to throw. There was a good pocket to step up and firm in the inside -- to be able to step up and complete passes.

***(on the decision to put wide receiver Julio Jones on injured reserve)***

There's a lot of things that we -- again I wouldn't -- you've been around me for a while. The prognosis is IR is at least three weeks, and so they're not going to let us change those rules. Outside of that, I'm not going to be able to give you a timeline, but every move that we make we feel like we do in the best interests of the football team. And that's why we did it.

***(on wide receiver A.J. Brown's performance)***

I'm sure there would be some plays he'd like to have back. Trevor (Siemian) had some good plays too, just like everybody else.

***(on the performance of cornerback Kristian Fulton returning to the field)***

Kristian (Fulton) was playing with a lot of confidence. He was excited about being out there. I felt like really starting to improve and playing corner in this league is a tough proposition. They're going to catch passes on you. To be able to come back and line up again and compete and make a play -- I thought for him to play as much as he did today and come out I hope, I think, OK, it will be good to have him back and continue to get some practice from him and build some continuity back there.

## **QUARTERBACK RYAN TANNEHILL**

***(on how good it felt to see the two-point conversion pass be incomplete)***

It was huge, obviously, yeah. It was awesome. We backed it up there and knew it was going to make it tough on them. It was awesome to see the defense step up and make a huge play.

***(on what it shows about the team to come out on top in game where things didn't go right)***

Yeah, obviously we've got to clean some stuff up but I'm never going to apologize for a win. I'm proud of our guys. We battled through. We were able to make some plays when it counted and come away with a win. Proud of our guys, stepping up and finding a way to come away with a win.

***(on wide receiver Marcus Johnson being due to have a big performance)***

I have a ton of faith in Marcus (Johnson) every time he steps out there. Going back to training camp, and then he's had a couple opportunities to step up and make plays for us this year. Awesome to really see him get going a little bit. When he caught that early one, coming underneath and then gunning for the open space, I knew he had some juice so I was excited to see that happen.

***(on if there was a better rhythm in passing this week)***

There's a lot of stuff we've got to clean up, you know? We did some good things, had some opportunities there. We've just got to keep our foot on the gas, keep cleaning the things up and be prepared for next week.

***(on if Marcus Johnson needed the boost personally as much as the team)***

Yeah, it should be. It should be. You know, the guy goes out there and makes plays for us, creates huge explosive plays, played consistent for us the whole day. It should give him confidence moving forward. I know I have a ton of confidence in him. This offense has a ton of confidence in him so hopefully we can use it as a springboard for him to keep progressing.

***(on the importance of having Marcus Johnson complement wide receiver A.J. Brown)***

Oh, its huge. You know you see Julio (Jones) not make it to the game. We need somebody to step up and fill that role for us. We've got a guy like Marcus (Johnson) that's able to do that, creates more balance for us offensively and we can run our offense.

***(on how big it was to have the special teams turnover to start the second half and score)***

Oh, it was huge. I'm not even sure who even made that hit but that was awesome, man. You see a big hit on special teams without a turnover and it can change the momentum of a game and really get the defense going, get a lot of confidence going out onto the field. Get a turnover, put the offense in great field position there. It really spring boarded us to get into the end zone and really change the game.

***(on how his illness impacted him getting ready for today)***

Yeah, I don't feel so good. Still dealing with a lot but thankful I was able to make it to the game and be out there.

***(on the short field twice in the game and if that is where the game was won)***

I think it was won in a lot of different areas but that definitely contributed. Obviously, taking advantage of short fields, we got another one there, I believe at the beginning of the – or the end of the third quarter, we didn't take advantage, but got the ball on the 40-yard line or so. Got to be able to move the ball there and get points out of that. We've got to be better in the red zone overall. We moved the ball during the middle of the game consistently but didn't finish consistently enough in the red zone. We've been better there. We've just got to get back on track and learn from this one.

*(on how the team takes the 'next man up' mentality to the extreme this season)*

It's something we believe in. Obviously, we talk about it. You don't want to consistently have to have other guys step in, but if that's the case, then you want guys to step in and play with confidence. It's something our program believes in. Our coaches are preaching it. We believe in it as players that if you get an opportunity, you've got to step in and take advantage of it. If that mentality persists throughout the organization, then we are going to be in good shape.

*(on the confidence in Marcus Johnson from training camp that came to fruition today)*

He went out there and made plays. He got some opportunities, and every time the ball went his way, he made the play. Hats off to Marcus (Johnson). Excited to see him get going a little bit. Hopefully, we can build on it.

*(on how he felt this morning when he woke up before today's game)*

Bad. It's been a tough couple days, but hopefully keep progressing and feel better.

*(on if it was a stomach bug)*

Yes.

*(on playing a game without running back Derrick Henry, wide receiver Julio Jones, and wide receiver A.J. Brown having one catch)*

I mean, I knew I wasn't going to have Julio (Jones) or Derrick (Henry). I didn't know A.J. (Brown) was only going to have one catch. I really didn't even realize he only had one catch, but Marcus (Johnson) stepped up. We had a bunch of guys that stepped up and make plays for us. Adrian (Peterson) had some good runs. Tight ends made plays for us. I kind of take the mentality of we're not ever dependent on one person. There's going to be opportunities that present themselves throughout the game to people, to different position groups. It's just a matter of being able to step up and take advantage of it. Some guys did that today and it really helped us out.

*(on the forced fumble on kickoff to spark momentum)*

Yeah, that was huge. Coming out of the second half, huge hit, ball comes out and it puts the offense in great position there to go score. Our offense was able to capitalize on that and go punch it into the end zone. It really got the second half started off right for us.

## **DEFENSIVE TACKLE JEFFERY SIMMONS**

*(on setting the tone early with fast start)*

Man, we've got to start fast. That's what we talk about as a defense. You know, we've got to create some momentum as a defense. This game is played at all three levels, offense, defense, special teams. Sometimes the offense may not be on a roll starting off, but that is something we talk about as a defense. We have to start fast, give our offense good field position and have to get off the field. First and second down be good, third down get sacks, or whatever it may be, second down get a sack. Pressure and sacks today, it was great.

*(on grinding out a win)*

I love winning. I don't care how it comes. (There's) always room to improve, but come in when we come back on Wednesday, watch film or whatever it may be, of course each and every week you have to be better in this league. We have to come in and play. You never know when another team can come in, any team in this league can get beat. So, I love winning, winning in this league. I learned since I have been in the league it's hard to win in this league. So, you know, we are going to enjoy this win. We always like tough games. Sometimes it might not be as tough as it was today, but as long we got the dub, I am satisfied.

*(on New Orleans making adjustments at halftime)*

Of course, especially if you see a defensive lineman wrecking the game, you are going to see more max protection. But it doesn't matter, you have to transition into the pocket, we have to be better against max protection because somebody's got to win, somebody's got to make a play no matter what it might be. So, eventually if we watch film and see who is getting the one-on-ones, even who's not getting the one-on-ones, everyone has got to transition to the pocket no matter what.

*(on it being a relief to see the ball hit the ground on the two-point conversion attempt)*

A relief. Defense came up big, the defense – I think it was Jayon (Brown) out there on his man, so it is always just great especially not to take a game to overtime, to get a win right there on that two-point conversion. I was excited, Jayon (Brown) was out there covering his man. Everyone did their job and seeing that ball hit the ground I was pretty excited, so I was kind of tired.

***(on if there is a reason the ball is bouncing the Titans' way)***

I guess it is we don't quit. I think that's just kind of the mindset of guys. No matter what it maybe, we are going to fight to the end. Guys finish the game. That's what's going to happen when you finish the game. No matter, of course they got a touchdown, guys didn't put their heads down. We knew they were fixing to go for two or whatever it may be. Early in the game they get a first down or whatever it may be, we have to come back and play the next play. I think that's just the mindset of this team. We are not going to drop our head when the game gets tough. We are not going to drop our head when a team makes plays, so we've just got to play this way.

***(on recording sacks)***

I just, you know, it's just the gameplan. I figure out the gameplan for the week. I eventually got the one-on-one on the first sack tonight and that's something we talk about. Guys have to win to win their one-on-one matchup. Things like that in that nature, guys on the back end covering guys, that's helping us get sacks. Whatever they give me, you know I am going to be prepared for. I see early in the game what a team is giving me, they double me. I got dogs on the D-line so if they double me, somebody gets one-on-one. So, I'm surrounded by – just grateful to have a good group of guys on the defensive line. So, if we have a one-on-one or whatever it may be, we expect to win.

***(on if his performance is continuing to elevate week after week)***

I think that's just a part of this game. Each year, each game, each day, I want to get better. I want to play better each and every week. Hopefully next week I play at a higher standard. I hold myself to higher standards. I love what I do, so each and every week, I know my teammates hold me to a high standard. I hold myself to a high standard as well the coaches. So, eventually it's got to get better. We know we've got to fix a lot of things on film and go and see what we can do better, especially in the second half, driving and scoring points or whatever it may be. But I love this team so each and every week, I am just trying to get better each and every week.

***(on feeling happy for rookie defensive tackle Naquan Jones recording his first career sack)***

I remember my first sack as a rookie. You know, just that feeling. I know he had that same feeling just being able to step you know with (Tear) Tart being out today. Being able to step in as a rookie, starting at nose, that's a hard position to play. A lot of people don't understand that and him beating that guard like he did, that's props to him. I was happy for him, told him on the sidelines. I ran on the field, I knew it was about to down, so I knew I was going to be on the field. It's hard to get sacks in this league so I am happy for him. He came in and helped us out this week, especially he made a lot of tackles, he got the sack, so he played a hell of a game.

***(on the difficulty of winning in the league)***

Like I said man, I love winning. Like I said earlier, it's hard to win in this league, so you have to embrace it and just take it all in. You know, (Mike) Vrabel said something this week and it made sense. Said, 'Success brings confidence, but confidence doesn't bring success.' That kind of stood out to me, because we can come into this game very confident – it doesn't promise a win. Each and every week we have to prove it and that's the best thing about this league. I think that's the best thing about this team. We are never satisfied. We've got a lot more games to play, each and every week, game by game.

## **SAFETY KEVIN BYARD**

***(on if today's game was the physical struggle that they expected it to be)***

I mean, we go into every game expecting a dog fight. We don't go into games thinking we are going to blow guys out. Obviously, the Saints are a really good football team. They've been a really good football team in this league for a while. No matter what quarterback they have in there, we understood that their defense was going to play pretty well. We had to match their defense. Just proud that we got a win today, that we just found a way to get a win.

***(on how confident the defense is in goal line situations)***

We're super confident because we put it on film before. We've done it plenty of times, getting stops down there. We could've been a lot better in the red zone though. I think they were three for four, something like that. We gave them touchdowns in the red zone. Could've been a little bit better on third downs as well. These are things we're going to get fixed, we're going to get corrected. But like I said, when it comes to those tight situations when we've got to get a stop, there's no panic on the field, there's no panic on the sideline. We just keep defending every blade of grass.

***(on if he questioned the personal foul called against him and if it felt egregious)***

Yeah, I didn't feel like it. Obviously, I've got to see the replay and watch the film. I wasn't really thinking about it like that on the field. I was just thinking, 'Man, that's a bad play or a bad penalty for me with the defense, giving them some good field position.' But we'll see. Hopefully I don't get fined, but it is what it is.

***(on if the team relishes the dirty and lucky games in which they've been involved)***

Honestly, we don't want them to be like that, but at the end of the day when it comes down to it, we understand that we've been battle-tested. We understand what kind of defense we have. Before that last drive, we were just on the sideline saying, 'Hey, this is about greatness.' We were talking about being a great team, trying to have a great record, trying to keep winning games. These are the type of situations that we've got to go out there and play well. Obviously, they drove the ball down, but we ended up getting the stops that we needed to get, especially on that two-point conversion.

*(on linebacker Dylan Cole coming off the practice squad to play today and what it says about the team's culture to have players stepping up each week)*

We talk about it all the time. It's stuff that we stress, that if you have a jersey on, you've got to go out there and make a play. We have high expectations for everybody on the field. So, when we don't make a play, we've got to hold each other accountable. I'm just proud of him being in a tough situation. I think last week when he came out to L.A., he was in L.A., had to fly to Nashville, and flew right back to L.A. Just being ready and being prepared for the moment. I'm just proud of him to make a play.

*(on cornerback Kristian Fulton's return and what he saw out of him)*

I think he made a lot of plays today. For a guy who's been out of the field for a while, you expect that he would go out there and have to knock some rust off, but I think that he played pretty well, played physical, made some plays for us. We're going to need to see Kristian (Fulton) continue to make those plays because we feel like he could be a great corner for us.

*(on Head Coach Mike Vrabel telling all players in team meetings that they should be ready to play and what that means to the team this year)*

I feel like it's a long time coming as far as we play 10 games straight, but we understand that every team in the league is dealing with injuries. We're not going to use that as a crutch or an excuse. The reason why guys came in and made plays, that's why we're in meeting rooms, especially in the DB room. We understand that usually everybody is going to play in some form or some fashion, so guys have to be locked in continuously in the meeting rooms, knowing what they need to do on the practice field. We're just trying to hold everybody accountable.

*(on how well the team is clicking after six straight wins)*

Honestly, it feels great. We understand that the past few games we've played against playoff teams, it's great. We've proven that we can beat these good teams. Obviously, they aren't handing out Lombardi Trophies just yet, but I feel like going into these tough matches that we play, we can go into these games with a lot of confidence. We're not going to be complacent. We understand that the confidence is not going to breed success, but we just have to go out there and keep doing what we're doing. I just feel like we're battle-tested.

*(on how defensive tackle Jeffery Simmons is changing what's happening for the entire defense)*

It's big for us. He's been a leader down there. He's been a tone-setter. We really respect Jeff (Simmons) and everything he's doing for this team. I talked about it before, me and Jeff talk all the time. He expects me to make plays, and I expect him to make plays. I feel like for us as a defense, to continue to have success with what we're doing, our best players have got to play well down the stretch and Jeff's playing well.

*(on beating playoff teams and how the team can carry that over to next week against a divisional opponent that is not a playoff team)*

I think that's going to be a big emphasis this week knowing the performance that we put out there against the Jets. I think we have to make sure that we have a lot of confidence. Our locker room is a real confident bunch, but at the end of the day, that's not going to just guarantee us a win. We have to go out there and play. We've got to go out there and prepare against every team. It's a division game, so regardless of what the records are, they're going to go out there and fight hard. We know each other well, so they'll put a good plan together against us. We have to make sure that we're locked in on all three phases.

## **WIDE RECEIVER MARCUS JOHNSON**

*(on his performance today and overcoming adversity)*

Absolutely. These last couple of weeks have been tough. I just felt like I kind of hit a wall, and I just locked in, kept grinding it out, trusting trust in my routine, and I'm thankful it paid off today.

*(on what clicked for him today)*

I think it's just consistency. I think that a lot of times, that's what we're capable of as players, and you don't get to show it every week. Believing in yourself, having teammates who've got your back, coaches that've got your back, and having an opportunity like I did today and just taking advantage of it.

*(on if he thought there could be some one-on-one opportunities for him going into today's game with so much attention on wide receiver A.J. Brown)*

Absolutely. We knew they were going to play a lot of man. We knew A.J. (Brown) was going to get doubled. Coach (Rob) Moore told us that it starts in this room – building momentum and making big plays.

*(on if he saw what he expected to see today in terms of coverage)*

Absolutely. I think to an extent, more man than usual than we saw on film, but we expected that with Julio (Jones) being out.

*(on if today's game was a confidence-building game for him)*

Absolutely. God's timing is perfect. I needed it. The coaches needed to see it, of course my teammates. I'm just thankful to be able to contribute and help us win.

*(on the long catch he made in the first quarter)*

It was just a quick slant, like an out-route. I think what really helped open me up was a burst off the line. I just committed to full speed and Ryan (Tannehill) saw me. As soon as I caught it there was immediate separation, and I was able to take it out. I should've taken it to the house. There were two opportunities to take it to the house, so I've got to find a way to get into the end zone.

*(on if he thinks there will be more opportunities for him to step up in the coming weeks)*

I believe so. I think that the more teams that want to play man and challenge us at the line, the more they make us as a whole receiving group step up. I think it will be big for me, Nick Westbrook-Ikhine, once we get Racey (McMath) back, everybody, to step up and support A.J. (Brown) as well.

*(on preparing for man coverage)*

Absolutely. That's what we get paid to do. That's what we're going to continue to do.

*(on how it feels to be a big contributor in a win)*

It feels great. Like (Mike) Vrabel said, it's a confidence booster. I obviously believe in myself, but sometimes you need to prove yourself right and anybody else who needs to see that. I think it was big for me, and I'm thankful to be able to contribute like that.

*(on what is says about the team that players are stepping up and succeeding when given the opportunity)*

I noticed early when I first got here, and even a little bit before I came, this organization loves their guys. Even once training camp is over and guys go somewhere else or aren't able to stay on the roster, they come back, and I think it's just the trust. They know what we can bring to the table. You know, you can't keep everybody, but I believe we have good depth. We started in training camp and we've seen it throughout the season. We're battle-tested. These games have been close. Overtime, fighting it out. That's what we'll need down the stretch, and that's especially what we'll need come playoffs. Just taking it one day at a time and continue battling.

*(on what the culture has been like in the locker room and what his teammates said to him today after a game like this)*

It's huge. Everybody was coming up to me and saying, 'Congrats,' and 'Good game.' Obviously, I'm saying the same thing to them, and I've been saying that whether I'm doing well or not. It really felt good to have my teammates and congratulate them.

*(on what he thinks is behind the team's results other than luck)*

It's grit, you know what I mean? We don't panic. We trust the gameplan, we trust what we see on film, and we just keep chipping away. We don't get too high or low. We stay centered. (Mike) Vrabel was talking about a Vanderbilt meeting he went to, and one of the coaches was telling the guys that staying centered was the key to success and being able to have longevity, and I think that's what we're showing as a team.

*(on what the team needs to do better going forward)*

We've got to watch the film. I can't really speak on it right now, but we'll watch the film and figure it out.

## **RUNNING BACK ADRIAN PETERSON**

*(on going up against the Saints defense in the run game)*

We knew we were going up against a really good defense up front, and overall a good defense. I feel like we had some good ones and we were close on a lot of runs. You have games like that. Fortunately, we were able to get that W in the midst of us trying to get the run game going and being able to help our offense. If we are able to run the ball, they are able

to do a lot of other things as well. Putting yourself in second-and-four or second-and-three are key. I feel like we just need to keep working. It is almost there so we just have to keep working.

*(on players being able to step up and how important that is when other players are out with injuries)*

It is very important. This is a new chemistry with some of the guys that are in the rotation now, so it is like, whoever can get us going, let's do it. I told (D'Onta) Foreman after I went back in that he did a great job of creating something, allowing us to build a rhythm and kind of get me going too. When I see my guys have success then that is fuel for me, and I want to try and match it or do better.

*(on if he did better running with his pads lower and if his son will give him a better review this week)*

I haven't talked to him yet. I felt like I was good with my pad level. My boy Mark (Ingram II), I guess he saw me on one play or so where I was kind of high and he was telling me, 'Hey, you have your shoulder pads up.' So still need to make sure I get my shoulders level. Just going to continue to work at it.

*(on what he has seen from the team that impresses him the most)*

Heart. That passion for the game. It is group of guys that love the game of football, that love the guy next to him and are playing for each other. You don't hear guys complaining. Defensively and offensively, you will see guys going out there and doing whatever it takes to win a game.

*(on what it was like to play at Nissan Stadium as a member of the Titans)*

I played here a couple times, but it feels good. It is kind of funny because I was telling my son yesterday that when I was younger, the first team I played for in organized football was the Oilers. This franchise being from Houston and now here and being a part of it, it feels good. I am blessed to be here in this situation that I am in. It is a great fanbase. A lot of love they were showing today. I just want everyone to know that I will continue to get better each week and keep pressing forward.

*(on what a six-game winning streak says about the character of this football team)*

It speaks high. Games are hard to win in the NFL and today was tough. It is games like this where it can flip and be able to lose it or win it. Have to continue to be able to grind them out and adjust on the fly and pull-out W's and not pedal down. I think offensively we have a lot of stuff to get better at, so to be able to continue to pull out wins out speaks on how good this team is and how good this team can be.

**LINEBACKER JAYON BROWN**

*(on the defense's performance today)*

Our pass rush did a really good job, good coverage, we did a good job on stopping the run. It came down to the wire and we made the plays when we needed to and overall got the win.

*(on the defensive performance in the redzone)*

We don't want the offense to drive on us, we prefer three-and-outs. When they did drive, we did a solid job of forcing them into a field goal. We didn't have any defensive touchdowns, but overall we got the win. We will watch the film, learn from it and correct those mistakes we see on film.

*(on the thinking on the final two-point conversation play and if he knew what was coming)*

Stop it. I was just playing my technique and had them in a pretty much man-to-man situation, and he got me earlier in the game for I think a 36-yard gain. Last play of the game, I saw the wheel coming, hit him coming out of the backfield which I think slowed him down, and the pass was short, and it fell incomplete. Overall, it was a short pass and got the offense the ball to take a knee.

*(on how much pressure it puts on the defense with key players on offense being out due to injuries)*

We don't see it as pressure, we see it as more opportunities for us to make plays. Our offense has done a good job and we have been able to match the game and putting up points as well. We are just looking to do our style of football which is to not give up points, and when they do get down there, force field goals instead of touchdowns and try to get the ball out and get sacks. Just have to watch film and make improvements.

*(on defensive tackle Jeffery Simmons and how good he has been lately)*

It is amazing. They have to look out for everyone on our D-line. Harold (Landry III) I think has about 10 sacks right now, (Jeffery Simmons) had two today, our young buck (Naquan Jones) had one today and Denico (Autry) is able to go off at any point in the game as well. They have a lot to worry about with our D-line and then you have Kevin (Byard) who is having an amazing year, and you know they don't want to throw to his side. We are just building. Keep on improving.

This wasn't our cleanest performance, but we got through it and that is all that matters. Just go in and watch film and make corrections off of that.

*(on linebacker Monty Rice and how he did today)*

Monty (Rice) did a really good job. I was proud of him. Me and Monty (Rice) led the team in tackles, so I was congratulating him on that. He was flying around, making big hits and making big plays. I was proud of him.

*(on the final Saints drive)*

They just made plays. It is football, they get paid too. They just made plays, but when it came down to the wire and the two-point conversion, we ended up doing what we had to do to get off the field and win the game.

*(on the current six game winning streak and what it says about the character of the team)*

We are just taking it day by day. Just trying to improve each and every week from what we did good and bad on the week prior. Just have to keep that mentality and not look too far into it. We know we are in a good spot, and we want to stay there. We will work hard each and every day in practice, and then come out on Sunday and get the job done.

## **RUNNING BACK D'ONTA FOREMAN**

*(on facing a good defense and staying patient despite not having running back Derrick Henry)*

We knew coming into the game that the Saints had a great defense. We knew there would be some dirty runs and tough runs. We just had to be patient and keep fighting and be gritty. Go in there and do all we could to pull out a win, and that's what we were able to do.

*(on the importance of relying on the next man up to get the win today)*

It's very important. Our motto is, 'The next man up.' You just try to come out here and be as productive as possible and do what you can do to help the team win games, so that's what I try to go out there and do. Do my part, nothing more than that. Just my part to help us win and that's what we did.

*(on his screen pass catch resulting in a big gain)*

It was something that we needed. We needed a big play at that time, and I was able to get my number called. I just wanted to be productive when I get my chances and opportunities. It was a great play. I wish I could have gotten it in the end zone, but I had one guy to beat, and he made a good play. We just had to keep grinding and were able to get it done.

*(on how the Titans are able to keep winning week after week)*

A bunch of guys coming together. A group of 48 guys coming together and trying to make it happen. Everybody is communicating on the sideline and motivating each other. Every time we come off the field, trying to piece together that we need to do to be better, and that's during the week and also in the games. I think everybody is on one accord, and we're just trying to find ways to win games. We have a lot of guys banged up right now, so all we can do is go out and find ways to win.

## **TACKLE TAYLOR LEWAN**

*(on the offense adjusting to not having running back Derrick Henry out there)*

This team is just finding ways to win. I think the only thing that matters is 8-2. Todd (Downing) is making great calls at the right time to put us in a position to win. (Ryan) Tannehill is doing an amazing job getting the ball out and guys are getting open. Timing has been awesome. The O-line has been protecting pretty well. We'll keep working. We'll keep working the run game and get more consistent as it goes. This is my first game with these guys and we started to get things going. We weren't as consistent as we like to be, obviously. Don't know what our final rushing yards were, but it wasn't great. But, finding ways to win is the only thing that matters.

*(on players stepping up and that speaking to the depth and readiness of this team)*

I think that speaks a lot about Coach (Mike) Vrabel and Todd (Downing) and these Titans' coaches, because I don't know how many guys we have played this year, but I think we're on a record pace right now for guys who have played for the Titans this year. The coaches are very clear on what the keys are every single week. What we have to watch out for in certain situations, situational football things. That's great coaching. Them taking care of business.

*(on if the Titans have discovered a formula to win without Derrick Henry)*

I don't know about that. That would be a question for the coaches. I play left tackle. You call the play and I run it to the best of my abilities. It's awesome to be 8-2. I bring this up a lot, but in 2014 or 2015, we couldn't buy a win. I was just talking to Miss Amy (Adams) about this being the 200<sup>th</sup> win for the Tennessee Titans. It's very cool to be part of a huge change and I think everyone has put us in a huge position to be successful, and we're scrappy. This team is very scrappy.

*(on what it says about the character of this Titans team finding a way to win six straight games)*

Finding a way to win, that's all that matters. To keep working and keep improving, because there was a lot of stuff today we could have done better out there on that field. That was not perfect by any means, so although our record is really good, we could be a lot better. The way we played today, we are very beatable, and we need to improve on a lot of things and not get complacent.

## **CORNERBACK KRISTIAN FULTON**

*(on how good it felt to be back on the field today)*

It was great. Like how last year I got hurt and everything wasn't good and really wasn't planned, this year just felt different for me getting hurt. It was tough on me, but it built me for this moment. You just have to react to it, when things are not going good. Everything was good being out on the field, then I got hurt and it was tough being out. It felt good to be back. My teammates and coaches kept me up throughout that time.

*(on playing against is hometown team today)*

It was definitely special. A lot of emotion for the game, especially me just coming back. It was crazy. A lot of kids from New Orleans don't get to make it to this point, and to play against the Saints and New Orleans, it was crazy to me mentally, but I just had to shake it off at the beginning and play.

*(on the key to playing with confidence coming back from an injury)*

I just wanted to fit back into the game and play my part and do what I do. It was just me mentally. I just wanted to make sure I was the best cornerback out there.

## **LINEBACKER DYLAN COLE**

*(on the forced fumble and what it was like to make a play to help the team win)*

Just trying to do my job. If you asked me two weeks ago where I would be at, I thought it would be on my back patio watching this game. I am just fortunate to be here, and when the plays come, I just have to make them.

*(on being amped up after the play given the last few weeks he has had)*

Absolutely. I think it is just understanding your opportunity. It is a humbling process. I went from playing four years in Houston to laying on my couch for eight months, nine months. It is a humbling process, and I am just so blessed to be here and have the opportunity. Like I said, when the plays come to you, you just have to make them. It came to me, so I made it.

*(on how he approached the hit to force the fumble)*

I am not much of a thinker. When I am out there, I just play. If I had my head down, I didn't know. That is just the way we play. I don't think anybody thinks before they hit, I think they just hit and however they hit them, you hit them. Luckily that wasn't the case today and it was just a forced fumble and great recovery by Tory (Carter).

*(on what he was thinking after he realized how big of a play he made)*

Right when I hit him, I saw the ball pop out. I saw Tory (Carter) kind of get in there a little bit and I was just hoping he would come out of there. I was just pumped up. Like I said, you ask me two weeks ago, I thought I would be on my patio watching this game. When plays like that come to me, I am happy to make them and luckily that came to me, and Tory (Carter) made a great play.