



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AT CAROLINA PANTHERS
SUNDAY, SEPT. 25, 2022 • BANK OF AMERICA STADIUM
SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- The Saints fell to the Carolina Panthers 22-14 to move to 1-2 on the season.
- The Saints return to action on Sunday, Oct. 2 when they play the Minnesota Vikings in at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London. Kickoff is set for 8:30 a.m. CST. The game will be aired on NFL Network (WWL 4 locally in the New Orleans area) and streamed on NFL+.
- The Saints tallied 426 total net yards while allowing 293 to Carolina.
- New Orleans converted 5-of-13 of third downs, while allowing the Panthers to convert 4-of-14 (28.6%)
- The Saints notched 19 first downs and allowed 12.
- QB **Jameis Winston** completed 25-of-41 passes for 353 yards, a touchdown and two interceptions. The passing yardage total was his highest as a Saint.
- On the opening drive of the fourth quarter, Winston went 7/7 for 73 yards as the Saints scored for the first time in the contest, with a five-yard Mark Ingram rushing touchdown.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** carried the ball 15 times for 61 yards and caught two passes off seven targets for 12 yards.
- WR **Chris Olave** posted his first 100+ yard receiving game, catching a career-high nine passes for 147 yards.
- WR **Jarvis Landry** recorded his 700th career catch on the opening drive Sunday, becoming the 56th player to cross that milestone. Landry left the game in the third quarter with an ankle injury and finished with two catches for 22 yards.
- WR **Michael Thomas** moved into third on the Saints all-time receptions list with a six-yard reception in the second quarter, surpassing Joe Horn. Thomas finished with 49 yards on five receptions but left the game with an injury.
- WR **Tre'Quan Smith** caught four passes for 105 yards before leaving the game with an injury. It was his first 100-yard game since Week 11 of 2018 against the Philadelphia Eagles, where he went for 157 yards.
- WR **Marquez Callaway** caught his first pass of the season on a four-yard touchdown reception.
- RB **Mark Ingram** scored a five-yard rushing touchdown early in the fourth quarter, his 65th career rushing score. He moved into a tie for 42nd all time with Stephen Davis, Derrick Henry, Willis McGahee and Thurman Thomas. It was his 75th total touchdown, becoming the 83rd player to have 75 career scores.
- Ingram finished with five carries for 18 yards and a touchdown.
- New Orleans allowed 101 total net yards in the first half and 1-6 third down conversions. The defense tallied three first half sacks as well.

- LB **Pete Werner** led the Saints in tackles with 10, including six solo.
- LB **Demario Davis** notched his first sack of the season on the opening drive of the game. Davis finished with five tackles, including two solo.
- P **Blake Gillikin** punted six times for 285 yards with a 47.5 gross and 40.5 net and two dropped inside the 20yard line.



POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

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HEAD COACH DENNIS ALLEN

Opening Statement:

Disappointing outcome. We talked about the ball being the most important thing, and we did not play well in the first half. The turnover was a big play in the game. Obviously, the two missed field goals were big plays in the game. That is 13 points. We get back into the game and give up the explosive pass, missed tackle and the game was kind of out of hand at that point in time. Look, our guys fought. Our guys competed. WE had some guys go down, some guys stepped up. But we're going to have to regroup and we are going to have to play better.

RE: Offensive penalties

I don't know for sure. Couple of them I am not sure I agreed with, but certainly that is something that we have got to clean up, because really we are beating ourselves. We're beating ourselves with penalties. We're beating ourselves turning the football over. And that has got to stop.

RE: The offensive chop block on Mark Ingram II

Again, I didn't see it. You know, looked at the replay and I wasn't sure what it was. But I am not going to comment too much on any of that though.

RE: What happened on the illegal shift penalty

Yeah, we had a little miscommunication in terms of alignment. And so, we've got to clean that up. We have got to be better there.

RE: If he is surprised by offensive struggles

Well look I don't know if surprise would be the word, you know. We've got a lot of new pieces and really didn't get a chance to work as much in training camp as we would have liked. But we've got a job to do. We've got to go out there and we've got to play better. We've got to perform better. We've got to coach better, and it starts with me. Look, we will head over to London, we will get ourselves ready and have a good week of work and get ready to go play the Vikings.

RE: Significance of wide receiver core injuries

Michael Thomas injured a toe. Jarvis Landry injured his ankle. Looks like Tre'Quan Smith had a concussion. We were really down kind of at the end there. We were really down to two receivers. So, we will have to evaluate and see where everybody is at, and how significant the injuries are and see where we go from there.

RE: How they will fix the turn over issues

Well look the one was, they did a good job of ripping the ball out. Look, it is a part of the point of emphasis and obviously we are not getting emphasized enough because we have had it happen a couple of weeks in a row and we have got to clean that up. And then look, some of the interceptions happen because you are trying to play catch up and you are pressing a little bit. I just think we've got to be better early on in the game. We've got to execute better. And so certainly, I think that starts with us as a coaching staff. We've got to put a good plan together and give our guys a chance to go out and be successful.

RE: Confidence level in Jameis Winston today

I think everybody, when you get in these situations, is looking for a place to place blame. There is enough mistakes to go around that I don't really want to go there. I feel confident with Jameis. Certainly, we all need to do better and that is what we are going to do.

RE: If Winston is dealing with more pain management this week

Again, you would have to ask him those questions. Certainly, he is a competitor. He is a battler. He is tough. Yeah, he is fighting through some things, and that is part of playing pro football.

RE: What it would take for him to consider a quarterback change

Well, I think all the elements around him have to play better. And so again, like everybody is looking for a place to go to look to place blame. I think we've got to play better as a football team in all areas, and not look to individuals really.

RE: Issue of teams blitzing Winston

I am sure that is a part of their packages. Each week there is a different game plan. I know obviously there is a couple zero pressures we have got where there is going to be a free guy. And I thought they did a good job defensively of creating some pressure and attacking us, but I think that is a combination of things. I think we've got to do a better job of having our guys in a position to succeed in those situations, and sometimes take advantage of when people want to try and be aggressive with us.

RE: Concern with Wil Lutz

Well, he's got to kick it through the uprights, but I've got plenty of confidence in Wil Lutz.

RE: If he is not in a point to look at a quarterback change

No. No. No, look we all have to play better, and so I am not looking to single anything out. Obviously, we've got to make some corrections and we've got to do a better job as a group.

RE: If Chris Olave's performance was a positive of today

Yeah, look I thought he did some nice things in the game. Obviously, we have been able to hit him on some explosive plays down the field. I think that is a good thing. Certainly, we are going to continue to utilize him in that regard. Yeah, I thought he did some good things in the game.

QB JAMEIS WINSTON

RE: On the disappointing loss

We don't like to lose. That's just it.

RE: On how the offense can start faster and maintain a rhythm

Just have a better execution. Don't shoot ourselves in the foot.

RE: On if he feels like he knows what he needs to do to execute

Yeah, and we're going to continue to work at it.

RE: On how his back is feeling

Again, the most important thing is us executing. That's it. We can't shoot ourselves in the foot. We've got to find a way to finish drives and we will.

RE: On the amount of talent on the offense and if he is surprised by the struggles they've had

I believe in every guy that we have. I know together, we're going to continue to fight. We're going to continue to get better. We're going to continue to learn each other. We're going to find ways to be more productive.

RE: On any plays in the passing game or decisions he made that he looks back on

No. We just can't put ourselves in long down and distance. That's just on us. We've got to execute better.

RE: On how the team can execute better

Penalties. We just can't have penalties. Can't shoot ourselves in the foot. That's all part of execution. That's pre-snap things.

RE: On the injuries suffered by wide receivers

We've got a bunch of resilient guys. I know Marquez (Callaway) came in and stepped up and had a big catch for us. Chris Olave did his job today. He did a good job. Hopefully we get these guys back and rolling. Get us a win in London.

RE: On not being able to complete the drive after the big pass to Chris Olave

Every drive matters. Certain things lead to another. As a team collectively, we have a good defense. We have great special teams. We have a great offense. Every team has to hold their end of the stick. When we shoot ourselves in the foot, that limits us. We just have to do a better job, especially offensively, that's all I can control, executing and being more proactive. I know we've got a bunch of guys that are bought in and are willing and able to execute.

RE: On if his back can get better if he keeps playing

I think it's going to get better. I believe it is. My focus is on us trying to find a way to finish drives. That's my main thing.

RE: On if the back pain injury is a pain thing

It's part of the game. You're going to get hit. The offensive line did a good job protecting me. They have a tough defense that schemed up some things, and they found a way to still get a hit on me. That's just them being who they are.

RE: On some of the blitzes in the game by Carolina

We had a good plan. I think they did a lot of zero pressures. When you run zero, you can't block them all. Having schemes, we did a good job scheming up plays to get the ball in our hands. The only sack that we had was in the red zone where we got sacked, it wasn't out of field goal range. Again, we put ourselves in long down and distance. We had a longer developing play and they brought zero, and we couldn't come block them all. That was unfortunate there.

RE: On if he feels the leaders have to step up after a loss like this

I think all of us are accountable. We receive anything that's going to come with this. I believe all of us are going to dig deep and find a way to persevere. That's a part of this game. Obviously, our leaders are called upon to step up in these times, but I think as a football team, that's the most beautiful thing about a football team, you individually have to assess yourself, and find a way to get better and what you can do to help this team.

RE: On Tre' Quan Smith and Marquez Callaway adding to the receivers group

I think just my connection with him. Since I first got here, I've been taking more reps than them. Than any of the other three receivers that I have. Definitely our connection. Both of those guys are just real tough individuals and they're long, and they attack the ball really well.

RE: On if it's frustrating being 1-2

My first year here, we were 1-2. This team and this organization has been here before. We're just going to find a way to persevere and get on a run. Look in. Assess ourselves and find a way to get better.

RE: On him appearing frustrated on camera

I take pride in trying to keep my poise. It probably was a reaction on something that I saw on the screen or something. I don't think it escalated from there. Looks can be very deceiving.

RE: On if he is comfortable running the football right now

My job is to throw the football and get it to the athletes around me. I think we've been doing a good job schematically getting some things out, but when it's third and long distances, teams are clamping on everybody and they probably got a guy watching me. When we have the third and 10 versus third

and four, it's a different situation when it comes to using my feet. We don't do a lot of RPO things. That's just not part of this offense.

RE: On if he feels physically limited throwing the football

No, we just got we just got to continue to get better and find a way to persevere.

RE: On his trust in Chris Olave and the double-digit targets two weeks in a row

That was brought on upon us. Jarvis (Landry) and Mike (Michael Thomas) we lost them in the fourth quarter. That's how that ended up happening.

RE: On if he talked to Alvin Kamara after his fumble

That's probably the first time I have ever seen Alvin fumble. He's resilient. He's going to be okay. But it's our job as a team to have his back. He's going to be fine. AK (Alvin Kamara) is one of the best players in this league. I don't think he's going to think twice about it. He's just going to keep on getting better, and a way to be a better Alvin (Kamara.)

RB ALVIN KAMARA

RE: N/A (On the 1-2 start)

We got to find our swag. When we're good around here, we usually play with a swagger and we're missing that right now a little bit. Part of it is our fault. We're just killing ourselves. We can't turn the ball over. We've done that three weeks in a row now. We can't have penalties. We're putting ourselves behind the chains and we have to come out with more energy. We have to come out faster. We're coming out flat for games and that's why teams are getting on us.

RE: The cause of coming out flat

We're going to figure that out in house. I think all these guys know each other's football character and personal character so it's going to be some stuff that we have to figure out but I'm sure that everybody is up for the challenge. It's nothing that anyone is shying away from. We know we have to get better.

DE CAMERON JORDAN

RE: On the disappointment of losing the game

Anytime you let a running back, what do you end up with? 120 something yards? Second time this year a running back has had over 100 yards on our defense as an individual. That hurts. You knew you could affect Baker (Mayfield) and do what you wanted there, Christian (McCaffrey) can't have the day he had today.

RE: On bouncing back after the loss

We have to focus on what we have to do as a mission on defense. We talk about stopping the run. Today was not stopping the run. They averaged almost four and a half to five yards a clip. We start there. We'll work off everything else after that. It starts with the defense. It starts upfront. It starts with me. Starts with Shy Tuttle. Starts with David Onyemata. Starts with Marcus Davenport. It starts with the D line. We've got to clean up our stuff now. Luckily, it's game three. Because it's game three, every one of these games is every more important.

RE: On if this is a time for leaders on the team to step forward

I think that this is a time where we have a chance to capture a moment that has been given to us. I think we have leaders on all sides of the ball. We have the right people in the locker room. I think we have a lot of talent. I think we have a lot of vocal leaders as well. We have leaders by example throughout our building. This is the time where we're going to have to focus on what we do. Focus on in house. Clean up whatever it takes. Even if you say that there was a turnover made, we did not create a turnover on defense. It starts here. If we can create one turnover, we can create more. We can stop the run for two and a half yards a clip. It's going to bode well for us. You saw what happened in third and anything beyond five. Even third and short. It was still going our way. What we have to do is create more third and favorables for us. We have to create a turnover. I'm going to start there.

RE: On if the team is questioning Jameis Winston

I'm going to let you guys question Jameis (Winston.) I'm going to focus on what we can control. I do know that 14 points in the fourth quarter is cool, but not enough. That touchdown that happened in the fourth quarter. The screen that happened in the fourth quarter. That would've been more than sufficient for us to be in the ball game. Again, it starts with us.

WR CHRIS OLAVE

RE: His performance today

I am a competitor, man, so when we don't win I don't really care about the numbers. I feel like we could get it going a lot earlier. We took a step forward, but I feel like there is a lot to clean up. We all got to clean it up as a team. We all hate losing so we are for sure going to bounce back.

RE: Next man up mentality with wide receiver injuries

Yeah, guys are in the NFL so when we get an opportunity we've got to take advantage of it. Sadly, we went down with a couple of injuries, but I know they are going to get back as soon as possible. I know they are all going to get treatment and rehab. Marquez Callaway and Tre'Quan Smith, they both stepped up in a huge way. I am proud of them and I can't wait to see what they do the rest of the year.

RE: What he thinks went well for the wide receivers

I mean we have been down these first three games. We all know we are going to fight. We are all competitors at the end of the day. We are not going to give up until there is no time on the clock. So, that is one thing I have come out with in these first three weeks. We believe in each other. We've just got to get that chemistry going and that rhythm going to be explosive the rest of the year.

CAROLINA PANTHERS HEAD COACH MATT RHULE

RE: Opening Statement

It's not a perfect game. A lot of things we still have to improve upon. A lot of things that showed up in the first couple games are still there. But I thought our guys competed. I thought our defense took the ball away and scored on defense. I brought that up when you guys asked me this week. We challenged them to not just get the ball but score. It was great to see some great efforts by some guys - Derrick Brown, Marquis Haynes, Frankie Luvu getting that ball out and Laviska [Shenault] giving us a spark on offense. Excited for the guys. 1-0. We will have the same approach this week that we had last week, just trying to get better and try to do it again next week.

RE: Laviska Shenault performance today

We had a couple plays for him. Early on we ran a play where we ran back on a naked and they defended him so we had some plays for him. Certainly, that ball that he caught, really, he is kind of running a flat route and it's really supposed to go to the other guy but they played it differently. Baker [Mayfield] read it perfectly and got on the ball and he turned and ran down the field. People in this room have heard me talk. I thought he was going to give us a spark. I woke up this morning to a text from Garret McGuire to Laviska and I showing that they went to rival high schools. Garret is one of our young coaches saying, 'hey, this is all we need to see today.' It was hinting at DeSoto. Laviska is kind of a competitive guy and so that's why we traded for him. He has come far enough along that we feel like we have a good feel for him. It was good. He had a good kick off return. We will just continue to up his workload now that we can see what he can truly do.

RE: Impact of the blitz package for Phil Snow and playing Jeremy Chinn up more in the box?

We played Chinn [in the box] some. We really tried to pressure more. We kind of talked about that. But then it hurt us on a couple. They threw some up at the end. It got outside contained. But we knew coming into the game we were going to pressure a little bit more than we have. I thought they did a good job starting the second half out. They ran the football more at us. They just kept running the ball. I think really, when I look back at the game, stopping the run and holding them to 84 yards was really a big key in the game. We wanted to get Chinn involved in some of the pressure packages. Some guys went down early. Donte Jackson went down, CJ Henderson went down, Xavier Woods went down at the end. Guys just kept stepping up and playing which was great.

RE: Tone set from Frankie Luvu's strip that lead to Marquis Hayes Jr. touchdown?

I think it just unleashed at least the spirit for the defense. I think the defense heard all week about not getting takeaways and our challenge wasn't just to get takeaways but to try and go score on D. So for Frankie to go and rip the ball out and not kind of land on the ground but for him to rip the ball out which is something that we want for Marquis to scoop and score like that, I think that is exactly what our team needed. Later obviously when you have your nose tackle in a 3-technique making a diving interception and then Jaycee [Horn] finished it. We know those guys can make plays and we just keep coaching them. The guys keep working trying to get to this point where it all shows up.

RE: Mood in the locker room after length of time between home wins

You guys know me, I'm not the one to 'so long thing.' We lost two games. We are not doing that. At least I'm not and I hope you guys all respect that. We are 0-2. Now, we are 1-2. We are 1-0 this week. We will play again next week. So these guys have done a tremendous job of staying really true to the narrative, not that I'm saying, but they are setting of, 'hey, let's get better this week, let's get better this week.' I think there are a lot of guys in there that said, 'hey, we did well but the guys on defense feel like we should have finished the game better. Offensively, obviously Christian [McCaffrey] had that long run that could have ended the game or changed the game a little bit, gets called back. Well, Laviska gets us back on track. I think they are happy to win. They worked so hard to win. They want to hear the fans cheer like they did at the end. It was a great atmosphere today. I appreciate everyone for coming. But they also know there is a lot more work to do.

RE: Why the offense isn't creating explosive plays?

I honestly knew we weren't going to get behind them today. They have too many crafty veteran players back there. You are playing against Marshon Lattimore. You are playing against Tyrann Mathieu. You are playing against guys who have played a ton. We knew we weren't going to get behind them. We thought we would be more explosive in the intermediate areas. We weren't. There is a lot of work to be done offensively to get this thing to the level that we want. I think when we have 145 yards rushing and a big run called back at the end. That's really coming along. I think our O-line is coming along. Again, I'll go back to the third downs. I think we were 1 of 6 or 1 of 7 at halftime. We finished 4 of 14, plus a 4th down conversion we didn't get. Those are probably what is holding us back also. But you know what, I think Baker [Mayfield], every week we expect him to get better and better in the new system. We expect the guys to continue to generate. To win a football game in the NFC South and have Robbie [Anderson] and DJ [Moore] each have one catch, I wouldn't have thought that would happen. DJ takes the reverse and I just feel like we are going to keep coaching it and hope that it gets better next week. It has to get better next week.

RE: When he decided to activate Laviska Shenault Jr. and why

We knew he was probably going to be the kickoff returner on Monday. Just felt like it was time. Felt like it was time for him just watching him in practice. He's a competitive guy, makes a ton of plays in practice. Just felt like it was time. Again, all week, I just had to see it all week. I had to see him practice well. I had to see him prepare well. I walked in this morning at 9am and he was in the treatment room. Usually, I'm one of the first guys here on gameday. He was in there getting ready. I knew he was ready to go. I think he is a real competitive kid.

RE: Timing between Baker Mayfield and receivers

I have to watch the tape. I have to be careful everything I say right now. I don't want to say it's this guy then it's that guy or say it's that guy and it's this guy. I have to go back and watch the tape to see what it is. At the end of the day, we protected the football on offense. We ran the football on offense. We were able to do a couple things in key moments to go score. Had an explosive touchdown when we needed it. They went down and scored. I think that in the National Football League, when you can answer a score with a score at the end of the game, you have a competitive team. Laviska went and answered a score with a score so I'll watch the tape and try to give you guys good answers in the next couple of days.

RE: Seeing players pick other players up

We are trying to have the team, I think we got the right people, I think we have a really good foundation built. We are trying to have our guys be guys that understand that through adversity, it can turn you into something that is so ferocious, so competitive. So, we have those types of guys. At the end of the day, they made three or four great catches with us right on them. That was one at the end of the half. Then we are trying to have our guys just win the next rep. Just play the next play. Two – you know the blocked field goal was awesome. I thought that was exactly what we needed. This is one of the best 2-minute end of half/end of game offenses that there is in football the last two years. To get that field goal blocked and have the miss coming out of the half, I thought those were crucial things. I think one of the keys to the story early on down in the red zone was we were able to hold them out of the end zone and force them to get to that field goal.

RE: Excitement after today's win

Oh yes. Please don't get me wrong. I wanted to win the first week. I wanted to win the second week. I'm just not going to feed into 'hey, its been this long or that long.' That's one of the problems, honestly, that we are trying to get our guys past. Just because we won this week, doesn't mean you are going to win next week. Every week, just go compete. That's what the greats do. They get to the end of the game like that and they love it. They love all the pressure on them. I think we are seeing a team that's like that. The first two weeks, we got down to the end, we competed all the way to the end and it didn't go our way. We talked a lot about finishing this week and at the end of day Jaycee [Horn] picks the ball off to finish it. Christian [McCaffrey] hits the long run. It came back but we did a lot of things to finish the game. We are not a perfect team right now, so we are just going to try and get better and better at it. Trust me, I'm happy. I'm happy we won and I'm happy for these guys. But, I'll say this and it may sound corny and I get it but I don't care. At the end of the day, the true victory is they responded on Monday and they responded on Wednesday. You guys are in the locker room. I don't think you see a bunch of guys pouting or whatever. They just keep fighting back. That's the thing that's really important to me.

RE: Whether the score on defense took pressure off players and coaches today

We went into this game as coaches saying we were going to let it rip. Even the double-reverse to DJ [Moore] there. We were just going to let it rip and trust the guys to make plays. I think the defense had heard all week, hey, you're not getting takeaways, you're not getting takeaways. As a coach, I'm pushing the takeaways, but I'm also pushing, hey it's also going to come. Week 1 to week 2, we worked on tackling and improved the tackling. In week 2 to week 3, we were better at taking the ball away. So, I just think with this group, we have to identify what we didn't do well and try to improve upon that. So, there is a lot of things we have to better at. But, that was a good win for us in a lot of ways.

RE: Offensive line progression this season

Yeah, I think the offensive line has played well. We got beat too many times. The left side is still young and they are a work in progress. We got beat twice on twist games that at the end of the half we got the ball. We blocked that kick. I think we had 21 seconds or 27 seconds and two timeouts. I wanted to go kick a field goal and score. We gave up the sack. There are some things that have to continue to improve over there and we knew early on playing some young guys, a second-year player and a first-year player, it will take some time. The long run at the end gets called back for a hold. We have to be better. There is lots of good things. I do feel the interior of our line is strong. I do feel like we are running the football well. If we can just stay on the field some more third downs, I think we will really see the offensive line get into rhythm.

RE: How close the defense is to going from good to great

I hope they don't come in and start, saying, 'hey we're this, we're that.' It's one game. I think they wish they would have ended the game better. We can't give up that long touchdown at the end of the game so quickly. We are doing a lot of things well. I think one of the keys is that we are stopping the run. I don't know how many sacks we had today, I am not sure, but we were able to affect the ball, but there is a lot of room to improve on defense.

RE: Whether you are surprised the offense is a work in progress since to many things are new

It's just kind is what it is. Honestly, I have a lot of confidence and faith in the offense. Right now, it's always like a bunch of little things, it's the twist game on third-and-five when I think we are going to nail it. It's the third-and-four that gets down to fourth-and-one, I feel like we are just one more yard. Its kind of like the defense last week, we are going to just keep coaching them. The guys in that room, we believe in, we are going to keep coaching them, keep trying to get them involved. I don't have a great answer right now, to be quite honest. I have to watch the tape from this game and see what things happened. I will say this, we knew going into this game, and I think you guys heard me say this all week, the Saints are one of the best defenses in the National Football League. Great red zone defense, great third down defense, great passing defense. We knew it was going to be a challenge and we were just able to make a couple more plays.

RE: What he saw on the challenge of the kickoff return and his discussion with the refs

I looked up to see what happened. I challenged it, because I couldn't tell from the angle. I was hoping he didn't get touched. Obviously, they didn't overturn it, which means they felt like when he hit his knee down that he got touched. You guys probably have better angles in the pressbox than I did, I look at the jumbotron. I took a shot at it. They said to me, 'hey if you want to challenge it, you have to challenge it.' So, I challenged it, hoping to get the ball right there at the 15. I don't know what happened.

QB BAKER MAYFIELD

RE: The mood in the locker room afterwards

We'll take wins whenever we can get them. They don't have to be pretty. Still have a lot of stuff to work on obviously. Just the way the defense played and special teams, it's pretty great. The way we ran the ball honestly. The mood in the locker room is great. Get that first win, kind of a relief. That weight lifted off your shoulders. Just need to build on. Guys need to get use to this feeling and continue to chase it.

RE: Having Laviska Shenault in the lineup today

It was great. He continues to make plays, he is a play maker. Just trying to find ways to get the ball in his hands. Obviously, he made a lot of good plays, broke some tackles and extended those.

Re: What Laviska Shenault brings to this offense

It's just finding ways to get the ball in his hands. Obviously, he is a big physical guy. Played a lot of ball. He is a young player but he has played a lot. Just need to work our way into fitting him in more and more in to the system and just finding these roles out. That is what we keep talking about, as the

season goes on, the more experience we have we are going to continue to learn what type of team we are going to be and where everybody fits in. He made a lot of plays for us today and we are pretty happy and excited to have him on our side.

RE: Issues on third down

Some of them are four-down territory situations, so a little bit skewed on that. Just make the simple plays. I think about the first third down over DJ's (Moore) head in man coverage. Just putting the ball in the right spot. I think the third downs are completely on me, just ball location. Just continue to work on that and just harp on our passing game. Obviously, just throughout the whole game we need to be better, but especially on third down.

RE: What boost did it give the offense to have the defense score today

Anytime you can have momentum without really playing well, it just lifts the mood all around. It lightens the mood to where we feel like we don't have to stress or press. It is good to have a team like that, that can take the ball away. They have been talking about it all week, so they went out and just did their job and executed. We are really happy about that and just builds the momentum for us on offense.

RE: Getting DJ Moore and Robbie Anderson more involved

Just ball location honestly on some of these man to man spots. I am going to look back at the tape and not be real happy with how I played. Obviously, considering that third-down conversions and our passing game. We will take wins when we can get them, there's no doubt about that. Just need to capitalize on it. I don't think it's anything schematically. The physical errors are going to happen every once in a while, I just think today was just one of those days.

RE: Is there a time where you feel like, "I will have been here long enough that you should be, fill in the blank?" When is that time?

It doesn't matter, there is no acclamation period for me. I have never viewed it as that. I know there is going to be bumps in the road but I expect to be a whole lot better than I have been so far. So, I am just going to continue to be my own biggest critic and just continue to push these guys.

RE: The narrative in the locker room?

This is a new season. We have a ton of new guys. For me at least, obviously being here for the first time. It's just one game at a time, one play at a time. You think about, from what I've heard, all the games that were close, one-score games last year and just trying to learn how to eliminate those mistakes. Make those plays that do make a difference. So, the narrative in our locker room right now is just do the little things right. Just do your job, go execute. We have the pieces. If we just play well and execute, good things will happen.

RE: The ability to turn it up late in the game despite the slower starts

To play quarterback in this league, you have to have a short memory. You have to flush the good and the bad plays because anything can happen. I think we have seen in the past few weeks in the NFL, just league wide, crazy things can happen. So, you have to be able to flush it and play the next play. A lot of these games aren't over until the clock really hits zero. That's just kind of how I have always

been. Try and take care of the rock the most I can but things happen. You have to play the next one. You can't harp on it.

RE: Anything you saw today that gave you hope that this is the start of the turnaround here?

Everything we talked about this week, guys just went out and did. Obviously, besides the third down passing game and just passing game in general, which I take credit for, that's on me. Everything we talked about during the week, defense getting takeaways, playing with energy. The special teams meeting last night with Coach Tabor, they talked about blocking a field goal, they did that. Derrick Brown got an interception. That's pretty unique, big Derrick. Everything they talked about was creating turnovers and getting after them on defense and just went out and executed. Teams when they can singularly focus on doing their job and go out and execute it in a game like that, divisional opponent, that's a part of showing progress.

RE: His footwork in today's game

That is something that I have continued to take steps on. Like I said, I am not going to be happy with my own tape execution wise, but just going to look at it and see where I am at with my feet. I feel like I have played well when it comes to the footwork but I will look at it more.

RE: Feeling more at ease in terms of pressure

Yeah, definitely felt better in the pocket. I think the guys did a great job, obviously. They bring a variety of blitzes and stunts and stuff that are tough, that is why they are a good defense. For the most part I felt comfortable back there.

RE: Is it a little conflicting for you when you are critical of yourself and you know there are things you have to do right when this was a reasonably significant win for the team

Like I said, we will take wins when we can get them. It is extremely hard to win in this league, you never take that for granted. You can get beat by anybody, week in and week out, so enjoy it. There are always things to work on, which is the good part about how we are early in the season, get a win. When you can learn from wins it is better than learning from losses. We will continue to progress and get better.

RB CHRISTIAN MCCAFFREY

RE: If he feels like the offense is still a work in progress

Yeah, offense is always a work in progress. I think it is kind of the mindset we have. Each week is a new week. And each week comes with different challenges. It is us to up to just capitalize on the things we do well and fix the issues.

RE: If that is the same Laviska Shenault Jr. he has seen in practice

Yes. Yeah, I mean he is a horse. Guy can do everything and brings a different energy to the offense too that I think we are excited about.

RE: What frustrated him about offensive stagnation in the middle of the game

I try to not get frustrated at all. I think you are one play away all the time and you don't know when that is going to be. So, we just have the next play mindset and obviously the defense did great. That play by Laviska was great and as an offense it's just up to us to keep growing and keep getting better and focus on what we can control.

RE: How much of an assist it was for the defense to score

That was awesome. Just good to see those guys go out there and do that. So obviously anytime we score it is exciting.

RE: If seemed like a business-like atmosphere after the game in the locker room surprised him

No. You know we are three games in with a lot of ball left. It should be business like. You know obviously celebrate all victories, but there is still a lot to improve upon and you know like I said, whether we win or lose it's the same for me. Get better at the things you have got to get better at and keep growing as an offense.

RE: If it was a conscious decision to maintain a business-like atmosphere after the win

Yeah, we need to be a team that you know you are really playing against the tape. Whether you win or lose, obviously you want to win, and everybody is excited when you win. Especially division games, those are awesome. But you have got to continue to fight for execution and when that comes I think we want to be a team that is consistently putting teams away. That will come. We have just got to continue to work. But you celebrate all wins. They're exciting when you win.

RE: Message from Robbie Anderson after the game

Yeah you know we have great vets. He just said look that is a great game, proud of you guys, we know what we can do. Let's get better at the things we can get better at and keep rolling. And so, I think we have just got to play connected football and then when that happens, and our offense gets rolling and we continue to move the ball and put the ball in the endzone instead of field goals it is going to be exciting.

RE: How it feels to not go on the road the next few weeks

To us it doesn't matter for our guys we are just trying to stay connected as a locker room. Whatever happens, happens. Whether you are home or away have the same approach.

RE: What Baker Mayfield is like in the huddle when things aren't going smoothly

Baker is the same guy whether things are going well or not. He is the same guy. He is a great leader. He is tough as nails. And he is someone who we know is going to get the ball rolling. He is an easy guy to share the huddle with.

RE: If that is how he expected Mayfield be like

I didn't have any preconceived notions on what he was going to be like. But every day he just shows us who he is. He comes to work. He is the first guy in. Last guy out guy. He is a great leader like I said. He's not overly emotional and he is very business-like, but has fun with it at the same time.

RE: How that differs from public perception of Mayfield being emotional

I think if people believe everything that everyone says about people then that is the issue. I think we are good at defining people based off perceptions not if you have met someone or not. To me he is an unbelievable person and a great teammate and a great player as well. That is all I know him as and I know him pretty well. I have been with him, not a long time as a season, but starting in training camp I have known him for a long time and he has always been a down to earth, really solid human being. I don't know what notions you are talking about, but that is how I know him.

RE: Where he has seen the offensive line improve

Those guys block their ass off man. They work hard every single day. And I honestly have got to do a better job of making them look better on a few of these carries. We are going to continue to work, but I am so proud of those guys and lucky to have them in front of me.

DT DERRICK BROWN

RE: Setting a tone on defense after not having takeaways

We did great with takeaways today. We know each week won't be like that. We show up and work the same way we did at Wofford. We knew it was going to come and we're taking it through the process every week.

RE: His first career interception

We had pressure and I saw Alvin (Kamara) try to push out of the pressure. When he got ready to break I saw Jameis (Winston) still patting the ball, so I knew something was coming out soon. Just had to sit there and wait it out.

RE: Ending the nine-game losing streak

That's washed. If you're worried about last year you won't be able to do anything this year. We got off to a slow start and we knew we had to come in and work.

WR LAVISKA SHENAULT JR.

RE: The difference on being active for this game

Just learning the playbook. That was number one.

RE: Making an impact in his first game with the Panthers

It feels so good. It feels so good. I haven't found the end zone...it's been a minute, let's just say that. It felt great.

RE: Describing the 67-yard touchdown catch

I had a flat. I saw the coverage was something funky. But I knew I was by myself so I squared up the ball and then after that it was just about going to find the end zone.

RE: What he saw as he was running

I saw green. I saw opportunity that had to be snatched away. It felt good.

RE: If he felt frustrated not being able to play as he was learning the offense

It's very frustrating knowing what I can bring to the table. It's just hard to not be able to do what you love to do.

RE: If he's scratching the surface of what he can do for the team

I can imagine.

RE: If he's had a debut like this

No. I mean I can go back to college and the first time I touched the ball was off a fumble on a punt return and I returned it. That's probably the closest.

RE: His mindset on making a catch

How tough can you be.

DE MARQUIS HAYNES SR.

RE: The defense's performance

We really came out here, wanted to set the expectation high. We got challenged last night like getting back to having fun and going back to the old defense with the turnovers and just having fun and being all this...[inaudible]. That's what we did today. We came out here, answered the call of what (Defensive Coordinator Phil) Snow asked us to do and we came as one.

RE: His fumble return for a touchdown

This was the first time I ever got in the end zone. It was pretty exciting to watch all of us run to the end zone and get very excited. You can tell how the brotherhood is around here. We're really tight with everybody, we've got each other's backs like we said we did and that's what we came out here to do. We came out here, one person created a fumble,...[inaudible] our brother go scoop and score or just recover it.

RE: What the win does for the team

It's going to give us the momentum, keep on going and we're going to keep going every time. We're going to try to keep this momentum going and be connected as one and keep on making each other better every day.

DE BRIAN BURNS

RE: If Marquis Haynes' fumble return for a touchdown helped the defense play freer

Yeah, for sure. When you get turnovers, it starts to be contagious. Once that first one happened, it just hyped up the defense and everybody wanted one.

RE: How important it is for the defense to play for one another when a team is 0-2

It's very important. With that penalty Yetur (Gross-Matos) had, everybody was down and stuff like that. It was a bad play and don't do that or whatever but we have guys that can erase that as you can see. So I don't want to get too down on somebody too much just because you see what happens with still no points on the board. So forget about it. Keep being physical, keep playing hard and let's just go. Next play.

RE: If aggressive defense and blitz package helped lead to turnovers

Very. We were coming after them and I feel like that might have forced a lot of the turnovers that we got.

RE: If he knew the game plan was going to be more aggressive on defense

Yeah.

RE: On how aggressive they could be with injuries to Jameis Winston

I think that we're naturally an aggressive defense. But knowing that information may have ignited that a little bit more but the plan and the mentality into the game was to take the ball away.