



NEW ORLEANS  
**SAINTS**

**POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES**  
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**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AT HOUSTON TEXANS**  
**SATURDAY, AUG. 13, 2022 • NRG STADIUM**  
**SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES**

- With the loss, New Orleans moves to 0-1 on the preseason. The Saints return to action on Friday, Aug. 19 when they play the Green Bay Packers at Lambeau Field following two days of joint practices. Kickoff is set for 7:00 p.m. CST. The game will be aired regionally on the Gray Television network of stations in the Gulf Coast (WVUE FOX 8 in the New Orleans area).
- Attendance in Houston was 69,477.
- QB **Andy Dalton**, CB **Paulson Adebo** and DB **J.T. Gray** served as the team captains
- The Saints defense allowed 33 yards in each of the first quarter and third quarter and held the Texans to 275 total net yards.
- The Saints forced six total punts.
- New Orleans allowed one combined first down in the first and third quarters and gave up 14 total.
- The Saints tallied 20 first downs in the contest.
- The Texans didn't convert a third down until the third quarter and finished 3-of-12 (25%) on third down.
- The Saints converted 6-of-14 (42.9%) third-down attempts.
- LB **Chase Hansen** recorded a second-quarter interception off a tipped pass from Texans quarterback Jeff Driskel. Hansen finished the game with five tackles.
- LB **Nephi Sewell** led the team with six tackles
- DB **J.T. Gray** tallied five tackles in the first half.
- S **Justin Evans** recorded an interception in the third quarter, finishing with two tackles.
- DB **Brian Allen** recorded a fourth-quarter interception after signing with the team earlier in the week.
- QB **Andy Dalton** made the start and completed five of five passes for 51 yards and one touchdown on one drive.
- QB **Ian Book** took over for the remainder of the game and completed 15-of-22 passes for 121 yards and an interception. He rushed for 22 yards on four carries.
- RB **Dwayne Washington** rushed for 19 yards on a team-high nine carries and caught a nine-yard touchdown pass from Dalton.
- The touchdown pass from Dalton to Washington was the first time the Saints scored on their first offensive drive of a preseason game since the 2012 Hall of Fame Game against the Arizona Cardinals, when Mark Ingram scored a one-yard rushing touchdown.
- RB **Abram Smith** led the team with 30 rushing yards on seven carries.

- WR **Dai’Jean Dixon** led the team with 33 receiving yards on three receptions.
- WR **Kawaan Baker** had the longest play of the night for New Orleans on a 26-yard catch.
- WR **Chris Olave** made his first NFL catch on a pass from QB Ian Book for a four-yard gain with 4:52 remaining in the first quarter.
- P **Blake Gillikin** punted six times for 301 yards (50.2 avg.) and had three punts downed inside the 20.
- K **Wil Lutz** made a 23-yard field goal in his first game back from a core muscle injury that cost him all of 2021. Rookie K John Parker Romo made a 36-yard field goal.



## POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

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#### HEAD COACH DENNIS ALLEN

##### **Opening Statement**

“Obviously, first preseason game, I saw a lot of things that I really liked out there in the game. Obviously, there are some things that we have to get cleaned up. The ball was on the ground too many times. Three turnovers in the game, especially one down there on the goal line that took some points off the board. We’ve got to get that aspect cleaned up. But I was pleased with the way the first units went in there and played. Offensively, a 10-play drive for a touchdown and defensively we go three and out and get them off the field. So that was encouraging to see. Look, we’ll get back to look at the tape and have a better evaluation. But there were some good things I saw tonight.”

##### **We talked to you a lot about Andy in this game but to see him come out the offense and put together a really, really clean opening drive. Does this solidify what you’ve seen from him?**

“Yeah, I thought he did a nice job moving us down the field. I thought he operated in the pocket well. I think he was 5-for-5 on that drive. I thought we did a couple of good things in the run game. I think Andy did a really good job of operating the offense. We kind of had a plan to get 10 to 15 plays, and getting 10 plays and a touchdown. We felt we had seen enough and we went on to the second phase.”

##### **On that first scoring play, what did you see from G Erik McCoy with that block and WR Dwayne Washington getting the touchdown?**

“I couldn’t tell exactly who got the block. But yet I thought it was a very well-executed play. The timing was really good on it. I think Dwayne (Washington) did a nice job on the timing of the screen and getting the ball up inside. So I thought that was all good. The lineman got up front and got some good blocks. So, it was good to see.”

##### **Coach, the very first series you guys took care of business. The very last series of the first half seemed a little bit unusual. Could you talk to me about that, was it just a miscommunication in the last series QB Ian Book played? He got sacked close to the one yard line.**

“It’s just part of when you’re in those kind of two-minute type of situations, and I think we got to do a little bit better job of the protection there. I couldn’t tell exactly what happened. Obviously it’s hard to comment on a lot of specifics until you get a chance to get out and watch the tape. But certainly, didn’t want to have to be punting the ball from backed up in that area.”

**The running backs shared the load pretty evenly. What did you think of them as a whole?**

"I thought they ran the ball hard. Again, we'll look at the tape to see exactly how they read it. But I felt like they ran the ball hard. You know, obviously, we've got to protect the ball better. We had the ball on the ground from the running back position. So we've got to do a better job there."

**How do you weigh something like that, that fumble by RB Abram Smith at the end of the game? You got a very small sample size and some of the other stuff he did looked pretty nice.**

"You can't put the ball on the ground. You know? So that's a huge negative when you do that. I will say this: I thought he looked explosive running the football. I thought there was a couple of really good runs that he made. But it doesn't matter how many good things you do. If you put the ball on the ground, that's an issue."

**How do you feel Co-Defensive Coordinator Ryan Nielsen did tonight?**

"I thought he did a great job. I thought both coordinators did a heck of a job calling the game, getting the call in. I thought the operation on the sideline, with the play callers, I thought overall was really, really good. So, really encouraged."

**What are a few things you're looking forward to get done in Green Bay this week?**

"You know, just like improving. Continue to work to get better. We're going to have an opportunity to go up against a really good football team. They're a really good offense, really good defense. They played well in the kicking game. So it will be a good opportunity for us to challenge ourselves against another good football team."

## **QB ANDY DALTON**

**You looked good during the first season. Tell us about it.**

"When you talk about these first preseason games, you know you're only going to get 10 to 15 snaps. That's how you want the drive to go. Did some good things. Completed some passes and converted some third downs and got down there, and we were able to score a bunch when we got in the red zone. If you can draw it up, that's exactly how you do it."

**Can you talk about the effort from Offensive Coordinator Pete Carmichael, C Eric McCoy, RB Dwayne Washington on the touchdown pass?**

"Yeah, it was a great call. And anytime you can get the linemen out in front on those screens, then you've got a shot. And so, Erik did a great job. And Dwayne did a great job cutting back, finding his way into the end zone. It was a great call and good execution by us."

**You've practiced with these guys for a couple of weeks now. Does the first game huddle feel differently?**

"It's definitely a different environment. But when it comes down to it, you're still doing the same stuff that we've been doing throughout camp. But it's good to get the game action. In these preseason games, you get the opportunity to get out there and hopefully execute like we did."

**How did it feel to return home?**

"It was good. I got to see family. My family came in from New Orleans. And my parents still live out in Katy. I have a sister and brother-in-law that live out in Katy. And my in-laws came in from Dallas. It was good to see a lot of people and a lot of family."

**You have a few years of experience with different teams. Where does this team stack up with some of the other teams you've been with at this point?**

"I feel we've got a lot of talent. For me, when you get to free agency and you get the opportunity to join a team like this, you get excited because of the type of people that they have here. The locker room's great, the staff is exactly what you want, and everybody's on the same page. So, I'm looking forward to seeing what we can do this year."

**How much did QB Ian Book come to you for advice during the game?**

"You've got to let him play, but also you're trying to help him out as much as you can too. So, I was there for him the whole time."

**You were the starter tonight, but going into the season you'll be in a different role. What do you hope to accomplish?**

"I think exactly what I was able to do tonight. Just the execution of it all. You want it to be smooth in and out of the huddle, make sure the communication is there. And you want to put drives together like we were able to do to start this one off."

**Do you feel this is a continuation of camp?**

"Yeah, I feel like I'm in a really good place. I feel like I've done some good things throughout camp. This is just another step in that. And so I was glad to get the game action out there and do it against a different team. But, yeah, I feel good about what I've been able to do so far."

**How was it to go through the process with OC Pete Carmichael?**

"I thought Pete did a great job. And we knew the openers going into it. So for us, it's just kind of being dialed in, making sure we know the execution of it. And like I said, there's a lot of different scenarios. Converting third downs and different things. It was a good start for us."

**TEXANS HEAD COACH LOVIE SMITH**

"Anytime they keep score, you want to win. Simple as that. But there's a lot more we would like to get accomplished in these preseason games. We don't scrimmage against people or anything like that, so we haven't actually done an awful lot of live work, finishing, defensive players being able to tackle, hitting the quarterback, ball carriers getting tackled and thrown to the ground. So all of that is good. And that's what you kind of use this first game for a little bit. As you can see, we kept out quite a few of our players by design. We wanted to see some of the other players in some of the other situations that we got. I like what Jeff Driskel did. Jeff is our third team quarterback. Whenever your third team quarterback can come in and keep running the offense -- I know early on we weren't moving an awful lot. But he just plugging away. I like some of the things that he was able to do. Dameon Pierce definitely caught my eye and everybody's eye that was watching him. And that's what we've seen in training camp also. He's a good football player. We talk a lot about the turnover ratio. Offensively, I

think – what did we have? Two turnovers. That's not good. Defensively, taken away three times. Every one of those takeaways helped us. I think we scored off of all of them. So that's what you need as a football team. But we got a lot of good video on a lot of players. As I said before the game, the depth chart doesn't mean anything until you actually have at least one live contest. We know a lot more about our team now. No major injuries. That's another positive from this game.”

**What do you think about QB Davis Mills and his limited work tonight?**

“We wanted to get Davis some work. We wanted to give him limited work, just getting him out there on the football field was what we were looking for. Three of his offense linemen weren't playing, so it's a start. We didn't have a lot of production with our one offense when we were out there. But again, what we wanted to get accomplished with him, he's healthy going into game two.”

**RB Dameon Pierce on the 20-yard run he had, what did see from your vantage point in terms of the cutback and running through a tackle?**

“Well, you're kind of explaining it all there a little bit. He can run with power. He can make you miss. He can cut on a dime. Catch the ball. There are some things that he can do well that you'd expect a good running back in the NFL to do. So as far as what we want to do as his first game, we wanted to get him some work. For a lot of the young players, you just want them to get their first NFL game in for them. So that was big for him.”

**With the first team offense, it seemed like you were a little conservative in terms of run-pass ratio. Was that due to some of the penalties or part of the game plan?**

“As far as being conservative, yeah. It's our first preseason game. And we're going to play a lot of players. I don't think the first preseason game is about tricking them an awful lot. We want to play kind of man-on-man football so we can get a good evaluation on a lot of players. I think we were able to do that. But we wanted to be more productive early on. Of course, that wasn't a part of the plan. But as we grow, we'll get better.”

**With two young receivers like WR Johnny Johnson III and WR Jalen Camp and we don't know if they're going to be on the final roster, how important was it for them to have as many reps as they did tonight?**

“We're talking an awful lot about showing up first. I like the crowd that came out to see their team. Once you show up, you've got to show out. You've got to make some plays. For young players that know that they're going to get a limited amount of opportunities, when you get it, you need to make yourself known. So that's what was good. That's what's always good about the preseason. You give guys an opportunity and they show you something that you haven't seen. As I said, you've been at our practices. We don't do a lot of live work. So I was anxious to see some of the young players when it's live throughout for 60 minutes.”

**What do you take away from your first look at the offensive line?**

“Our players know that if you're a running football team, you need to be able to run the football and having a fullback helps. We like all three of our guys, matter of fact. But that was part of the plan to get that started. They're all young players. Well, I wouldn't tell you about Jano (Andy Janovich). But they're all talented, all bring something unique. Even Troy (Hairston) who hasn't been at that position a long period of time, we'll continue to use him.”

**I know it's just been one preseason game, but how much did QB Jeff Driskel's performance change the plan that you have for him?**

"You have a rotation. Davis (Mills) is our starter. Kyle (Allen) is backing him up. And Jeff is our third quarterback. One goes down, we move everybody up. That's what happened tonight. And what's really good for me to see, for us to see, is that we tell guys always you've got to be ready. You never know when, your number will be called to play almost the entire game. But Jeff prepares like that. It's not like that's a shock to us. He's a heck of an athlete. There are some things we can do with him, read option plays and things like that. But I like the way he handled himself throughout."

**You said that the depth chart comes more clear once you have games. I'm just curious what more do you need to see from RB Dameon Pierce for him to be the number one back?**

"I think it's a little early. It will work itself out. Every time you go out and you practice a play, they tell you something. We're in no big hurry. It's a while before Indy gets here. Dameon has been impressive in practice. And we expected him to come tonight and do some of the things that he did. We'll just keep fighting through. Next week, another guy may have a good game. But it's safe to say that we like Dameon for sure."

**You talked a lot about LB Blake Cashman during OTAs and training camp, and you got a chance to see him in live action tonight. What was your evaluation of him?**

"I think he was a leading tackler tonight. He fits the profile. He's fast. He's a smart guy. He's kind of new to our system a little bit, but for the people that have been out at training camp, he's flashed quite a bit. So when a guy has been flashing in training camp practices, you want them to take that to the field on game day. And I think, of course, I try not to get too high or too low before I actually study the video. But we like some of the things he did tonight, just like we've liked what he's done in training camp."

**To start, you said that you learned something about your team tonight. I know you've got to go watch the film, but what's something you learned tonight?**

"We tell the guys always that most games come down to how you finish. Two-minute situation. Situational football. Most of our practices have ended with that. At the half and at the end of the game, those situations came into play, which is big. So that's what I like. It's always about the finish. And guys were into it, coaching up the young players we had on the football field. So that was all good."

**How big of a boost is it for this team to finish the way you did and win the game so close to the end of the game?**

"As I said, whenever they keep score, you want to win. And so to be able to do that whenever – preseason, I understand. A lot of players out. But during the course of the year, we went to play Jacksonville last year. We had most of our team out. And we needed young players to step up. So you just never know. But again, no matter what, you find a way to put it together. Tonight, we fought through some adversity. Turned it over a few times. They were able to get a couple drives going. But I'm going to go back again to how the guys finished has to give us a boost heading into – who do we play next week? The Rams. They're the world champions or something like that. So we need to be at our best when we go out there."

**Three total turnovers, five total sacks. As a defensive coach, how pleased were you with that?**

"You haven't been in the defensive room because we see it as three takeaways. You say three

turnovers, right? We see it as three takeaways. We did turn the ball over two times. But you know that's what we preach, and the guys buy into it. And especially the last one by Tae Davis. He punched the ball out. It's not like an offensive player just fumbled it. So guys need to see that and to see setting the offense up in a favorable position. All these things, of course, a lot of them on video that we can teach from."

**Understanding that WB Davis Mills is your starter, at the same time, a second year player. Where is your philosophy or where do you stand on him playing more?**

"The first preseason game, the plan is not to play him a lot. They play more the second, and then the third. We have a plan for a three-game preseason. I'll just say that. That's what we wanted Davis to get tonight. I understand he hasn't played a lot, but he's got more reps in practice than anyone. We feel comfortable with a healthy football team for the most part going in to play the world champion next week. He'll get his reps in."

**How does DB Tremon Smith's performance both in the return game today and also the interception factor into how you balance that group and who will be a part of it?**

"The more things you do, the better your chances. And Tremon is our returner. He's gotten the ball in the endzone. We've seen him. We know what he can do in that role. But when you say the more things you can do – to be able to do that and also play good ball at the cornerback position in a backup role is big for us. And it's always good when a cornerback will get his hands on the ball. What I expect when he got his hands on the ball, since he's our returner, I was hoping he could maneuver and use some of those moves to get it into the end zone. We'll work on that next week."

**What did you think of DB Jalen Pitre and DL Kurt Hinish's initial performance?**

"I think young players have to get that first game. I ask them, 'Hey, how much sleep did you get?' You know your first game, it doesn't matter. You're really excited to play it. Jalen Pitre has been outstanding throughout camp. This is just another thing he has to go through. Right now from not analyzing the video, just like all camp, I like what he's done. And you mentioned Kurt. Whenever you have a nose guard that gets a sack, that's really big. But he's been a steady performer throughout camp also."

**As a defensive play caller in preseason, what's the balance from trying not to show too much but still put the defense in an advantageous situation for them to execute?**

"Everything we do is about getting ready for Indy. We wanted to just play some base football. I don't think you accomplish an awful lot by blitzing, doing a lot of trick 'em plays. You don't get a chance to really see how good your football players are. So the balance goes, first preseason game, we don't do an awful lot. Dennis (Allen) had the same approach. We kind of play vanilla football so we could get a good evaluation of our players. But as the preseason goes along, you start adding more. And one of our games that we have, we'll treat it more like a game situation, getting ready for the season."

**TEXANS QUARTERBACK DAVIS MILLS**

**How do you feel about your first game action tonight?**

"I felt comfortable going out there and picking up where we left off with training camp. Now we're onto the real stuff, onto the games. I'm comfortable out there. Obviously, I would have like to put together some longer drives, but I mean, it felt like I handled everything well. We saw the defense and thought



we executed well. Overall, we ended up with a win tonight. The whole team put together enough to get the win, and that's all we care about."

**You've had some time to think about your two drives. What were your main takeaways?**

"Overall, I think we shot ourselves in the foot a little bit too much tonight. A lot of penalty yards. Those add up and put us in third-and-long situations that you don't want to live in. I had to play out of that a lot last year, and it's tough. So, we want to stay ahead of the sticks in that regard. I thought we ran the ball pretty efficiently tonight. They packed the box and played a lot of man on the edges, so they loaded the box, but I think we handled it pretty well. We got to the checks and different front in situations that we needed to gameplan-wise. But overall, I think we played well. We just have to limit some of those penalties and protect the football. We got the win, so that's what we want."

**In the preseason, how do you balance the need to stay healthy while still getting enough reps to be ready for Week 1?**

"It's tough, obviously. I mean, every rep and experience out there will benefit me. This is still the first preseason game. We have two more after this. I'm sure I'll get more playing time in the next one and even more in the following one leading up to the first game of the season. But it's tough not getting all the reps, but we have a lot of guys who are right now fighting to make this team who are contributing and have contributed that are going out to get their chance. I mean, everyone played well, and they are doing the same thing we are out there trying to make a living and put some points up on the scoreboard. It's exciting seeing all those guys get a chance to go out there and perform."

**What does RB Dameon Pierce's skillset bring to this offense?**

"I think (Dameon Pierce) ran the ball extremely well tonight. His average was over nine yard or something, per carry. If he can keep doing things like that, it will open up our offense in a big way. I think the whole running back room is really talented. Dameon showed the work they've put in through the offseason and throughout camp. He played well tonight. But thinking back on last year, I think we ran the ball the best in the Chargers game. It really allowed the offense to flow throughout the game and be really efficient passing the ball as well because the run sets up the pass. So, it's going to be exciting when guys like Dameon step up and are able to run the ball. He had a lot of help from the offensive line who performed well tonight too."

**How much more confident and comfortable are you heading into your second season?**

"I think I've always been pretty confident going out there. I'm fully trusting my abilities and go out there and make plays. I think that comfort thing adds to the confidence level. I have a most-of-the-season under my belt so far, a full training camp and a second one now, so the experience is starting to build up. I'm really just itching to go out there in the first game – when the record is going to show up after the game, we want to put something in the win column. I'm excited, but like you said, just more comfortable and confident coming out this year with some experience behind me."

**WR Brandin Cooks didn't play today, but you two have had a very strong connection. What's gone into having that strong chemistry on the field?**

"A lot. I think one of the biggest things is how open (Brandin Cooks) is and how he wants to talk about basically every route he wants to run and make sure were on the same page with all the defensive looks, even things when the defense is starting to show that we know we're going to get later on the

season even though we haven't gotten those from our defense in training camp. He wants to be the best player and wants to make sure everyone out of the field with him is playing at their best as well. So, he's been a really great leader for our team and I'm really excited to see where our team is going to go and do and attack defenses this year."

**How would you describe what the fullback unit can do with you guys this year?**

"Yeah, I think it's awesome. Pep (Hamilton) describes the fullback room as tools for the offense. Truly, that's what they are. Swiss army knives almost. In the run game, they also add a lot in the pass game in protection and also check downs and getting out in the flat to create mismatches. So, I think those guys are the hardest workers on the team who don't get as much credit as they deserve. Truly, (Andy Janovich), Paul (Quessenberry) and Troy (Hairston) put in a ton of work, and it's exciting to see them go out and make a couple catches or get a little fullback belly down when we're backed up. So, those guys are the hardest workers out there, and it definitely adds to the offense and what we can do."

**You had limited time in today's game. How do you see the next preseason game going for you?**

"Go out and play my best. I think anytime I step out on the field, I want to put my best foot forward and perform to my highest capabilities. That's the goal each and every week. I think I'll be getting a little more playing time than I did this week, so I'll be ready to go out there and execute and do my job."

**You have had both preseason and regular season playing experience. What is the difference you see between them?**

"Yeah I mean, I think it's kind of the same. You're not getting some of the exotic pressures that you'll get later in the season when teams really start game planning against you. But I mean, there's still guys on the other side of the field that are NFL players and are extremely talented. You've got to go out there and play to the best of your abilities and win each rep on any given play. You can't take anything for granted. You've got to go out there and perform. We're stressing that in the locker room too. These games do matter. Any time we're keeping score out there, we want to win. The team believes that, and that's what we did tonight."

**TEXANS QB JEFF DRISKEL**

**Can you talk about your overall performance tonight?**

"Yeah. Definitely up and down. Turned the ball over three times there and got to get those cleaned up. But, you know, for a quarterback, I think they were throwing errors, right? They weren't like bad reads. They weren't mental errors. So that's something that I've got to still get cleaned up. Those can't happen. But I would rather have those kinds of picks than mental errors. And then, you know, NFL games come down to two-minute. So, we went out there and made a couple plays and found a way to win."

**WR Jalen Camp and WR Johnny Johnson III had extended reps. What does that do for the confidence and strengthen their case?**

“It's huge, right? I mean, they've been making plays all training camp. But it's a little bit different when you're out there under the lights and playing games and the bullets are live. So, I mean, I thought it was awesome for those guys to go out there and figure out a way to get the ball in the end zone. It was awesome for Johnny [Johnson III] to bounce back. He had a drop there, but he didn't hang his head. He knew the ball was going to come back his way and had a couple huge catches down late to help us win.”

**How hard is it when you're coming in a game where you see 30 or 40 players that you played against on defense tonight?**

“It's a hard business. That's part of the deal. It's definitely not an easy thing to do. But, you know, playing quarterback in this league, there's only one starter. I've been around long enough to where I've had to come off the bench. And that's just part of being a quarterback is being prepared and ready to go no matter the situation and coming in and playing and playing well.”

**How does it feel to be able to put that last drive together, 90 yards to win the game with seconds remaining?**

“Oh, yeah. We practice two-minute every single day. It's something that we're super comfortable with. Most games come down to a two-minute situation. And Chad Beebe fair caught the ball on the 10-yard line. I thought that was an unbelievable decision. You know that ball hits the ground, bounces around a little bit and we're backed up on the one- or two-yard line, it could be a different scenario. So, that was huge. Obviously, the defense getting the stop to force the punt and then just going out and executing. That's what it's all about. The players are out there. We've just got to go execute, and we did that at a high level on that drive.”

**Last year you were a quarterback, then you went to tight end, and now you're back at quarterback. How was it for you to go from position to position? Was it a little bit frustrating?**

“I wouldn't say frustrating. You know, I'm a competitor. I want to figure out a way to get on the field and help the team win. And last year that way was playing special teams, playing tight end. And this year, it's playing quarterback. So, you know, I want to figure out a way to help this team win and do what I'm asked to do. So, definitely not frustrating, but, yeah, it's pretty cool to be able to have the skillset to be able to do multiple things.”

**What makes it for you to have that ability to play position from position and to actually have the opportunity to help this team in multiple different ways?**

“Yeah. I mean, that's what we're all here to do. Right? Everybody in our building is here to help the Houston Texans win games, no matter how that is. It doesn't matter. Go out and do what you're asked to do and do it at a high level. So, I'm just going to keep doing what I'm asked to do and, you know, keep competing and try to win games.”

**Jeff, you've been in the league for a couple of years now. For you to be able to be inside of a locker room and be in those situations where Johnny gets a drop. Did you tell him anything before the next play?**

“He knew that the ball was going to come back his way. I walked over there and gave him a little pat and said, Hey, don't hang your head. He was far from hanging his head. We've all played enough football to know those things happen. And NFL games are back and forth; right? He got a chance to

go out there and make a couple plays to help us win the game. I think he had two or three spin moves on one of the plays before he scored the touchdown. So, he's a really good player. He's been making plays all training camp and, you know, you'd like -- everyone wants to make every play, but that's just not realistic."

**You're a former Florida quarterback and RB Dameon Pierce is a former Florida running back. What do you see from him and just to know that he has that power and elusiveness?**

"Dameon (Pierce) has had a great camp. But it's kind of hard to tell when things aren't live. Like is he down? Is he not down right there? Dameon wasn't going down on first touch tonight. He was running the ball extremely well. He saw the cut back lanes. He has great natural cutting ability. And he loves the game of football. So, he's a constant learner. He's in here early every day. He's a great person to be around. He's a really good player and a really good teammate."

**How does leading a game-winning drive make you feel internally?**

"It's great. Coach (Lovie) Smith said before the game they're keeping score. We want to go out and win. That was our intent all night was to go out and win the game. We did what we came to do. We won the game. Obviously, there's things we need to go back, watch the film, correct. But it's a great feeling to go out and win that game with that group of guys."

**Does the performance that your team had mean something more for you even though it is preseason?**

"Yeah. I mean, I think everybody on the roster right now, you know, has ability, has great ability. And it's a great chance to go out there and showcase that. And it's about making plays. I wasn't worried about anything besides going out and executing at a high level and going out and win the game. We still have a long training camp, two preseason games left, so a lot of opportunity to improve and get better."