



POSTGAME NOTES & QUOTES

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AT ATLANTA FALCONS SUNDAY, SEPT. 29, 2024 • MERCEDES-BENZ STADIUM SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES

- New Orleans drops to 2-2 after falling to the Atlanta Falcons 26-24. The Black and Gold will return to action on Monday Night Football, when they play at the Kansas City Chiefs on October 7 at 7:15 p.m. CT. The contest will be nationally televised on ESPN (also available on WDSU 6 locally).
- The Saints outgained the Falcons in yards (366 to 315) and had 25 first downs offensively while limiting Atlanta to just 14, while not surrendering an offensive touchdown, the first time they kept an opposing offense out of the end zone this season and since Week 15 of the 2023 campaign.
- The Black and Gold were 7-of-13 on third down conversions (53.8 pct.) and held Atlanta to just 4-of-11 (36.4 pct.)
- QB **Derek Carr** finished 28-of-36 for 239 yards and one interception. At one point in the contest in the second half, Carr completed 13 straight passes.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** racked up over 100 yards from scrimmage again Sunday (119), finishing with 19 carries for 77 yards and a rushing score to go along with seven grabs for 42 yards receiving.
- Kamara's touchdown late in the fourth quarter was the 84th of his career, tying Pro Football Hall of Fame WR Calvin Johnson (Class of 2021), Andre Rison and Herschel Walker for 59th all time. The score also marked the 59th rushing touchdown of his career, tying former teammate Latavius Murray for 56th in NFL record books.
- Kamara now has 10,584 career yards from scrimmage in his career and is 99th in league history.
- Kamara's seven receptions bring his career total to 522. On Sunday, he passed Emmitt Smith (Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2010) and LeSean McCoy and sits at 12th all-time among NFL running backs in receptions.
- TE **Taysom Hill** played in his 100th career game on Sunday and was efficient for the Saints offense prior to leaving with an injury, adding six carries for 24 yards and two touchdowns. With the two scores, he now has 40 in his career, ninth-most in franchise history.
- Hill's 29 career rushing touchdowns now rank fifth in club record books, passing RBs Tony Galbreath, Chuck Muncie and Pierre Thomas on Sunday.
- WR **Chris Olave** was key for the Saints offense Sunday, finishing with a season-high eight receptions for 87 yards.
- WR/RS **Rashid Shaheed** had a career-high eight grabs for 83 yards as well as three kickoff returns for 75 yards (25.0 avg) and two punt returns for 17 yards.
- C/G **Lucas Patrick** got the start at LG for the Saints and played in his 100th career game on Sunday.
- CB **Paulsen Adebo** finished with a career-high and team-best 12 tackles (ten solo), one interception and three passes defended.
- CB **Alontae Taylor** added four solo stops and two passes defended.
- DE **Payton Turner** finished with three stops, including a strip sack for a loss of 11 yards to halt an Atlanta drive in Saints territory.
- LB **Anthony Orji** led the special teams units with two tackles.

- P **Matthew Hayball** punted three times for 120 yards (40.0 gross avg.) and downed all three inside the 20-yard line.

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS QUOTES

HEAD COACH DENNIS ALLEN

Opening Statement: “It sucks to lose a game like that. Those are the kind that rip your heart out. But I know we've got a good football team in that locker room. Now, we have to play better. We can't spot a team 14 points, a good team, and expect to win those types of games. The fact that you come back and put yourself in a position to win that tells me that we've got a good football team. But we have to be better, we've got to play better, we've got to coach better. There's a lot of things we have to improve on. We'll go back to work tomorrow, and we'll get ready to go to Kansas City on Monday night.”

On WR Rashid Shaheed's decision on the first punt: “Bad decision. We don't ever want to field that ball. Look, he's typically been a guy that's made a lot of really good decisions back there, so it was uncharacteristic for him to make that decision to field the ball there. We certainly don't want to do that.”

On CB Paulson Adebo's three pass interference calls: “I'm going to reserve any comments on that until I get a chance to look at it. When it was crunch time, that's where they wanted to go. They wanted to attack him over there. I think there are some things that, not just him, but all of us could have probably done a little bit differently in that situation.”

On whether there was a missed block on Falcons' ILB Troy Andersen: “We had a screen, and they brought the nickel pressure off the edge. Just seeing it from the field, it didn't look like he felt like he had a clean look to get the ball to Alvin [Kamara], so he kind of double-clutched it. I think he was trying to dirt the ball and they got a tip on it. It tipped up in the air and they got it and ran it back for a touchdown. But two touchdowns, whether it be special teams touchdowns allowed or a pick-six, those are big plays.”

On the decision to go for a touchdown instead of a field goal: “I think just being aggressive. We knew we were going to have to make a stop anyway, so whether we kicked three, they were going to get the ball and we were going to be in a four-minute mode there. That was the decision. Be aggressive. Let's try to score the touchdown. They got the ball at the seven or eight-yard line – the seven-yard line, I think it was, so we knew we were going to have to make a stop anyway. We got a good field position. We went down there and scored the touchdown. If we kicked the field goal there, I think the game doesn't play out the same way. I think it plays out differently. I don't think we can make the assumption that they wouldn't be able to make a long field goal at the end of the game.”

On RB Alvin Kamara's efforts today: “The same thing I would say that he's been, ever since he showed back up for training camp, he's been awesome. He's been outstanding. He's probably been our best offensive player. He's done a really good job for us, and we're going to need him to continue to do that.”

On whether RB Alvin Kamara reaggrieved his previous injury: “No, it's ribs on the other side.”

On how much RB Alvin Kamara's reaggrieved injury changed the game plan for today: “Well, when you lose a player like that, it affects you. But I still think we had enough guys on the field that could have made enough plays to give us a chance to win.”

On LB Willie Gay Jr.'s injury: “Hand.”

On how close WR Chris Olave was to not playing today: “I think we were very sure that he was going to be fine and able to play. After he tweaked it on Friday practice, we got the imaging, we really didn't see anything on the imaging. This is something that he has dealt with before, so we felt very confident that he was going to be able to go out and play. I thought he played well today.”

On the team still playing well despite dealing with injuries: “When you lose guys like we've lost and gotten that many injuries and battled back, I think that gives you confidence that you have a good football team. But really, it's still about going out and winning games. Everybody faces adversity, and we've got to figure out a way to face this adversity and come out on the other side of it and win games while doing it. It was a frustrating loss because I thought we had a chance to win the game despite whatever adversity we were facing.”

On whether the offensive plan played out how he wanted it to: “In particular, early on in the game, I felt like we had a good plan. I think there are some things that we still have to execute a little bit better. We had far too many times that we were behind the sticks in longer yardage situations. We've got to eliminate those things. I felt like we ran the ball well. I thought we were able to find, in particular, Chris [Olave], and get him some targets. I thought we did some decent things in the passing game. Not quite as well in the first half. I thought we threw the ball a little bit better in the second half.”

On whether RB Alvin Kamara was managing pain throughout the game: “Probably have to ask him. I know that he was able to get some work during the week. I thought he felt like he was going to be able to go and be effective. I don't think he was 100 percent, but I thought it was awesome to see him go out there and gut it out and play the way that he did. I thought that was good for our team to see.”

On CB Paulson Adebo's last pass interference call: “I'll have to look at the play.”

On C Shane Lemieux stepping into the center role: “I thought overall he did well. But again, I'm talking about the center in the middle of the line and there's a lot of other stuff that's going on, so it's hard to have a good evaluation for you. I thought we moved the ball offensively. I thought we did some good things offensively. The penalties and getting behind the sticks caused us to miss out on some opportunities.”

On whether there is a reason that the penalties happened: “No, I don't think so. But as we do with everything, we're going to go back, we're going to look at everything, we're going to talk about everything, we're going to evaluate everything as a staff. What did we do well? What did we not do well as a staff, and then make the corrections that we need to make. We had too many penalties, which put us in some negative situations.”

On the team's record after today: “I'd rather be 4-0, and I think we had chances to do that. We're going to have to go back and put together a good plan and get ready to play Kansas City. We'll see where we're at on the injury front, who we have and don't have, and then get ready to play against another really, really good team. We've played some pretty good teams to this point. It's never easy in our league.”

On whether he was trying to score on the last drive of the game or burn time off of the clock: “We were trying to score, and yet, I wasn't upset when we didn't. We were trying to score, and they did a good job of stopping those plays. But certainly, we wanted to eat up as much time as we could.”

On whether there was anything he wanted to avoid with RB Alvin Kamara in the game today: “Well, I think when you get into the game and he's on the roll like he is, it's kind of hard not to try to get him some touches. I think with Taysom [Hill] being out, that probably changes the plan just a little bit. We've got to have some other guys that come up and make some plays other than just Alvin, and we do have that.”

On whether he thought the defense would be able to get to Atlanta QB Kirk Cousins more: “I don't think we had enough pressure on the quarterback. So, we've just got to look at why that was. The pass rush has been pretty good, but I don't think we affected the passer as much as we needed to in this game.”

QB DEREK CARR

On tonight's game: “It hurts. You try your best not to be so angry about it, but you hate losing. You hate losing, especially close ones. They just stink. I thought positively, we ran the ball, we threw it effectively. Compared to last week, I thought we got better, but just like Debo [Paulson Adebayo] said, it's not good enough. We got to do better, and obviously it wasn't enough to get a win today.”

On whether playing with limited offensive linemen was a factor in the loss: “Yeah, of course. There's a lot of factors. I think just getting everybody comfortable, getting in the rhythm of the game, all those things. We were able to hit some chunks, I think, here and there. And then especially more in the second half, I thought our guys battled. I thought up front they did a great job, especially running the ball early. When we were able to run the ball early, it allowed some of those passes in that second half to really open up for us. And so, they did a great job in the protection then. They brought a lot of heat at us. They wanted to get after us and put a lot of pressure on those guys, one-on-ones everywhere. Put me on the time clock, and I'm really proud of the way that our guys handled it.”

On his interception: “Yeah, it got tipped up. It sucks, but I should throw it away quicker. 100%, throw it away quicker. Don't have me hang on to it just to see and all that kind of stuff. DA [Dennis Allen] and I talked about it right after it happened, just quicker, I was like, ‘You're right, yes sir.’ Again, we spotted a touchdown there, and I don't know the last time I've seen that happen on a screen. But, hey, it happened. It sucks, but I've got to get rid of it quicker when it's not there. So, yeah, can't wait too long to throw it away.”

On whether the preparation this week was helpful for guys filling in for injuries: “Yeah, I think obviously that helps the guys that are playing, right? The mindset is different and all that kind of stuff, and they get the reps. It's one thing to see it. It's really hard to see it and then go plug in and play. That's a hard thing to do, but I'm really proud of our guys this week and their mentality. I thought we had a really good week of practice, and I was very confident going into the game that we would at least play better. And we played better. Our guys up front handled a lot of different things, a lot of different fronts, some different pressures and all that kind of stuff, and I thought they did a fantastic job. I think having those reps during the week definitely helps them with that.”

On how much the loss of TE Taysom Hill impacts the offense: “I'll say this about the system. Obviously, everyone has a role, but there's also guys that are ready to play that role if need be. You know what I mean? So we don't lose the call sheet, the plays to be able to call, if that's something. But like I always say, you can take a Taysom Hill out, you can take an Erik McCoy out, you name whoever. It's always hard. You don't just replace somebody. Different guys have different abilities, they bring different skill sets to the table. And so, anytime you lose a guy like Taysom, it hurts for sure. But there's definitely a system and things in place for us to be able to not lose those plays if we need them.”

On RB Alvin Kamara's game today: “He just continues to amaze me. You guys have seen him. You've been close to him longer than I have. I've seen him at Pro Bowls and that's about it. I get to see him every day now for the last two years and he just blows me away. Just as a teammate, in the games, he reminds me so much of Marshawn [Lynch], their mindsets during the game. Playing with Marshawn, they just absolutely love football. No matter the situation, no matter how chaotic it is, I can always look to AK [Alvin Kamara]. This busy, older player, I can look at him and I can just stay like this when the stadium is at its loudest and we need to go score a touchdown. He just continues to amaze me. With his mentality and the things that he's physically able to do.

I'm proud to be his teammate and work alongside that guy. He pushes me, just watching him, he pushes you as a teammate to be at your best when the game is on the line and things like that, for sure."

On whether there were questions about WR Chris Olave's status for the game: "Yeah, I mean, without getting into his business, I didn't know for sure. But for him to gut that out, to see him in there, hurting right now, obviously. For him to do that for us and come up with that huge catch across the middle to give us a chance to go take the lead and possibly win a football game. There were seven catches before that. For him to gut that out and be at the end of the day and catch that ball, that is huge for our team. There's no moral victories, but that's definitely a positive going forward, for sure, for us. His grit and his toughness, that's what we need from our number one. He gave that to us today."

On how much comfort he takes from him and WR Chris Olave's consistency on third downs: "Yeah, I mean, we've come such a long way. I'm glad that you get a couple of games in, and you see the work paying off. He had a choice route today versus a certain look, and I threw it to a spot. Someone was coming, I threw it to a spot, and he saw it just like I saw it, caught it, boom, first down. You know, that stuff doesn't happen overnight. That's a lot of work on his part and on me, us doing it together, obviously. But I'm just so proud of him, man. I really am. His work ethic and just his mentality to get us to this point. There was another play today that I dropped back, and I just threw it to a spot that I knew that he needed to be at, and he's there, he makes the catch, first down. It's like, yeah, we can look past that. Even the one down the middle that got called back, it takes a lot for me to just make that decision. With the safety over the top, Mike [Hughes] underneath, that's a big trust throw. Those easily get tipped up and be trouble. For me, it was like, I'm throwing it. So that confidence and trust I have in him, that takes a lot of work, but he's earned that. Just like he did last week, he said again, end of the game, he keeps reminding me. I tell him, 'Game on the line, I'm coming to you.' He reminded me again, he said, 'Hey, I'm here.' Sure enough, he made a lot of big plays for us on that drive."

On the mindset the team needs to avoid a repeat of last year: "I'll say that just as a team, we're just in such a much better place than last year. Last year, everything was new, and we're all figuring each other out. This year, we know who we are, and we know what we've earned. We've earned 2-2. That's what we've earned. It's not good enough. Not good enough in our organization to be .500. That's never the standard for us, and that will never be acceptable as leaders. That's just not acceptable here. We hold that standard, but at the same time, there's no pointing fingers. It's all people pointing their thumb at themselves saying, 'I will do that better, I will do that better, I'll do that better, and we're going to be better.' We've been here. We know the mindset and the work it takes. We know that it doesn't get easier as you go forward. Having that experience to go off of last year is a benefit, honestly, because we're going to rally together. I know one thing, our team's going to get tighter, and we're going to be more unified going forward, even more so than today. We'll keep going and hopefully build on getting a win, get back in the win column."

CB PAULSON ADEBO

On what the initial feeling was after two close losses in a row: "I mean, definitely feel like I'm going to still play. Personally, me having to be on a call late in the game when we have a chance to win, got to be better right there. Just trying to find a way to finish, so personally I know that's a big part of me playing clean late in the game."

On what his internal balance is of how aggressive he can be: "I mean, if they're calling it, then I have to be less aggressive. So, that's all I'm focused on. Just trying to play clean the whole game. So, that's something I've got to work on personally."

On what the defensive strategy was on the Falcons go-ahead drive in the fourth: “Yeah, I'm just trying to finish the game out. I mean, they have a ways to go to try to get field goals, so I'm trying to stop them from getting a positive play.”

On whether he agreed with the pass interference call: “Did you agree with the call? I mean, I'm just trying to play, you know, and if they call it, then it is. So, for me personally, just being better, you know, just playing clean the whole game and not letting that be a problem.”

On what he thought about the overall defensive effort in today's game: “We did some good things at the end of the day, but it wasn't good enough. So, we've got to get back to the drawing board and find a way personally to be better. So, there's things that I feel like I've got to work on, and everybody just do that.”

C LUCAS PATRICK

On Shane switching position to Center: “I'll wait to see if that's the judge. I thought comfort was there, and I can't give enough credit to OL Shane Lemieux. That might have been a miscalculation. I've seen that a lot. He took on the challenge, and it was a big challenge. But he answered it, and he landed it. I think it's just steady year. The way he came in, I would agree with him on that he played pretty efficiently.”

On the fight the Saints offense in general: “You've got a few things you want to clean up. But to drive the ball down and score at the end of the game, proud of the fight that this group has, and probably how tight the agreement is. It's a tight-knit group. People believe in each other. It's just got to be a group, and get ready for the Kansas City Chiefs.”

On the effort to come back and take the lead late in the game: “We got a lot of ball, a lot of things. We've got to step up and play. Could be a receiver in a few weeks. Back to work. I just think the way this team is built, we're going to practice on a regular basis. We're going to make it tight across the ball. We're going to encourage everyone to make good mistakes.”

RB ALVIN KAMARA

On losing close games: “I've been in this league, and I think we've got a couple people in this locker room that have played a lot of football in this league. When you play a lot of football in this league you realize that blowing people out and doing all that don't matter. That's fanfare. That's cool. You don't get points for that. These type of games, these are the type of games that matter. You close out when it's nail biting, one score, these are the types of games that matter. These are the games that the winning teams win. When you look further down the line, when you get to December or January, when you look at those teams that are playing – you look back on their season – they're able to close these games out. So, I don't care about beating whatever team 50-0. I don't care if we beat a team 80-0. That don't matter. I think I kind of had that tone after y'all interviewed me after the game last week. It's like ‘Man, we've got way more football to play against better teams, and we've got to play better ball. So, we did a lot of things today to shoot ourselves in the foot and keep ourselves from being able to close out when we need to. But, we've just got to be better all around. I'm not even looking at anything good we did in this game because we have to close it. We got to be in the W.”

On commonality between winning teams that he has been on: “Every team – I'll just say every team is different. That's kind of the best way I can answer that question. I'll give y'all a big essay or paragraph about comparing and contrasting teams. We'll do that. I'll come get on the show and talk to you about it. I'm just focused on 24' right now. Like I said, I think we made a lot of mistakes on offense that prevented us from putting points on the board. It's not a good feeling when you think back and you're like, ‘Oh well we killed ourselves on that

drive and we killed ourselves on that drive. We could have had points right here'. We've got to find a way to capitalize on those situations."

On if he feels like the Saints are a good football team: "I think it's a good football team. I feel like sometimes I'm the negative Nancy because nothing really excites me, but I think we're a good football team. We have to be a good football team every Sunday. That means winning because that's all that matters."

ATLANTA FALCONS QUOTES

HEAD COACH RAHEEM MORRIS

Opening Statement: "Obviously the result you wanted today. It's so good to win. Then obviously, you get out there and get a chance to play that way and to finish it the way it finished. A complete team win across the board. [Younghoe] Koo finishing that thing off for us. So many things you can correct, and it's always nice to correct those things in a win."

On sending K Younghoe Koo to kick the game-winning field goal: "That thing was ending with a Koo make or miss. Didn't matter where it was from. Koo was going out there."

On having a complete team win: "It certainly set it off for us today. We talked about what it takes and what it takes to win. We talked about our guys being an impact the game, and they certainly were today when we talk about the teams phase and what we do. These guys go out there and play. Those guys covering punts and covering kicks and really setting the edge and doing the things that we need to do out there was definitely critical and clutch for us. I was so proud of how they reacted and went out there and played."

On how strongly he considered letting the Saints score earlier on the 1-yard line in the fourth quarter: "Used that two time-outs. Oddly enough, believe it or not, we had 56 seconds the other day with no time-outs to get in field goal range to win in a practice setting, so we knew we needed a little bit of minute of it, and we used it all. We were able to get that big PI [pass interference], which oddly enough, happened in practice. We went out there, and we were able to finish that thing with [Younghoe] Koo. It was exactly how we wanted it to go out for us in practice. Would have liked to get closer and tried to take a couple of shots there to Drake [London]. They played tight coverage. Wasn't able to get in there and took the shot down to [Darnell] Mooney on the sideline. I was extremely excited about those guys getting that done. We needed about a minute, we had about a minute, and it was well done by those guys."

On when the practice drive was: "That was Friday, actually."

On having a pass interference call against WR Darnell Mooney in practice: "It wasn't against Mooney. I would have to go back and see who it was on for you. But we definitely – oh no, you know what? We got a penalty. It wasn't a PI. I won't tell you what it was."

On taking big shots on the game-winning drive to get in field goal range: "The calls are a little bit shorter, but when you play sticky man coverage like that, it goes to who's open. You take the shots to your best players. You take the plus shots to Drake [London], you take one to [Darnell] Mooney. You give yourself a chance down the field. We had some shorter people in position to catch some shorter passes. Obviously, they did a nice job of trying to cover things. You try to uncover on the center cut. Tried to get to get outbreak and tried to hit a honey-hole shot there and see if we can get something going there."

On getting TE Kyle Pitts more involved in the game: “It’s about going out there and winning the game when you’re out there and playing. He had a couple of targets today, had a couple of things going out that way. We believe we got a questionable call at the end of the stretch of the game to Kyle. Those things always are unfortunate. Really, for me, stats are for losers, man. I don’t get involved in that stuff. You go out and try to win each game. We were able to win it today, and that’s what we did.”

On how much the crunch-time games are testing his nerves: “Welcome to the National Football League. I’ve been in the league since 2002, and I feel like they all end the same way or around the same way. It’s about having that mental stamina enough to go out and push and pursue and get your guys to go out and finish. They’ve certainly given me a nice chance to go out and finish with our guys. They fight every single week, and I’m proud of them.”

On how much an accurate kicker during the game factors into late-game field goal: “It’s not always the same, but it’s always going to be a lot of confidence in [Younghoe] Koo. It’s hard to say you’re not going to have confidence in that young man and what he is able to do. I believe it was a 58-yarder and it looked good from – probably a little bit further. You are always going to have a lot of confidence in [Younghoe] Koo and what he does and how he goes about his process. As long as his weekly rhythm and routine is good, I think he is going to be good.”

On whether he felt like he was funneling some things in-game to ILB Troy Andersen: “I have to go look at it. I don’t think we actually intended to funnel anything to him. It’s just kind of how it works. The guy was flying around today, making a bunch of plays, making a bunch of tackles. He plays with tremendous speed. He plays with a tremendous violence that we love, and he got it done for us today. It was awesome.”

On how RB Tyler Allgeier played today: “Hot man got in there, man. He got a couple of runs and was able to tote that thing. You just keep feeding him. He got a couple of really good runs. He was critical for us. He is the heavy back, and he was heavy for us today. He got a couple of yards for us, and we were really excited. I don’t know how many exactly. I got it in front of me. I was proud of what he was able to do when he got a chance to play for us.”

On CB Dee Alford’s matchup with Saints WR Rashid Shaheed late in the game: “Great play by Dee Alford. Dee Alford’s playing his butt off. He plays hard. He gets tough matchups every single week. He was almost the goat at the end of that game with 12 [Chris Olave] going out there and catching a big catch on the 1-yard line. You know, I’ve got a lot of confidence in those guys how hard they play, how much they put into the game. They play for each other. They play for the love of the team. I’m just excited. I can’t wait to go watch the tape and grade the guys and find ways to get better.”

On ILB JD Bertrand stepping in at the end of the game: “The Rook went out when Troy [Andersen] left. Troy had a little injury at the end. I don’t have all the details on that. I’m sure you’ll be bothering somebody about it. I’ve got a lot of confidence putting him in the game. Our young rook, Captain America, went out there and finished the game for us and was able to go.”

On whether he feels like this team is a team of destiny: “No. I don’t feel like Cinderella. I feel like you got to go out there and play every single game, and you’ve got to try to go out there and win. And the more poised team usually wins. Right now, I’m trying to show my team poise and show them poise, what it looks and feels like, what it feels like to be resilient. They’re showing us, and they’re showing our city. I can’t say enough good things about the fan base today. That place was a home field advantage today. That thing was rocking. Almost caught me dancing. They got me out of character on the sideline. That was outstanding.”

On whether WR KhaDarel Hodge being in the right place at the right time on special teams was a surprise to him: “No. How the special teams have been playing for the majority of the year has been really good. You’re talking about [Antonio] Hamilton [Sr.]. You’re talking about KhaDarel Hodge. You’re talking about Micah Abernathy. I mean, we’ve got people that go out there and play every single week. We had a clear-cut advantage that we knew we could get something off if we went out there and covered the right way. We certainly did that and I’m very proud of those guys.”

QB KIRK COUSINS

Opening Statement: “I’ll start and then take any questions you have. It’s great to find a way to win in this league. After kind of a week of feeling awful about not finding a way last week, it’s great to do that this week. There’s a lot to fix. You come away saying I’m so glad we won. But I’m going to be voice-memoing on the way home to the coaches with some thoughts on how I’ve got to be better and how we’ve got to build on it. [It’s] a lot easier to give those voice memos after a win. I thought penalties were tough today to overcome at times on some drives where we were in the high red zone. Or in a place on the field where we felt we had some momentum and then got in some long yardage situations. I thought Tyler Allgeier ran the ball really well, and his third down conversion was a big play in the game. I was pleased that we were better on third down. At least it felt that way. I haven’t seen the numbers but it felt like we were better on third down overall as a unit. Even on some of the conversions that we didn’t have, we still – completion, getting close to the sticks and giving ourselves a chance. Honestly, I felt like the final drive was really not good enough by me, by our offense, but [Younghoe] Koo made an unbelievable kick. We got the pass interference call and that was enough. But pleased with the complementary football that happened today to get us the win. Now we have a great chance to build on it and I can take any questions you have.”

On what he saw on the late-game throw to Darnell Mooney that resulted in defensive pass interference: “It was a double move, and so I threw it pretty early. I felt I should have thrown the ball further. I felt like Mooney could have run underneath and maybe it’s a walk-off, if you will. Although there was still a little time left. I was disappointed in myself that the ball ended up being underthrown. And he did a good job of coming back to it, and we got the PI call. Great route by him. Would have liked to put the ball out there further for him to be able to run underneath it.”

On whether there is a remedy for the penalties: “Until I can see them, it’s hard. I wasn’t sure on the touchdown that got called back what exactly happened. Because it didn’t feel like it was anything too unique. But I don’t get to see it until I can watch the film. A remedy would just be once we see what took place, we just have to make sure we don’t even give them that chance to call it.”

On when he thinks wide receivers start picking up tricks to try and draw pass interference calls and how nice it is to play with someone like Darnell Mooney who recognizes those things: “He’s a total pro. I mean, he’s at times -- his lockers next to me, and he’s at times whether it’s the spring or now, I’ll ask a question, and when I hear his answers, I think, Whoa, the way you are taking care of your body, the way you’re thinking through situations like a quarterback, like whoa. At times he kind of keeps me on my toes because I think, man, if I don’t know my stuff, Moon is going to expose me here because he does. Not surprised that he would have an awareness of, hey, ball is underthrown. We’ve got a chance at a DPI here. That’s the kind of player he is to be very aware. I’ll go back to my role. I just don’t want to leave it in the ref’s hands, and I want to hit that in a perfect stride. Like we had the go ball earlier in the game in the third quarter, and that’s why I want to go watch it and see why the ball wasn’t further.”

On whether he is often frustrated after a win: “I wouldn't be if I played really well, we played really well. But, yeah, I do dislike this about myself that I have a standard that's maybe unreachable and even after a win you feel like you've got to play better. I'll still enjoy the win, believe me. Yeah, there's just a lot we left out there.”

On whether he feels like the Falcons are a team of destiny and how difficult it is to get physically get ready for a game in four days versus the normal week: “It all depends on how beat up you are from going into the game or coming out of this game. I feel pretty good. It shouldn't be too bad for me. Each guy is maybe a little different. It helps -- you got to remember that postgame Thursday, we do have ten days. And so you kind of remind yourself to take the good with the bad too. The extra rest after this if we can get through Thursday, physically, you get more time to get caught up for guys. But I just find that in this league that's the way these games tend to go is it's just so close. It's a play here, a play there. And you've got to find yourself on the winning side of as many of these as possible. But finding those inches is hard, but that's the way this league is designed to be.”

On the offense generating yards but not scoring any touchdowns: “I'll be pretty critical as I think through it. [I'm] just grateful to be able to have the critical evaluation after a win. So you're grateful for the win, the outcome. It's such an outcome-driven league. To have a win is a big deal. You never really stop going back and analyzing the performance and how to be better, win or lose.”

On the opportunity to go 2-0 in the division and over .500 with a win on Thursday night: “It's a great opportunity for us. Home game, divisional opponent. [We] dug ourselves a hole starting 1-2. Now give ourselves a chance to go into a long weekend above .500. We know what's out there for us. But so does our opponent. I expect it to be a hard-fought game like they all have been thus far.”

On whether he noticed the intensity of the rivalry: “I loved it. It was the fourth quarter we were a little bit backed up, and it was a TV time-out. And they were playing that song about you swag and surf, and the whole stadium was moving. I looked around, like, this is pretty sweet. And the [Dirty Birds] Nest especially -- I love the Nest. The Nest may be my favorite thing about being a Falcon. It's awesome, the energy they bring. Yeah, you felt it today. We need to win and play at a level that will keep it that way all year long and into January. I can't say enough about the environment today and the way our fans showed up. I was really, really pleased with the atmosphere we got to play in. It was a privilege.”

On the improvement of the pass protection over the last three weeks: “Yeah, I think so. I didn't see how many attempts we had today, but usually whenever I felt anything, it was because I was going through a progression longer. So, I thought they did a good job. There was a lot of times where it was kind of one-on-ones across the board where they were rushing five. I was really pleased. And even the sack fumble today was really me holding onto the ball too long. Jake [Matthews] did a really good job. I've been very pleased with them.”

On Kyle Pitts having two targets today: “It's interesting. The under route I threw to him, I really shouldn't have. [Marshon] Lattimore drove it. I should have gone over his head to Ray-Ray [McCloud III]. Then on the shallow cross to Kyle in man coverage we had the incidental contact. That was one where it's incomplete, but had a chance there if their feet don't get tripped up. Then there are other ones like the third down at midfield in the second quarter I threw to Drake [London]. It was incomplete. Looking back, I wish I had worked Kyle over his head on a deep corner route. So there's some plays out there where I come to the sideline and say hey, Kyle, I got to work you there. Then there's other ones where I did work him and say, hey, I probably shouldn't have forced it to you. It goes both ways, but just kind of always go where your reads take you. And sometimes it skews the number one way or another, and sometimes it's balanced and you have to go where they take you.”

DL GRADY JARRETT

On what he thought of the effort as a team: "I think everybody played good. It was good to see Dee [Alford] get a sack and Troy [Andersen] take one to the house. I mean, these guys put so much work in, man. So, when you see them be able to get the success, be able to get recognized, it means a lot, and hopefully, that will continue to push them to be better. But as a big brother, as a teammate, you know, I love to see it and the joy that it brings. not only to the players but to the whole stands when they make big plays like that. They deserve it."

On what was going through his head during ILB Troy Andersen's pick-six: "Crib. Crib. Ain't nobody catching Troy Andersen, that boy can run. He good, he good."

On his feelings watching the go-ahead field goal: "You know, when we're down we don't want anybody else to put the pressure on than [Younghoe] Koo. I mean, he's built a great reputation for himself in this league. He came through for us when we needed him the most."

ILB Troy Andersen

On his interception for a touchdown: "Saw the ball and it was 'catch it' and go score. It was a great play by [Matthew] Judon and we were able to capitalize on it. I tried to run to green grass and get to the endzone before getting tackled."

On his performance and the defensive performance: "I think it was kind of our scheme today and then everybody eating up blocks letting me be able to roam a little bit. Then everybody is running to the ball and hunting. It was fun."

ILB JD Bertrand

On getting a few snaps: "I felt ready. I think going through the week, every single week, I'm going to make sure I'm prepared to be able to be that backup. To be the guy that's going to be able to come in. Its just a matter of how I go about my day every week. So that's what I'm going to make sure I'm focusing on."

On K Younghoe Koo's winning field goal: "I mean Koo's [Younghoe] just known for that. Koo hits the game-winners and he's so cool about it. He's always calm, cool and collected and that's just Koo."

On what the game means to Atlanta: "[Inside Linebackers Coach] Barrett Rudd emphasized it before the game. He said this is the game we pick the rosters for, and we pick the rosters for winning the Saints game and winning these conference games. We're talking about how we need to take over and run the south, and that's the objective. We're 1-0 for that."

CB MIKE HUGHES

On how he was able to be successful against Saints RB Alvin Kamara: "I knew once they motioned him out, they had the play call going for him, so I trusted my technique. I trusted what the coaches coached us to do all week and made the play."

On what has been good about the defense this season: "We're a tight knit group. I think it's safe to say that we're a bend but don't break type of group. When things go bad, we all try to lean on each other. Just counting

on your men next to us to do their job and vice versa. Like I said, a tight knit group. We all trust each other, [are] playing with confidence and just flying around having fun.”

On how critical it was to get the win in the first of three-straight division games: “It’s hard to get wins in this league, so any way we can win, especially in the divisional game, is definitely huge. So, any way we can get it, we’ll take it.”

On K Younghoe Koo’s game-winning field goal: “I had all the confidence in the world. He made all his kicks prior to that one. I kind of knew it was on the money. I had all the confidence in the world.”