



**POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES**  
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**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS VS HOUSTON TEXANS**  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023 • NRG STADIUM**  
**SAINTS POSTGAME NOTES**

- With the 20-13 loss on Sunday against the Houston Texans, the Saints are now 3-3 on the season and 2-2 on the road. They will take on the Jacksonville Jaguars on Thursday Night at the Caesars Superdome. Kickoff is scheduled for 7:15 pm C.T.
- New Orleans is now 3-3 all-time against Houston.
- The Saints outgained the Texans 430 yards to 297 for Houston and led the time of possession 31:33 to 28:27.
- New Orleans finished with 24 first downs, while holding Houston to 19.
- Dennis Allen's unit was effective on third down defensively, allowing the Texans to convert just 4-of-11 third down tries (36.4%).
- With their stop on the first drive, New Orleans continued the NFL's current longest streak of 18 consecutive games without giving up a touchdown on the opening drive.
- The Saints defense snapped Texans QB **C.J. Stroud's** NFL record 191 passes without an interception to begin a career when LB **Zack Baun** intercepted him in the first quarter.
- LB **Zack Baun** added five stops and a pass defended to go along with his interception.
- LB **Demario Davis** led the Black and Gold defense with a team-high seven tackles, including a sack and two tackles for loss.
- LB Davis's seven stops pushed him over 1,250 tackles for his career (1,252).
- DE **Carl Granderson** was impactful once again on Sunday, totaling six tackles, a sack, and two tackles for loss.
- CB **Marshon Lattimore** led the Saints secondary with six solo tackles and a stop for a loss.
- QB **Derek Carr** finished 32-of-50 for 353 yards, one touchdown, and one interception.
- Carr's 353 yards through the air were his most since 2021 and his highest total as a Saint.

- The lone touchdown of the day for the Saints offense came on a 34-yard strike from Carr to WR **Rashid Shaheed**.
- WR Shaheed added two catches for 85 yards and a touchdown, including another explosive play of 51 yards on a contested deep ball in the fourth quarter.
- Second year wideout **Chris Olave** hauled in seven passes for a team-high 96 yards.
- RB **Alvin Kamara** paced the Saints rushing attack, totaling 19 carries for a team-best 68 yards. He also added seven catches for 36 yards out of the backfield.
- WR **Michael Thomas** finished with five grabs for 45 yards.
- TE **Taysom Hill** had one of his best days as a pass catcher with a career-high seven receptions for 49 yards.
- RB **Jordan Mims** made his NFL debut against the Texans, contributing a tackle on special teams
- P **Lou Hedley** added 3 punts for 126 yards (42.0 avg).

**SAINTS HEAD COACH DENNIS ALLEN  
POSTGAME PRESS CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 15, 2023**

**On what went wrong in today's game**

"Way too many missed opportunities in this game. We had plenty of chances. Red zone continues to jump up and bite us. Missed a couple field goals today, which is uncharacteristic. Defensively I thought we played poorly in the first half. They were better than we were in the first half of the game, that's for certain. Gave up too many explosive plays. We intercepted the ball and turned it right back over to them. We had the ball on the 41-yard line. So just way too many mistakes and way too many missed opportunities. And we have to – I told the team in there we've got to do a better job of executing our jobs. If we're not executing our jobs, then we need to find somebody else that can execute those jobs. Doesn't matter who you are."

**On miscommunication on the offense**

"There were some things at the line of scrimmage that we missed, more from a route concept than from a protection standpoint."

**On G Andrus Peat's active status**

"Look, he was dealing with a groin, so he was going to be the emergency eighth offensive linemen in the game."

**On why miscommunication within the offense occurs at this stage**

"I wish I had the answer to that because, if I had the answer, we'd have it fixed. We've just got to continue to keep looking at it, continue to keep working at it. It's an area that has to get better. It was good last week. It wasn't good this week. At the end of the day, that ends up costing you games. I felt like we were able to move the ball. I thought we moved the ball efficiently. I still feel like, in that we're moving the ball, and then all of a sudden, we'll have some negative plays. I think we had a couple of holding calls down in the red area, which got us into first and long or second and long situations, and it's hard to overcome that. I think penalties down there were a big deal. The first drive we end up getting a negative play. As we get into kind of scoring position, or at least close to scoring position, we get a negative play which puts us at second and 14. We end up trying a long field goal there. Yeah, there's certainly a lot of things we have to clean up."

**On the momentum swing caused by the interception and fumble**

"That's a big momentum change in the game. Again, we're going to take over possession around the 41-yard line, something like that, in their territory. Instead, we give them the ball right back, and they're able to kind of go down and capitalize on it. So, yeah, I thought that was a big play in the game."

**On K Blake Grupe's missed field goal**

"I'm not sure exactly what happened. Obviously, he pulled it left. I think he just missed the kick."

### **On the Texans' success running against the Saints defense in the first half**

"I don't think we did a good enough job getting off blocks. I think they ran extremely hard. I think their backs ran extremely hard. I think they did a good job of blocking. I don't think we executed like we're capable of executing. They were better than us in the first half from an offensive standpoint against our defense. We had to get in at halftime and talk about a couple of things. I thought our guys played better in the second half."

### **On the Saints' offensive approach in the final drive**

"It's kind of a little bit of both. I think there were some opportunities there. We got a lot of pressure there at the end of the game. So, I thought we had some chances, particularly the ball over to our right in the back of the end zone over there to [Rashid] Shaheed. I thought we had a chance there. Again, we weren't on the same page in terms of what we were doing there. Yeah, that part of the passing game has to be better in terms of -- look, every team in the league goes in, and they have certain things that, okay, hey, look, if we're getting this, we want to get to this. We're not unique in that way. So, we have to be able to kind of change a play based on what we're seeing, and everybody has to be on point with that."

### **On the decision to take T Trevor Penning out of the game**

"I think five games in, and I saw some improvements from the player. Yet I've wanted him to kind of be able to sit back and see the game from a different perspective and kind of grow that way. Then obviously with James [Hurst] going down, he (Trevor Penning) had to go in there and play. I thought he got off to a little bit of a rough start, but then I thought he settled in a little bit more. Again, we'll evaluate the tape and see how that ended up playing out. Yeah, I think we just wanted to give him a chance to kind of step back a little bit and kind of see the game from a different perspective."

### **On how Trevor Penning handled being pulled from the game**

"Look, I thought he handled it well. I thought he had a good week of practice, and he knows that he's got to continue to work to get better, which he's going to do. So, I thought he handled it well. We'll see where we're at next week."

### **On the importance of Trevor Penning getting snaps**

"Yeah, and look, there's still part of that to it. I look at him as still a rookie player, and there's some ups and downs that go along with that. There are different ways to learn. There's trial by fire, and then there's giving a guy an opportunity to step back and take a breath. Again, like I said, evaluate and see the game from a different perspective. So that's what went into the decision."

### **On Allen's thoughts on QB Derek Carr's decision-making**

"Overall, I think the decision-making's been fairly good. I think in every game you look at and say there's probably a few plays you'd kind of like to have back. So, without really having seen the tape, I don't want to go get too in depth with that. Look, I thought overall, I thought his decision-making has been pretty good."

**On the message to the team ahead of a short week, with a game on Thursday, October 19, against the Jacksonville Jaguars**

“Look, swallow it and let's go. We don't have a lot of time to sit around and feel sorry for ourselves. This is a big man's league that we're in, so we've got to pick ourselves up off the mat and regroup, get ready for a good Jacksonville team.”

**On evaluating goals of personnel**

“Look, we all have jobs to do – players, coaches, personnel, everybody has jobs to do, and we have to do a better job collectively as a group, all of us.”

**On what made the Texans' running backs difficult to tackle**

“I thought they ran hard. I don't think we got off blocks nearly as good as we needed to. I don't think we had enough violence at the point of attack. A lot of things we had to address and get better at in the second half, and I thought we got better in the second half.”

**QB Derek Carr**

**On his assessment on the outcome of the game**

“Very disappointed. I was livid coming off the field. I was angry coming off the field. I had to calm down a little bit. We as an offense had too many details and you know I'm not going to tell you what happened. Yes, we know what it was and all of those things, and I won't say it. But there's these little details that if we just do those things right, you're looking like, oh, my gosh, we scored 28 points. I just want to win, man. Like the yards are awesome, great, thanks, yes, but couldn't care less. I just want to win. That's all I care about is winning football games. If we don't do those details right every single time, especially when the game is on the line and when it matters most, then we're going to have this feeling more often than not.”

**On if he was throwing it to a different spot on the second to last pass of the game to WR Rashid Shaheed**

“Yeah, that one, we were on the wrong page. That's on me. The communication of it, I've got to clean that up for him and make it better for him.”

**On if there were several examples of being on the wrong page tonight**

“We had a couple of those. We did some things very well. We did some things explosively, but just having a few explosives or a lot of yards doesn't win football games. What wins football games is doing the right thing at the right moment every single time. Houston, give them so much credit. They're such a good team. Such a great young team that flies around, they play fast, and have tough defense. If you are not on your details, especially against this scheme, they're going to be on theirs, and it cost us today.”

**On if it is surprising and unacceptable that they are not on the same page this many weeks into the season**

“I would say unacceptable. Today was unacceptable. And that's up to us as players to make sure we're on our details when the game is on the line for sure.”

**On if the fourth downplay to RB Alvin Kamara was designed to go to him**

“I was going to try to throw it to Mike [Michael Thomas], but the backer was pushing. I didn't want to throw a pick. My option there against that zone is give Alvin [Kamara] a chance to go make a play at the sticks, similar to what we did last week against New England.”

**On if he felt like there was a lack of communication or too many mistakes in the red zone**

“Absolutely! It's like we were talking about. It's the details of our assignments, making sure that we're doing those things right and we did not do that right today for sure.”

**On how he would evaluate the pace of the offense and if he was out of sync**

“I didn't feel like we were out of sync or anything like that. I felt like everything we want is there in the run game, pass game and looks. There's a couple times we got in there, and I had to throw them way earlier than I wanted to, but great designs. Guys running open and having to check them down for certain things and reasons. I think that was more of the feeling. Them making plays, rather than a bad feeling like, “Oh, we can't do this or can't do that.” We felt like we were doing some good things.”

**On how they can get the ship righted since they have more than enough talent and felt they had the right answer**

“Yeah, absolutely. It's going to take each man every time you break the huddle. Like I said before the game, when you break the huddle, it's going to take every man just focusing that much harder on what is my assignment? When they present the look, what is my assignment now? If we do that as players, we definitely have enough pieces to do everything we want to do.”

**On his self-evaluation of where he wanted to be the first time joining a new team, six weeks into it, and how it's going?**

“I didn't want to be 3-3. I think we've let a couple of these get away from us. It's early in the season. You play four quarters and then one more. We always break it down that way. What we've earned -- Coach Del Rio always said you are what you've earned, and we've earned 3-3. That isn't what we wanted. That's not what I wanted. It's not what I expected, but it's what we've earned. And so you look in the mirror and really push the envelope to everybody else. Demario [Demario Davis] was saying it too, look in the mirror. Did you do what you did last week this week, or did you just enjoy the week too much or whatever? Whatever the case may be, we have a lot of problem solvers, not a lot of problem creators in that locker room. And Mickey [Loomis] Dave have done a great job of bringing those kind of guys in. Michael and Kyle they've done a great job of bringing the right guys. It's up to us as leaders to make sure we're solving problems that we know need to be solved and can be solved.”

**On if a short week after a game like this better in a sense**

“Yes, absolutely, because I'm going to get on the bus, I'm going to get on the plane, and I'm going to begin my preparation for the next game. You don't really get time -- whether we won this game or lost it, you don't get time to enjoy it or feel sorry for yourself. Like I said at the end, nobody cares how you feel. You've got to get ready for the next one. That's what I'll be doing on the plane is preparing, making sure everything I do in six, seven days, get it done in three, four days. That's what I have to do this week for sure.”

### **On if he has reached the throwing without thinking stage with the shoulder**

“Today was the best I've felt since it happened. For sure, yeah.”

### **DE Cameron Jordan**

#### **On how he feels**

“About losing? There's only one way to feel, like we've got to get this sh\*t together.”

#### **On what aspects the defense needs to work on**

“Second half was a good half. First half, we gave them back momentum. You can't let a team that you feel like you're imposing your will upon – you can't let them get will back. Gave them confidence, and you saw confidence then put 17 points on in the first half, another 3 points in the second half, gave them 20 points all together, which was more points we put up on the board. At the end of the day, self-inflicted wounds, penalties, extended drives. We've got to be able to eliminate those. I've said it weeks before. How do I feel? It sucks to lose. It's frustrating to lose when we have the talent to affect the quarterback. We knew he had up to this point the fastest release of a quarterback, so it's going to be frustrating to pass rush after him. But we collapsed the pocket, got him to escape. You saw the throws that we wanted to get out of him. At the end of the day, we didn't do enough to get a win.”

#### **On what adjustments the defense made in the second half**

“Nothing. It was all us. Again, we get an interception early in the game – what was [it], that first drive, second drive of the game? [You] give it right back. It's not fortuitous for our defense. You feel like we had another penalty that extended their drive. It was a lot of, again, self-inflicting wounds. We have to focus on us and how to get better rapidly. We've got a game in 96 hours or whatever that is.”

#### **On his message to his teammates**

“We've already talked about it in the locker room. Going into halftime, it was a challenge to – we looked up, and it was 90 yards on the ground, and that's a direct reflection of the D-line – interior, exterior, all of us put together. So, it was a challenge to step the hell up. You saw the energy in the second half. You want the tale of two tapes is first half didn't have the energy we needed because we gave back some momentum early in the game. That second half, now we're back to our defense. That being said, back to our standards of defense should be where our standards should be from the start of the game until the end.”

#### **On what team leadership looks like to get this team back on track**

“Again, as a defense, you can only look at how we played in the second [half]. Like, if we came out with that same energy in the first half, if we came off that interception, whether it be – a pick-six would have been great – but just give another chance to our team. You look at everything, even beyond the two missed kicks, you feel like, if you were 19-20 going into the last drive – a quick chip for a 22-20 situation – you can't get that back. Interception early in the game against a quarterback who really hadn't thrown any interceptions, you need those. I think there was tackles that hit our edge that you can't give those blatant runs up, especially against our edge. I think with our edges we've been quite stout, and that's not like us. So, we have to play our type of ball. If we do that for four quarters, then we'll talk about it. But right now, I'm just looking forward to breaking down this film and getting better.”

**On if the team's confidence is still intact**

“It better be. Again, we need to eliminate our mistakes. It's not like the team came out and beat us today. We beat ourselves and gave the ball back. Defense did an okay job that first half, better job in the second half. If we eliminate our mistakes, if we stay tuned to what we know to play our brand of football, if we execute our plays on a high level each and every play, each and every series, the game will go our way more times than not.”

**TEXANS HEAD COACH DEMECO RYANS  
POSTGAME PRESS CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 15, 2023**

**On today's defensive performance**

“I'm really proud of the defense and how we stepped up and made a play. When the game was on the line, when we needed it most, guys stepped up. It's tough to win in this league, but it was awesome to see the way our guys grinded it out, the way they stepped up right there at the end with [Steven] Nelson making a big-time interception there. I couldn't be more proud of the defense from the growth from last week to this week. That's what I continue to see in our team is just growth – being resilient. These moments we were in the same situation last week, but to see the growth and see us finish it out, it was awesome.”

**On what it means to the team to be 3-3 going into the bye week**

“It's something we talked about all week is just finishing, finishing this week 3-3. We know our team is continuing to improve, continuing to get better, but it was very important for us to finish with a win this week before heading into our bye week. Just go in with a better feeling. You can enjoy your bye week a little bit better off of a win. Definitely still [have] things to clean up and we understand that. On all three phases there are a lot of things we can clean up. But it's a lot easier to clean things up with a win.”

**On how he feels the rushing attack was in the first half and the adjustments that the Saints made in the second half**



“I felt really good about our run game. I think this may have been our best run performance of the year. It was good to see us moving the ball, getting some good runs. Good to see ‘Motor’ [Devin Singletary], ‘D.P.’ [Dameon Pierce] – both guys having success in the run game. We just have to continue to grind it, continue to work at it. Credit to our offensive line and what they did moving those guys off the line of scrimmage. [The Saints are] a tough defense to run the ball on. We did a really good job. [The Saints] tightened it up in the second half and forced us to throw it a little more than we wanted to. But the way we ran the ball in the first half was what we look forward to doing and who we want to be. But we still want to do more. We still want to just run it as much as we can throughout the entire game.”

### **On QB C.J. Stroud’s performance**

“With C.J. [Stroud], it’s the same. It’s resiliency. Even though he throws his first interception of his career – and I mean, I can’t say enough about Nico [Collins] first, and his effort, his mindset to go and get the ball back in that situation, and the resiliency of our offense just to – no matter what happened, bad things happen – but you don’t let that affect the next play. They went down and drove on them and scored right there. I think that was the turning point of the game for us and on offense. Bad things happen. We responded the correct way. That’s what you continue to see from C.J. – even though it’s a bad play, it doesn’t affect the next play. That’s growth and that’s really great to see from a young quarterback.”

### **On the defense’s resiliency and CB Steven Nelson’s game-ending interception**

“We had a couple of shots on us. We had our opportunities to make plays. I thought Steven [Nelson] played a really great game. It’s all tied together, rush and coverage. We have to rush better. I thought the coverage was really good. When we needed a play the most, Steven stepped up made a big-time play for us.”

### **On what he saw from DE Will Anderson Jr. today**

“I thought Will [Anderson Jr.] and that front, they did a decent job of getting after it, putting the pressure on [Derek] Carr all across the board. Guys did a really good job. Will has been doing good throughout the season. He continues to grow as a young player, continues to improve his game each and every week as well. It’s great to see the growth of Will and what he’s able to do for us defensively. Everybody is just starting to play well together. We have to keep going.”

### **On TE Dalton Schultz’s performance**

“Dalton [Schultz] has had two back-to-back big games for us. He put the team on his back last week to give us an opportunity to close that game out, and coming back this week, there’s a lot of big catches, a lot of explosives. Seeing Dalton and his playmaking ability in the passing game, it’s been what we anticipated we would get from him and it’s showing up big time. Proud of Dalton for him showing up, making big-time plays for us.”

### **On the play before the Saints final drive and the decision to throw versus running the ball and winding down the clock**

“We wanted to get yards there. Second-and-12, still wanted to get yards. We thought we had an opportunity there to throw it and make a play. And, again, we trust our guys in that situation to make that play.”

### **On his overall evaluation on the kicking game**

“With the kicking game, I thought they did a really good job of forcing missed kicks. Excellent job by our field goal block unit. And also, by Cam [Johnston], he impacted the game big-time for us, to get a backed-up opportunity which turned into points for us on offense. I can't say enough about how we play complementary football – how important the kicking game is. Kind of goes hidden, but that's a huge part of the game. A huge part of why we win games is because we're playing well in the kicking game.”

### **On the last fourth down when Saints RB Alvin Kamara was out of the backfield and what was going through his mind defensively**

“Yeah, defensively it was just about us getting pressure on the quarterback, forcing him to make some tough decisions and as much as we can, to just try to get pressure on him. And guys did a great job tackling there. Jimmie [Ward] made a really nice tackle on [Alvin] Kamara to give us an opportunity to stand up. But guys executed. When it's critical situation – situations where we haven't been really good defensively in the red zone – I think our guys stood up today and shut them out in the red zone. And that was the difference in the game.”

### **On the linebackers performance today and if there was improvement from last week when they were out of position against the Falcons**

“The linebacker guys are doing a really great job. I don't think necessarily [the Saints] were attacking them. I thought defensively everybody did what they were supposed to do. Everybody was in position, and everybody did their job. And that was the outcome.”

### **On how the team played in the redzone**

“We won the red zone battle. We scored two times down in the red zone, and they didn't. That's the game. Did we want to score more? Of course. But credit to our offense for getting into the end zone when they did. We kicked field goals and we just played together as a defense. Of course, we want to score every time, but it doesn't happen. You still have to stand up and play great ball. That's what we did – played together as a team today and that resulted in a win.”

### **On LB Blake Cashman's performance and what he means to the defense**

“[Blake] Cashman has done a great job for us. He had a lot of tackles today, flying around all over the field. Really great in the passing game. He's done a really good job showing up, making big-time plays for us when we need it most. I'm proud of 'Cash' [Blake Cashman] and his development. What he provides is confidence. When we're out there in passing situations, we know he plays really well in coverage. He's done a great job of tackling and just playing sideline to sideline.”

## **QB C.J. Stroud**

### **On the team's 3-3 standings**

"First, I want to give all the glory and praise to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It was a hard-fought win. Needed that one. Our biggest thing was empty the tank and leave the game 3-3 going into the bye week. That's huge for us. Got to have a good Bye Week and get better there. Rest up, because it's going to be a big-time second half of the season that we need to execute better and be better at. So, happy with the win and proud of my guys for being resilient and fighting."

### **On overcoming his first NFL career interception to lead a touchdown drive**

"That's life. There's ups and downs. My teammates were like, 'You've got this, let's go.' I looked back, and DeMeco [Ryans] was like, 'You've got it.' I could see it in his eyes, that he cared about how I was going to respond. For me, that meant a lot just for them to have trust and faith in me. And, I'm going to have trust and faith in myself too. I know that play, he [Zack Baun] made a good play, and they weren't going to get me again. Just learning from that. Excited that we went down and scored. I thought that was really big. A lot of other things I can clean up, like some things I probably did worse than the interception that wasn't really highlighted. So, for me just getting better."

### **On what has improved the running game and red zone performance**

"Hard work. We work our tails off at practice on the little details. DeMeco [Ryans] was up here for 45 minutes showing us the details, all the positive plays we've had. And we were kind of like, 'Man, we shouldn't be 3-3.' We should be better than that, but we are because we missed details on little certain plays.' That's what it boils down to, so we just really worked hard at practice. Honing out the details and getting better every day, being better in the red zone, in the run game, getting our IDs right, me being precise and getting guys lined up right. It was a good thing for us to have a good week of practice. I think this week was our best week of practice and preparation."

### **On the difference the team culture has made in the team's current standings**

"I think it's everything. I feel like all the games that we've played so far have been dog fights, from Ravens all the way now to the Saints. I don't think there was one game we thought we were out of. We might have went down earlier or went up early, but we fought the whole way. And, one thing I've learned about this league, it's not easy to win. Of course, we didn't play perfect. I didn't play perfect, could have made some better plays. But, you have to be happy with a win because that's a great Saints defense. They're stacked from left side all the way to the right. It was a blessing to get a win against a tough defense like that."

### **On what has given him confidence in the team since the beginning of the season**

"What I've been through in this game, coming from a place like Ohio State, having ups and downs. And, just knowing the next play is the best play. It's not about what's happened before or the game before or whatever. It's about going 1-0 every play. And, I can go all the way back to high school, my head coach from high school is sitting back there, so I may be thinking about him. But, he'll tell you at times I'd get flustered, I'd get

pissed, because I want to be so great. And, I work really hard on the little details, on straining two yards every play after the whistle is blown. Every little thing I've been taught to do, I want to do it for the Lord God and for my teammates. I get really down on myself sometimes. I'm probably my biggest critic. I remember in college, we were playing the Rose Bowl, I threw a pick coming out of the half, and we were down two scores. And, [Ohio State] Coach [Ryan] Day gave me a look and was like, 'You've got this, let's go.' Ever since then, I just started kind of playing carefree. He trusted me on fourth down a lot. I made plays, and a lot of confidence was built back then. It's kind of where it stems from."

### **On how important it was for WR Nico Collins to get the ball back on a particular play**

"We talk about the ball, our DB Coach Dino [Vasso] comes up here every Wednesday and talks about what we need to do with the ball, protect it and take it. And, I gave it away, which isn't a great thing. But, it's kind of crazy because he [Coach Vasso] always shows clips of guys getting interceptions, not protecting the ball. You know me, I went in and tried to get his leg, so I try to get a little tackle, probably soft. But, I think I made him cut, and Nico came. No, I'm playing, it was all Nico. Nico made a good play, and like I told you, I'm looking back at the sideline, Bobby [Slowik], DeMeco, they're like, 'Keep going. You're all right. They got you, but they won't get you again.' And, Jerrod [Johnson] was very positive on the sideline as well, that helped me a lot."

### **On how he will remember his first NFL career interception**

"I ain't tripping. It is what it is. I learned from it. I understand that that guy [Baun], I think he watched a lot of film on that certain play, because we run a lot of in-breakers and things like that, and we try to offset it with certain out-breakers. He played both. I tried to move it with my eyes, probably didn't do enough of it. And, he made a hell of a play. I knew right when I threw it. I ain't tripping. You've got to keep going. I think I played a solid game after that. Of course, have to clean some things up. But, overall, we had a good day offensively. Got to be better on third down and just being on the same page on the scramble drill, missed some ops there, but other than that, I think it was solid. I'm not tripping. I'll learn from it and keep going."

### **On improvised plays with WR Robert Woods**

"He's always clean with his body language. I just have to see it better, throw it better. The third down one was my fault. I should have seen that he was breaking in and made a better play. I'm not sure what happened on the non-PI on the sideline. That was crazy. The red zone one I couldn't see far back in the end zone, so I tried to stop him with the ball. And, he did a good job by just keep rolling, because he didn't know it was behind him. It's just communication, talking about it, getting those reps at practice when things don't go well. But, other than that, I think me and Rob made a really good play on the third down in the red zone to get a score. So, it's just things you've got to work on."

### **On how opponents are changing their game plan to respond to his performance**

"I know the Atlanta DC came from Dennis Allen's tree, and Dennis Allen is a really good coordinator, really good head coach. Got a lot of respect for them over there. They were

changing up on me. It wasn't easy. Switching up the coverages, playing Tampa 2, going one robber, going quarters, going to cover 3, different things they were trying to get me on. I think this game, I wouldn't say more prepared, but I was ready for it. Bobby told me last week that the game against Atlanta was the first where they treated me like a great NFL quarterback. I think they treated me the same way this game, I just handled it a little better. And, I think this game, I should have took a completion, and I think I was smart with the ball, interception and things like that. Just growing every week. Thought I took a step. Of course, some things that I'm always going to go back on and try to get better at. But, Dennis Allen is a great [coach]. They called a great game. That's a tough defense and a really good win for us. Got to get back to the drawing board, but it's a great win."

### **On how Head Coach DeMeco Ryans has changed the culture of the team**

"I wasn't here last year, so I don't know. But, when I came in, I just knew this dude loves us. He really understands what it is to be a player. He understands practicing, building that callus in August and September, so in November and December, when you're playing to go to the playoffs and big things like that, those games are won back in August or September. That's the vibe I got. And, the one thing about DeMeco, it's all about because he played. I think some coaches who didn't play don't understand this, you can shoot yourself in the foot, get mad and be like, 'I'm going to be pissed about the play the rest of the day.' But, his thing is next play, next drive, next thing, and that means a lot, especially being a young quarterback, when I do make mistakes. Always come back to the sideline, and he's got a smile on his face. He always tells me how good I'm doing, always gives me advice and tips. I appreciate him for just his demeanor, his attitude and his positivity that he brings to this culture and this brand of football. And, I think as we're winning, we're buying in more and more."

### **On wanting to go for it on a fourth down at the end of the game and watching the defense close out the game**

"I'm a team guy, so I feel like we weren't playing complimentary football with our defense. They were getting stops. We were moving the ball, but we weren't scoring. We've got to get touchdowns in the red zone. I'm always aggressive. It was a great call not to go for it on fourth down, but I know if it (going for it) was the call, I was going to be ready to make a play. I know that they have trust in me when it's the right time, but it wasn't. So, I think DeMeco made a hell of a call punting the ball, and I know when that opportunity comes, I've got to make the play. I think they had trust in me though."