

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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David Tepper

Dan Morgan

Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: I want to welcome everybody on behalf of the Carolina Panthers, Tepper Sports and Entertainment, and David and Nicole Tepper. Welcome to Bank of America Stadium. Thank you all for being here.

Before we get started, there are a few people I'd like to recognize. We'd like to extend a special welcome to our current players, to our Panther legends who are here, all of our honored guests, members of the media, and those of you who are tuning in and watching.

We are here today to share how the Carolina Panthers are moving forward, and with that, I'd like to welcome the owner of the Carolina Panthers, Mr. David Tepper.

DAVID TEPPER: Good morning, everybody. Exciting day today. I'm excited to introduce to you our new head coach, Dave Canales, and our new president of football operations, general manager Dan Morgan.

I'm also thrilled to welcome Brandt Tillis, who will serve at our executive vice president of football operations. Brandt is with us today. His wife Elizabeth is with him.

Let me tell you a little bit about Dan and Dave. They are tremendous people, well-respected, and they are both connectors. Dan has 14 years of front office experience throughout the league. When Dan was a player, he kept the defense connected and on the same page, and I've seen those traits with him translate throughout this building with everyone, including scouts, players and coaches.

He keeps everybody moving in the right direction. As a player, he had a relentless pursuit of excellence which he will bring to this organization.

Dave Canales brings that same quality to players and coaches and on the field every day. He has a track record of bringing the best out of players. He is a connector. He

takes the time to work with players to create an environment that will earn their trust and maximize their ability.

Each of them brings experience from winning programs. They share the same vision for our organization and are aligned on how they will get there.

I'd like to ask Dan and Dave to join me on stage, but I'd also like to recognize Dan's wife Ashley and his family and Dave's wife Lizzy and his family.

DAN MORGAN: First, I want to thank everybody for being here today. It's a great honor to be named the general manager of the Carolina Panthers, along with Dave Canales as the head coach. Super excited to work with Dave. Me and Dave have known each other for many years now --

DAVE CANALES: Seven years.

DAN MORGAN: And this is a dream come true for both of us. The way Dave carries himself is a lot of the way that I carry myself, which is with honor, integrity, and we're going to work our butts off. First, I just want to start off by thanking David and Nicole Tepper. It's been great working with you guys. It's going to get better and better. There's going to be a process. There's going to be alignment in our building, and we're going to do things the right way to build a championship team here.

Obviously it's a great honor to be named the GM of the Carolina Panthers after playing here seven years with greats like Mike Rucker, one of my best friends is here, Vinny Ciurciu, he's here, Mike Tolbert is here, Thomas Davis, Jonathan Stewart, all these guys here, Muhsin Muhammad, you guys are the best. Doors are always open. You guys are family, and we're going to make it a family environment. That's the kind of environment that me and Dave want to create around here, so you guys are family.

We're going to do everything in our power to build this team the right way, not only on the field but off the field. The type of character guys that we bring in are going to be

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guys that love football, play with passion and play with a relentless pursuit of greatness.

There's several people that I'd like to say thank you to. Trent Kirchner, who's out in Seattle right now, he called me -- 14 years ago he called me and he said, I think you'd be a really good scout, Dan, and I didn't know if I wanted to do this or not, but 14 years later, here I am as the GM. I guess he has a pretty good eye for who's a good talent evaluator. I thank him.

John Schneider and Pete Carroll, they were so much fun to work with. I learned so much as a young scout out there. I was just a pro scout, driving guys to the airport, putting the work in, and John and Pete were just so great to work under.

For me and Dave to be able to learn under them is just -- you can't get that experience anywhere. I want to thank them.

Brandon Bean, Joe Schoen and Sean McDermott who I worked with in Buffalo, again, learning from great mentors, people that know football, people that know how to put an organization together, again, I can't thank them enough for everything they've done, and they've continued to help me to this day.

Terry and Kim Pegula with the Buffalo Bills, can't thank them enough for welcoming me in and my family in. They're the best. Just great people, just like Mr. and Mrs. Tepper. There's some great ownership in this league.

Scott Fitter, I want to thank him for bringing me back to Carolina and giving me this opportunity. Scott is one of my great friends, and I thank him for everything that he's done for me.

All of the Seahawks and Bills players, I want to thank them. Let's tell it how it is: All the sacrifices those players have had and the hard work and the dedication, we wouldn't be where we were if it wasn't for the players. The players are what make this game. I just want to thank everyone involved player-wise for being great and just kind of developing the relationships with them.

I'd obviously like to thank my family, my wife Ashley, my daughter Lexi, my son Brady, and my youngest, Cali. I love you guys so much, and I wouldn't be able to do this without you guys. All the hard work, all the dedication, all the sacrifice, Dad being at work and maybe missing some games. But I thank you guys and I love you guys so much.

To my parents, I want to thank them for instilling the values in me, honor, integrity, hard work, dedication, all those

things that I carry with me to this day. I just want to thank them for always being there for me.

I want to pass it off to Dave.

DAVE CANALES: Thanks, Dan. Good morning. What a moment of gratitude. What a moment of just thankfulness. In a room this big and of course for everyone who's watching, I think we can all kind of think about the people who believed in us first, gave us our first opportunity to show who we are, to express ourselves.

So first I want to thank David and Nicole for giving me this opportunity. This is a dream of a lifetime that Lizzy and I have had that goes back 20 years, and really the last 10 years, really honing this opportunity to get in front of an ownership and to sell a vision of who we can become. It's in my DNA. It's a part of who I am.

And for allowing me to be me and recognizing that, so I want to thank you, Christy, as well, just throughout the process, I learned so much just in those couple of days just how to interact and how to try to just keep the focus on the things that are important and feeling what your vision is for this team and feeling that alignment that's happening with Dan and I, to fit right into that, I'm just really appreciative there.

I've got to thank the Bucs organization for believing in me, giving me a shot. I was in Seattle for 13 years, but I get my first offensive coordinator opportunity way on the other side of the country, so my family, Lizzy and the kids moved out last April. I didn't quite make it to my one-year anniversary there, which would have been February 18th, so this part has happened really fast, but this is something that I've been working on.

I really want to thank the Glazer family, Joel and Darcy, Jason Licht, Todd Bowles, for giving me that chance for just letting me let it rip, giving me the confidence to let me do that. I'm really appreciative there.

Which takes me back to my time in Seattle. To formulate an identity, to formulate a football DNA that wins, 10 out of 13 years to the playoffs. I just coached in my 20th and 21st playoff games these last past couple of weeks.

I'm just really appreciative of Pete Carroll, who pushed me to think about the next thing. Quit looking just at the quarterback; quit staring at the wide receiver's route. Open your eyes what's happening with these combos; did you see what the defense is doing; did you notice we're playing a lot more of this coverage this camp; open your eyes; think bigger; be prepared. I can't thank Pete enough.

I'm going to miss a bunch of other names, but at that point right there I just want to also just thank the players, the guys who really just did a fantastic job, and most recently Russell Wilson, Geno Smith, Baker Mayfield, these guys that I just got to spend so much life with, to learn, to watch them grow as men, to watch them grow as football players.

It's their fault that I'm here, and that's the bottom line. It's about the players.

My family, just growing up in a family who's just a family of dreamers and self-starters in Carson, California, the Canales family, and then my extended family, the Hendersons, my wife's family, who we moved to in Seattle. We were with them for 13 years, how they walked the hard days, the frustrating days in the profession, the frustrating and hard days in our marriage, in our family, walking alongside of us, and just their undying support, prayers, all of my family members and friends that have been supportive over the years.

My kids, Ashby, Ben, Bea, May-May, Amaya, who lend their dad to this profession for six months at a time, but we fight for each other. We fight for windows. We fight to connect, to listen to each other and to grow together.

Finally, my wife Lizzy. It's really her fault. 20 years ago, I'm the head JV coach at Carson High School. Fired up, I'm so excited, we go to play Venice High School. It's my first day coaching. She's sitting up in the stands with about 35 crazy parents, and we got smoked 34-13 that day. It was the greatest day of my life because I had found it. I found my passion.

After two years of doing that, she comes to me, and she knew all I wanted to do was be the head coach at Carson High School. That's all I wanted to do, get us back on top, try to win championships and do all that, and she said, hey, don't get me wrong, I love your dream. You're really good at this. I think you can go as far as you want, and I've got your back. I'll make it happen, whatever we need to do.

She did; she worked three jobs at times, and she told me the hard truths. When I had problems with players or coaches, she said, you know what you need to do; you need to sit down and have those conversations. She's just been everything to me. This is our journey. This is our dream. We've been so excited and prepared for this opportunity.

I thank you, and I love you, babe.

That's just kind of the journey. How I got here started off with a dream in high school, and that turned into junior college at El Camino College. I learned the spread pass

game from a man named John Featherstone, rest in peace, and that's where I met Pete Carroll.

Pete gave me an opportunity to come along with him. I spent 14 formative, amazing years. I don't know if you've heard the saying see a little, see a lot. If you can sit at that same porch you'll watch the world go by, watch the NFL world come through the trends, the changes, the players, the generations of players, how to communicate, all happen in one place, in one city, for me just was a recipe for forming a really solid identity and a belief in a way to win.

I was able to fortunately take that to Tampa last year and to show what can happen. Not what can't we do but we what can we do, who are our guys and how do we build an offense around these people. I'm excited to be able to do that here with the whole team, to find our strengths, make them second nature, to find our weaknesses and work them into strengths.

I'm so excited to do it with Dan, with Brandt, with Mr. and Mrs. Tepper and all of us in the building really, that every time those players walk into this building, they're going to feel that intentionality. They're going to feel that this is about them. This is about building a place for them to thrive.

I'm excited to be here and to do this with you, Dan.

DAN MORGAN: Likewise. Just wanted to talk about the type of players that we want to bring in here, just DNA-wise. First of all, we need to find those leaders, those competitors. As Jay Stew would say, those dogs. We need some dogs. We've got to get some guys that are passionate about football, that love football, that want to come out every day and compete on the practice field, in the weight room. We need competitors. We've got to bring that back here. We've got to bring that back here to Bank of America Stadium to where people get excited about coming to see our team.

We're super passionate about bringing a team that the fans can be proud of, that our players can be proud of. When teams drive up to this stadium, we want them to fear that logo. The logo has to be feared again, because right now, it's not feared. We've got to get that back.

But I think it starts with getting the right type of players. It's guys like you, Thomas Davis, Jonathan Stewart, Muhsin Muhammad, we've got to get those type of guys. We want players with grit. We want players like Steve Smith, play with a chip on your shoulder, no holds barred, he's not taking any prisoners. We need those type of guys. Instincts and tenacity of Thomas Davis, and Luke Kuechly,

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guys like that that can make plays. We need playmakers out there.

We need competitors like Jake Delhomme, guys that are going to compete in everything they do, and they're going to be pissed off, and they're not going to stop until they win. Those are the type of guys we need.

I remember in 2003 we had our playoff game here, and I remember those towels out there, the white towels waving around. That's my dream for this organization. I was talking to David about that today.

We need to get that back, that excitement back here, and that's our goal is to roll up our sleeves, work hard, and find those type of players that are going to help us get back to home playoff games and winning. That's what we want to be about here.

DAVE CANALES: For me, just the marriage and the connection of it with Dan and I is just to create an environment, an environment that's set up, that our players have every resource at their disposal. That they come in here and they've got a plan for their body. They've got a plan for their mind. They've got a plan for their whole person as they walk in, and that this building stops everything when our players come in and say how can I help you, how can I serve you. That's the type of place that we have to be.

It definitely speaks to the coaching staff being developmentally minded.

I don't care about what we can't do. What can we do? Who are these players that we have, and how are we going to maximize those strengths on a daily basis? We're looking for championship moments, championship days, and that's got to be a full-on commitment every single time we walk in here. For me, it's about building that culture, building our language, making sure we're using specific language. There's going to be a bunch of buzz words thrown around. I don't like synonyms. We all speak the same language, and we're all heading in the same direction with that alignment that we talk about.

I'm so excited to create that culture. Culture is what you celebrate. Culture is also what you condemn and you say, this is a horrible-looking play; look what happened right here, guys. Boo this man, please, somebody, and then like at the same time, finding great opportunities from practice, from games to celebrate it. That's how you create culture. I'm really excited to be able to do that.

The next piece of it is we've got to get our football right. Let's just make it about the football. There's no storylines.

There's no agendas. It's about good football. We've got to play good football on both sides of the ball, be willing to look at it truthfully, and improve and take the next step and improve and capitalize on these moments to just see that growth and watch what it takes.

If we go after it every single day for a really long time, and for my players I always say, guys, just get better the next day. Do that for about 10 years, look back and see where you got.

For me, if it was this simple, how do we do that? It's our football philosophy here. It's all about the ball. We've got to be crazy about getting the ball on defense. We've got to be raking at the quarterback's elbow when we're sacking the quarterback. Every tackle has got to be an opportunity to get this ball back.

Offensively everything we do from the protection calls all the way to how we carry it, to our receivers transitioning and the quarterback, the decisions all is about taking care of the ball. Plus one equals 82 percent win. That's a historical number. If we can just be one turnover better than our opponent, look what we can do. We'll set ourselves up for success.

If I can make it that simple -- what if I told you in the wildcard round that the quarterbacks and teams that didn't turn it over won the game. It was as simple as that. We didn't even talk Xs and Os and what the style and philosophy of our offense and defense is. If we make it about the ball, we can go as far as we want to and put ourselves in position to be a championship team.

DAN MORGAN: With that, I think we're going to open it up to questions for the media.

Q. Dave, certainly welcome to Charlotte, and Dan, congratulations on your promotion. I think you guys answered all our questions in your preamble there. I think fans want to know, it's been six years since this team has been to the playoffs. It's been eight since they've won a playoff game. What do you feel like is the blueprint to get there, and secondly, maybe most importantly, how long do you think it'll take?

DAN MORGAN: I think it's about alignment and process. We've got to have processes in place, and we've got to be aligned in our building that we're all moving towards the same direction, and that's towards a championship.

To put it simply, I think that we just have to -- we've got to roll our sleeves up and we've got to get to work, and we've got to find the type of players that we want to infuse into our locker room, into our building, get winners in this

building.

DAVE CANALES: My timeline is today. How can we win today? Let's have a great interaction here. Let's start talking about what football you can expect out of us. Today this looks like a win for me, and that's just the way I think. Just approaching every single day, it's 1st and 10, I've got a new set of downs, my whole call sheet is at my disposal and got a bunch of fantastic people to go to work with today. It looks like putting a great staff together for me right now.

It looks like getting with Dan, looking at this roster and really coming up with an airtight plan for who we want to become.

Q. Dave, you mentioned your experience with quarterbacks. I want to know how that experience might help continue to develop Bryce Young in his second year.

DAVE CANALES: Attention to the details, first and foremost. It all starts off with relationship, Bryce and I just getting to know each other. I want him to know that I have his best interest at heart. I want him to be the best possible version of himself. That's the same approach that I've taken since I've been coaching positions in the NFL. That's really the approach I want to take with him.

Some of the other things that kind of come to mind thinking about the quarterbacks that I've worked with over the last couple of years is we are going to become what Bryce is great at in the pass game. We're going to grow to the capacity that he can handle. There's got to be a commitment and a discipline about that. There was a growth curve there with Baker. Here's where we're at today based on the information we have; let's get into these situations and see where he looks most confident. When I see that back foot planted in the ground and that ball rips out of there without any hesitation, I know we've got something. Let's find more of those. Let's put it in three different personnels and a couple different formations and motions.

Q. I wanted to ask you, what made this job attractive, and secondly, what were your thoughts coming to an organization that had fired three head coaches in five years?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, so first and foremost, in Seattle, we never were anywhere close to touching the first overall pick, and the more that I got ready for this interview and started watching Bryce, looking at my notes from his eval, that's just a year ago. We're evaluating him as a player, as a person, with all the information that we could.

I just got more and more fired up about the opportunity to have this amazing talent, and he's the guy. He's the right guy that we all talk about when we have that quarterback, that franchise -- face-of-the-franchise type of player, and that got me excited.

Just on top of that, I played against the Panthers twice, and the job that EJ Evero did with the defense was really hard, really hard to deal with. Great sound football, playing hard, some great players in some spots, and just the whole thing coming together, and then as it got to -- Dan and I have some history, so then I thought, shoot, if you look at some of the successful organizations, there's a dynamic relationship between the head coach and the GM, and then of course as I've gotten to meet the Teppers, too, to feel their competitive nature, their passion for what they want here, what they want to see when they come out to the practice field and just kind of knowing I can be that without faking anything, without having to make something up, I just felt like more and more this was going to be a great home, and I was really hoping as they were sorting through the names that I would come out as one of the top candidates.

Q. And the second part about coming to an organization that has fired three coaches in five years?

DAVE CANALES: I don't think that way. I'm thinking about today. I want to win today. For me, coming into this situation -- same like Tampa. I want to look at what we have, what can we do, not what can't we do. That's just my mentality.

Q. I've got one for Dan and one for Dave. Dan, for yourself, I wondered if you can talk about, you said you need more dogs, more good players, what that looks like specifically, where you think this team is lacking and where you want to build it. Then Dave, I just wonder if you can talk specifically about as a play caller what you try to do because you sound very passionate about that, deep balls, all that stuff.

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think when you talk about building the roster, I think it starts with competitors, guys that are passionate about football. We want to draft guys and sign guys in free agency that are passionate about football, that love football.

We have a lot of guys in the locker room right now that love football and are passionate, but we need to get more.

The dog part of it, we need guys that are hungry to go out there and inflict pain on their opponents. We need guys with toughness. We need physicality. We need those type



of things, just to put it plainly.

We haven't had enough of that, and that's going to be our DNA, to where when people drive up to Bank of America Stadium, they know they're in for a dogfight, so that's what we want to create here.

DAVE CANALES: Play calling, just thought process there, like we end up becoming us. That's one of the things I was really proud of is just looking at what run game fits us right, what's the best thing for Chuba, what's the best pass game for Bryce with the different pieces that we have on the offensive side.

We were able to find an identity and how to do that and win down the stretch, to put ourselves in position to play good football and beat a really good team in the wildcard round and give the Lions a run for their money there, that's a really good team, a great environment and challenge for us there. There were a couple games that got pretty hot there.

This is my first time around, so I'm really excited to see the growth there, too. Some people in the building that we have who have done it at a high level for a long time, Jim Caldwell being one of those, who's just got an eye for offense, an eye for this whole organizational piece, and I'm excited for my growth in the second year calling plays, and the mentality is what are they giving us today, and just having that variety, having the marriage of the run and pass, things that start off the same but end up being different, to have those nuances in plays, and utilize my staff so I can have good information on game day.

Q. Are there particular things you recall about Dan as a young scout in Seattle, his first entry into that part of the profession, and how do you guys plan to create kind of that John-Pete dynamic here?

DAVE CANALES: We were about one or two doors apart --

DAN MORGAN: Two doors.

DAVE CANALES: Two doors apart in the hallway down there, and it was kind of a crazy loud hallway for us. But what I remember about Dan in those times is just his conviction, his belief. Ashley, I'm sure you have a hard time with things that he had an opinion about stuff.

But right off the bat, just as a former player, he comes in and is like, he can just see it. He could just tell what a good football player was.

By no means was I an expert at that time, but I just have a

high value of my ability to evaluate, and Dan always had his opinions, and it was very clear thoughts that he felt strongly about, so that impressed me early on. Then as we grew to get to know each other, he was just such a natural in this world of evaluating players.

Q. Hearing a lot of talk about alignment. How much of that and how you guys wanted to restructure the front office and build Dave's staff has to do with last season when there were lots of reports, the factions among the staff and even going all the way up to ownership?

DAN MORGAN: I think it has to do everything with just moving forward. We're not looking back, we're looking ahead. We all want to be aligned, the business side, the football side, the locker room, the weight room, everybody on the same page, same mission, same vision. That's what I'm talking about when I talk about alignment. The whole building has to be on the same page. If we want to win, we all have to be on the same page, and we've got to be communicating every day. We've got to know the building inside out, and we've got to -- we all have to be aligned, plain and simple.

Q. Dave, you mentioned Ejiro. What's your confidence level; is the defensive staff going to be back intact?

DAVE CANALES: Oh, my gosh, just the respect factor that I have going against them. I know the scheme going against it. I'm really excited to learn more about the ins and outs as far as how the calls come in, the adjustments and all that of that. I know it was really difficult on me for years, whether it was in Seattle going against the Rams in that family or this year just going against EJ twice. This is really important for me, especially as a first-time head coach who's like, I'm here to make sure we get our football right, especially on the offensive side, that we have that continuity with the players, with EJ, just being able to have the mentality that I saw that was really challenging to play against.

Yes, this is for me like a huge piece of what we're doing.

Q. Dan, you mentioned other people telling you that you were a good talent evaluator. When did you realize that was where maybe your plan was after playing?

DAN MORGAN: You know, I think once I got done playing, you're always -- as a former player, I know a lot of guys here, you try to figure out what is the next step, who am I, because you reach your goal at such a young age and then you're left retired, and you're like 30-some years old, and you're like, well, what am I going to do with the rest of my life. It's not like you can go in the corporate world or

just go somewhere and get a job.

For me, it was about getting in -- back into what I knew best, which was football.

To start out in Seattle and learn out there from some of the best, one of the best GMs in the NFL, and then to continue that on to Buffalo and learn under Brandon Bean, it's been invaluable. They've taught me a lot, and they've really made me who I am today in terms of an evaluator.

Q. Dave, you mentioned a little bit of analytics when you went into talking about the plus one, 82 percent for a win. We obviously know the turnaround that Russ, Geno and Baker have done. How do you plan to implement those resources and those analytics when analyzing Bryce's trajectory and the potential that he could be?

DAVE CANALES: You know, I haven't really gotten fully into the details on that. I watched a good amount of Bryce going into the interview process, but right now I'm going back through the games, kind of looking at the story of the season and the critical and pivotal moments in those games.

Speaking about a specific plan there, there's a bunch of critical variables. I don't want to get too much into the football philosophy at this point. But just know, it starts with the ball for me. There's a way to win games in the NFL. It's defense. It's run game. It's an explosive pass game that comes off of that run game, and then in the pass game getting that ball out in 2.7 or less. That's a critical deal for me. It's been a really important number for us in Seattle, and being able to just track that for decision making, for route timing, the protection and all that. It all kind of fits into this really good brand of football that is complementary as we go through the season.

Q. Dan, bringing Dave in and having the conversations to bring Dave in, he's currently the only head coach of Mexican descent. It's no secret that the Carolinas and the Charlotte area has the largest Mexican demographic in this part. Talk me through that thought process of that representation for a large fan base that is quickly growing year by year, as well.

DAN MORGAN: I think first of all, diversity is a big part of what we do here with the Carolina Panthers. Dave just happened to be Mexican-American and also a really good coach and a really qualified coach. I'm really happy that he's here with us, and we're really blessed to have him.

Q. Dave, you've worked with short quarterbacks in the past, successful with Russell Wilson, successful with

Baker Mayfield, and you also had a tall quarterback with Geno Smith. Is there a way to coach quarterbacks under six feet as opposed to a taller quarterback?

DAVE CANALES: I think there are certain challenges. I'm not going to go and tell the whole NFC South what those advantages are. I think that's kind of a proprietary deal that we're going to own here.

But I will say that there are just certain things you can do to help. There are ways to find what that quarterback's comfortable seeing. You've got a guy like Drew Brees who's about my height, which is still short in terms of a 6'7" tackle.

Whether you're 5'11" or whether you're 6'1", you can't really see over any of the linemen. There's an approach to it, and at the end of the day, it's about decision making and just kind of making sure that we can have as many of our five eligibles available for the quarterback from a visual standpoint.

Q. Dan, you mentioned Brandt Tillis. Seems rather significant to be bringing over a guy who's been part of multiple Super Bowls and six straight conference championship trips. What impact do you envision him having, and your working relationship, what does that look like? And for you, Dave, a lot of guys in your position after just a year of calling plays might decide, hey, one more season, two more seasons before I'm ready to run my own operation. How did you know personally that now was the time for you to become a head coach, or was it as simple as this was your only offer?

DAN MORGAN: I think having Brandt here, it's really a blessing for us to have somebody with the knowledge that he has, how smart he is, how good of a person he is. To be able to work with him every day and collaborate and talk about the roster and kind of fit all the pieces of the puzzle together, and to have Brandt kind of work side-by-side with him, that's invaluable. I'm super excited that he's here, and I can't wait until he takes all these coaches' contracts off my plate, too, because I've been having to do that before he got here. I'm ready to hand that off to you now, Brandt.

DAVE CANALES: He's been crushing it, too, by the way.

For me, this is a dream come true. I think the part that I kind of feel a little bit compelled to say is I'm 42 years old. My wife and I have been together for 20 years. I spent 14 amazing years with an incredible -- one of the greatest football coaches of all time in Pete Carroll. So I got to sit there and just really formulate my plan and just wait for that opportunity to come along, and I just was like -- my wife



and I just kind of thinking like we're ready for this. Lead self, lead others, lead organizations. That's been an approach and mentality that I've had for a while.

When this opportunity came up and then I started seeing the pieces coming, I just got so fired up about it, and I'm really ready to serve this team.

Q. You talked about that alignment. I guess in terms of the alignment, even the power structure, what does that look like between ownership, front office and coaching staff?

DAN MORGAN: Yeah, I think it's going to be a strong bond. It's going to be a daily communication between the front office, between ownership, between the head coach, and it's just alignment on the roster. It's alignment on just everyday thinking. What are we about, what's the vision, are we doing the best things to reach that vision and that mission every single day.

It's just constant communication, and it's just being aligned in everything we do down to the detail.

Q. You guys talked about alignment and everything else, but you're both on a similar timeline in your careers. Are you guys feeling any amount of pressure to try to bring this team back to where you want it to go? Dan, you were part of a Super Bowl team, and Dave, I know you want to follow in those footsteps.

DAN MORGAN: No pressure, but a lot of hunger. Like a lot of hunger to be great. A lot of hunger to get this organization back to where it needs to be, which is back in the playoffs, which is competing for championships year after year.

There's an urgency with that that we're striving towards every single day.

DAVE CANALES: Can I say I'm nervous? Is that all right? Let's be honest; just getting this opportunity, I've got a ton of excitement about it. I've got a lot of things that I'm ready to put to the test, and that's been a lot of theory from a leadership standpoint.

But yeah, this is a big test. This is serious for me. This is a great opportunity.

I don't take that lightly, but at the same time, like Dan just hit, I'm fired up about it. I love a great challenge. I didn't shy away from the Tampa job. There was a lot of people that kind of looked at that and thought, what are you thinking, you've got a great situation with Geno in Seattle, and I was like, I'm going to bet on us, and I'm going to look

at what we do have and see if I can make the most -- it's about maximizing.

Somebody ran into me and was like, you guys really overachieved, and I just hate that term. I love the thought of maximizing, just getting every last drop out of everyone involved, all together in a worthy cause. I'm excited for it, and I'm nervous, too, and I realize how weighty this is.

Q. Dan, at the moment, you guys do not have a first-round draft pick. How high is it on the to-do list to get one?

DAN MORGAN: It's not really high. We have the 33rd pick, which is essentially a late first-round pick. We're just going to draft good players, and hopefully at 33, I think there will be a good player there. If we choose to move back, if we choose to move up, that's to be seen. But we're going to plan. We're going to have a plan. We're going to execute on that plan.

Q. Dave, you have shown that you are enthusiastic online and are willing to engage with the fan base on social media. When did that start? Is that going to continue? And why do you think that's important?

DAVE CANALES: Just I think what's important to me is that we all grow to have a relationship, and as we have a chance to get into more detail about what we're looking for from a football standpoint, my hope is that I can show you what to look for and what we're going to try to become. From a philosophical standpoint, of course the whys and the hows, that's going to be depending on what our players are.

My hope is that if I put this out there and I say this is who we're going to be, that we're able to have this relationship where you keep me accountable on this. You said we're going to play this brand of football where you guys are crazy about the ball. We had three turnovers last week, we were minus two or we were minus three, and I'll be able to say, that's a great point, that's not the kind of football we want to play.

My hope is that we can kind of grow in that relationship as we have that expectation for who we're going to become.

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