

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Derek Carr

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Panthers 23, Saints 22

Q. No such thing as 100% week nine. How did you feel out there today?

DEREK CARR: Yeah, health-wise I felt as good as you can. Good enough to play. At the beginning felt a little rusty. As the game kept going on, felt more and more in rhythm and felt good.

Whenever you don't play professional football for a month, you can't just go out there and just feel normal right off the bat. But I definitely felt good enough to help us try and win.

Q. The last play, the progression on that, coach was saying Juwan first. What is it after that?

DEREK CARR: It's the best matchup. They got a good secondary. No. 8. All week, we talked about No. 8 being one of the premier corners in the league. If you ever got man, which they don't play much of, going away from him.

Gave my guy the best chance I could on a tight throw on the sideline.

Q. When you look back on this game, will you look really hard on the first two drives?

DEREK CARR: Absolutely. You never want to settle for field goals. It always comes down to the situation. For us finishing with touchdowns in the red zone instead of those field goals would have obviously helped us, for sure.

Q. Have you talked to Chris?

DEREK CARR: Yes, absolutely. First thing I did when I went in there, went and saw him, sat in there and talked to him, made sure he was good.

I won't put his business out there or anything like that. But I did, absolutely. First thing I did was went and checked on him.

Q. That was after the game?

DEREK CARR: After the game.

Q. He was already back here?

DEREK CARR: Yes.

Q. Can you take us through the play a little bit, how he was going down the field, what you saw.

DEREK CARR: Yeah, I didn't see the actual collision because of people in front of me. It was single high. Hold the safety. First throw is to him. Threw it into just a zone spot. All I saw was him go like this. I don't know if he got hit or pushed, I don't know. Then he got hit and he was hurt.

I didn't see exactly what happened. I was 20 yards away.

Q. Did he give you any kind of indication that he felt like he was okay?

DEREK CARR: He looked right at me, reached out and grabbed my hand just to make sure I saw him. Absolutely, yeah.

Q. Is that a tough scene to see, especially because of he's had multiple concussions?

DEREK CARR: 100%. It's the scariest part of our game. That's a moment. That's the only moment in a game where you'll see both teams take a second and be like, Hey, man, this is someone's life. 'Cause you don't know what's going on.

Nobody wants that crap to happen to anybody, no matter the rivalries, all this kind of stuff. Nobody wants that stuff to happen to anybody.

We're just glad, I'm just happy that I saw him. I'm happy he's okay from what I saw. I didn't hear anything. Those are scary moments. I've been a part of a few of them with different kind of injuries with this happened, that happened, something happened on a sideline, whatever.

At the end of the day we are human, too. It's a brief moment during an NFL game where the humanity kicks in on both sides.

Q. This team is almost at the worst it can get, it feels like, seven straight losses, the way you lost today.

DEREK CARR: Yep.

Q. What can you do as a team to figure out what's going wrong?

DEREK CARR: Well, it's very frustrating for us as players. Our group of guys, I've said this and I'll keep saying it, are so tight-knit and so close. So what we do is we rally together. We're going to keep going with whatever our coaches say. We give it everything that we have. We're going to at this point to do that, continue to rally together, lock arm in arm.

Right now it is a hard time. It is. It's a hard time. We're pissed off. We should be winning these football games. We're not. For us, that's hard. It's hard to swallow. It's hard to deal with.

You can do one of two things: you can give up or you can keep fighting. Whether it's fun or not, no one cares. We have to keep picking each other up and keep going forward.

We're going to keep doing to the very best of our ability everything we're asked to do and keep going as we always have. Whatever it is, man. We talked as players, all of us will do whatever we have to do. We'll put it all out there for each other.

We just got to keep doing that.

Q. If it's not intangibles like effort, energy, buy-in, is it just the team is not good enough right now?

DEREK CARR: Man, I don't feel like that's the case 'cause there's a lot of the same guys the first two weeks of the season that are still playing. I don't ever feel that way. I never feel going into a game like, Well, we don't have a chance.

This one hurts. If I was our fans, I'd be pissed right now because we are, too. It baffles us, too. Coming in here, get a loss like that, this one hurts.

We got to pick ourselves up and keep locking arms like we have all year. We just got to play better. At the end of the day we put it on ourselves. I put it on me. It starts with

me. I got to be better for our team. I can promise you the work will be done to where I am.

Q. You've been on a few teams that have made mid-season coaching changes. What is it as a player going to bed not knowing...

DEREK CARR: Yeah before I came here, you hear those rumblings and things like that. That stuff to me is way above my decision-making abilities. My job is to play quarterback, take care of the football, try and score touchdowns, put us in position to win football games.

The one thing I've learned when that stuff happens, if you don't have a tight group, it can go south real quick. If they ever thought that something like that, which you never as players want that to happen, if they ever thought they had to do that, then we better go tight together because I've had that happen. I've been a part of a team that played the Playoffs where something like that happened. I've been a part of other teams where it's not fun.

To even think that could happen sucks. It's the sucky part of this business. It's the sucky part of where we are at right now.

Q. You talk a lot about the veteran leaders having a message. A lot of guys on this team have never won. Do you think that affects them? Are there people that don't believe you can win?

DEREK CARR: I wouldn't say that they don't believe we can win. It comes with experience. Do we have guys that are looking for someone else to make the play? Absolutely. That's with every team I've been on, whether our record is what it is now or we've had 10 wins.

You just do your best to be in those situations and scenarios. At the end of the game, I said something in the huddle after that second play. I was trying to get that ball off, get that snap off. Just like there's a learned urgency, there's a learned thing building character when you're in those moments.

I've been in so many of those two-minute drive moments in my entire life. Those are the things you live for, you love. You don't learn to love 'em until you've experienced 'em enough.

Q. You've had an opportunity to win a bunch of these games. When the team doesn't finish, what does that do to the mindset?

DEREK CARR: Yeah, the scary thing when that happens, the scary thing I've noticed over my 11 years is when that



happens, something maybe doesn't go your way, people get deflated. Here it goes again, it's over. It is a fight in here that you got to teach yourself that even if something bad happens, there's still time on the clock, we can still win. Having that mindset, that urgency.

Again, it's a learned thing. You have to go through those situations. You got to check yourself after every game to make sure your mindset going into that tough situation, whatever it is, that you're mentally like, No, I still believe we can do this. I'm going to do my job, make my play. When the ball goes this way, I'm going to make that tackle, make that throw, that catch, that block, whatever it is.

It's a learned thing. Everything is going against you, but I'm still going to do my job on that play.

Q. Michael Thomas was on social media saying, insinuating that your pass was the reason Chris got hurt, this is the second time you've done this. When you see that or hear that from a former teammate, what is your reaction?

DEREK CARR: I have love for Mike. When he does that, I don't really care for it obviously. I've had so many teammates over the years, he's like the one dude that didn't get along with me. I don't know what I did to him. I don't know why he feels that way. I'm sorry for whatever he's dealing with to make him feel like he's got to do that.

I don't know. But he's never called me during any of this. My phone number has never changed. I've, in fact, called him on different occasions just to try. Sometimes you can try as hard as you want, and it just doesn't work out. That's okay.

I don't know why he feels any type of way. I didn't see it. I won't see it 'cause I always ignore everything good and bad. I try to ignore everything.

It's unfortunate, especially coming from a player like that. But I wish him the best. I hope he gets on a team and does what he wants to do and loves it. I'll never change. I love him in that way, wish him the best.

It's something I just would never do to a teammate 'cause it was single high, the ball went to where we talked about it going, Chris got hit in the head. Unfortunately that happens in our game. I would never do it on purpose. I didn't throw him into a bad look. It wasn't a different coverage where that guy was... All that kind of stuff.

When it comes to the football aspect of it, I really don't have an answer for it. When it comes to the person part of it, I just hope he gets what he's looking for.

Q. On the throw itself, was it too high? There's no guilt that you put him in a bad spot?

DEREK CARR: Anytime my receivers get hurt, I feel it in the pit of my stomach. If what he wants me to say or what he's looking for is to put blame on me that I got Chris Olave hurt, he can put blame on me. It's not going to change my day.

I have a pit in my stomach anytime one of my teammates goes down because I love 'em that much, not matter if I like 'em or not. I happen to love Chris Olave. We have a great relationship.

Anytime that happens, I feel sick to my stomach. I hate - I hate - and I don't use that word a lot, but I hate moments like that.

To be clear about that part, I hated it happening. It makes me sick anytime that happens, whether they get up or don't get up. I don't like that. You try your best to never put someone in that situation. Over the course of my career, it hasn't happened that many times. Thankfully it hasn't.

I don't know. I'm sorry that I had to even answer these questions. I wish we could have made it better. I wish it would have never happened. I wish I could have made Mike happier. But that was hard to do.

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