

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Dave Canales

Postgame Press Conference



Buccaneers 26, Panthers 23 OT

DAVE CANALES: Story of the day. We got to control the things that we can control. We got to make our kicks, we got to take care of the ball at the end right there. We're in a field goal position right there to be able to win the game in overtime. Just the execution all across the board.

There's some good football in there and there's some bad football. We got to continue to attack it. It's just the things we gave away. It was a bright spot to get a couple of interceptions, got some points off of that. Once again, one of four in the red zone with opportunities there. Those and the kicks, it's the story of the game. Sends it into overtime.

We got to play better as a group. To come away with these groups where we're playing good football for parts of it, but we have to put together a full complement of quarters, a full finish to become the team we want to become.

Q. What was the explanation on the catch at the end of the half? Did you agree with it?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, they called it incomplete. There was some movement in the ball. I thought he had control going down. He got his knee down. But it's a close call. They called incomplete to start. It's hard to turn those over when they called it one way and there is a little bit of movement there. You have to go with the officials on that one.

Q. To think you have it twice, then to not, what is your message to the team in terms of keeping their spirits up?

DAVE CANALES: It was just the same message I gave to all of you. It's the things that we control. The things that were well within our control in terms of just getting down there in field goal range, coming away with points there. Taking care of the ball at the end right there because that's on us. That's the point to drive it home to the team. It was the same message that I just gave to all of you.

Q. How did you feel your quarterback played today?

DAVE CANALES: I thought he played great. I thought he made some critical throws in critical situations. He got us out of some bad ones. Threw the ball away a couple times. It was an aggressive day. They blitzed a lot. He handled it well and gave us a chance to win for sure on those last couple of drives.

Q. As the rebuild continues, how important is to it have players like Robert Hunt buy into the system?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, all the guys that we're counting on. All of them just coming together as a group to find the finish, to find the consistency that we've been looking for. That's a carryover, for it to sustain. Can't be here and there. It's got to be the whole time that we have to grasp that part.

Q. Outside of Bryce's scrambles, 18 rushing attempts, what is the sweet spot for you in the game?

DAVE CANALES: I don't have a specific number. I think we were having some success throwing the ball, as well. The run averages, some of the runs looked pretty good. Love to have more. But I don't know if there's a specific number if you put yourself in position to win the game.

Q. What do you say to Chuba after a game like that?

DAVE CANALES: Fundamentals. Just take care of the ball. You got your yardage there, okay, lock it up. Just like we talk about, the basics. He'd be the first one to come up and tell you the same thing.

Q. Chau Smith-Wade at nickel over Dave Jackson, he comes up with the big interception. When you make those big decisions, a guy immediately responds to them, how much does that justify the program you are trying to build, the overall arching chemistry?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's about opportunity. When guys get these opportunities to get back in there, to show us what they can do, they make plays, that's great. That



gives us a lot of confidence in the young guys to get out there.

Again, I have to watch the film and look like what the rest of the film looks like for Chau. Again, that was a huge play for us.

Q. In the red zone, you went to Jonathan on five consecutive touches. Why did you do that?

DAVE CANALES: We were moving the line of scrimmage. He happened to be in on that drive. He was doing some good things. He had a couple nice check-downs to make some yards. Really encouraged by his progress from the first week to the second. Great to get him some touches that he needs.

Q. Two misses on the kicks. What is your philosophy on going for those short-distance fourth downs?

DAVE CANALES: Trying to get points. I think if you miss a couple, it makes you feel like maybe we should be a little bit more aggressive if we get another opportunity that way.

Q. You said Bryce played great. Can you elaborate on what you saw that was great?

DAVE CANALES: Just the operation, being decisive with the ball. Knowing they were giving us a bunch of different looks and handling the challenge of it. Really studying the film throughout the week to find the voids in the different pressures and things that they printout.

Just again, the decisiveness of play is what is really critical at the position. He did a great job I thought of that today.

Q. Despite the outcome, how much confidence do you get in your offense when they're able to drive the ball into scoring position in those high-pressure late-game situations?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, I mean, it's great. The chemistry is growing. The trust factor. All those things are headed in the right direction.

But you got to do it for four quarters. There were some lulls in the middle of it, too. So some of the execution stuff we'll look and continue to grow from.

For the guys to see that we can do this, make this happen, when everybody does right. It's the whole thing, all three phases.

Q. I understand you're on the offensive side of the ball. This is the second week where the defense has

not been able to get that late-game stop. How do you fix that?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, just looking at rush lanes, making sure the guys are playing the right leverage in the coverages, the things we're asking them to do. We'll get a look at all that on film and we'll attack it for sure.

Q. Is there an emotional weight that you have to shake when the game ends this way?

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely. Because it's the things that were controllable. Just going back to that. If we can own those things, then we'll play to what we're capable of playing.

Q. I don't know if you knew, but Sam Franklin came sprinting over to the Bucc's side just a second ago and was shouting for a fight. I don't know if you were aware of that?

DAVE CANALES: I was not. I was not aware of that.

Q. Going back to Chuba, I think the play or series that was asked about, you only had nine carries for Chuba at that point. He's been your workhorse. Did you feel like you got away from the running game?

DAVE CANALES: I just thought that that was the way that drive played out and we were getting good movement so we kind of wanted to stay with it. Brooks was out there. I thought he did a good job.

Again, I got to watch the film to see what was actually there on all those runs. That was just the situation of where we were at in that drive.

Q. What should have been done differently on the defensive side with 30 seconds left?

DAVE CANALES: I got to watch the film to give you a real clear answer on that.

Q. What did you think of matching wits with Todd, seeing Baker on the other sideline, how that played out?

DAVE CANALES: It was a great challenge. It was a great challenge for us. Threw us two interceptions but kept battling. We knew that it was going to be a dogfight. We knew it was going to be a tough game.

Todd certainly knows this system. He saw it firsthand. He threw a bunch of difficult things at us. He caused some problems that we were able to capitalize on a couple of the

opportunities, as well.

We knew it was going to be a challenge. That's what we expect week in, week out.

Q. Eddie and Johnny seemed to struggle a little bit early with their kicks. How is Eddie feeling? What type of feedback did you get from Tracy on the attempts?

DAVE CANALES: I have to talk to the guys more. They'll be the first to come up here and tell you they got to execute better in those situations.

Q. Caleb Farley on the first kickoff, what happened there?

DAVE CANALES: I don't know. I was not looking directly at what happened there. I'll have to gather some more information about that.

But there were a couple of penalties out there. Again, those fall under the things that we're in control of, and we have to play with composure. You can't give NFL offenses any field position advantage, anything like that.

We had them pinned back on a good kick, great coverage and attack on that. We have to make sure we're just executing and doing our job. Just play with passion, yeah, but we got to play smart. That's a part of what we're trying to do.

Q. You guys weren't able to get a play off right before the two-minute warning. Were you trying to get one in?

DAVE CANALES: It was a part of what we were doing.

Q. The offense has played well the last two weeks. Would you say the one problem left is finishing?

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely. Finish in the red zone. We got to get touchdowns in those situations. Really close stuff last week. Really close stuff this week.

That's just us fine-tuning the chemistry, fine-tuning the landmarks, all those things, just making sure we finish that way. Of course, on the defensive side to be able to finish the game the way we want to.

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