

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

Sunday, December 22, 2024
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Dave Canales

Postgame Press Conference



Panthers 36, Cardinals 30

DAVE CANALES: Panthers football. Don't turn the ball over. We got two from them. Cleaned up some of the special teams penalties, but we had some other that kind of happened throughout the course of the game.

But we talk about finish and finding a way to finish, do right longer. The defense found a way in the overtime to have a couple of balls knocked down, a sack, some big things right there. And the offense, of course, finishing it the way we want to, being able to run the ball with toughness right there. We're in a great situation for a field goal, and Chuba ends up breaking a few tackles and scoring there. It's a great thing to celebrate with the guys.

So reemphasizing playing football right, doing right longer is the way we finish. Was really happy about that.

Q. For Chuba to close out the big one in the home finale, what do you think it means to this team and to this locker room?

DAVE CANALES: It's great for everybody involved. We talk about being able to run the ball. We talk about being able to finish the game running the ball, and we were able to do that right there. So it was huge.

Q. Dave, your last possession in regulation, your first possession overtime, you had two third and shorts where you didn't run the ball. Did that, when you got to that second overtime possession, were you, like, we're going to get it to Chuba?

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely. Thought about just having that mentality. They gave us some pretty challenging looks in those situations so they were playing for us to run the ball in those situations. Thought we had a couple of good passes called. Bryce tripped, said he might have tripped on Brady's foot on the first one. The last one we had, we had a guy open in the flat for a potential first down and missed the throw on that one. Would love to have that.

When we got to overtime, we had the opportunity to run the ball there. It worked out for us.

Q. You talked about this week about winning this last home game. What does it mean for this franchise to kind of leave it here, even though you have two more games on the road?

DAVE CANALES: It was great for us to be here, Bank of America Stadium, with our fans here. It was a great showing by the fans. It was some great energy at the end of this finish right here.

So to be able to show our style, great effort, great enthusiasm, great toughness, playing smart and finish. The final piece of that, it was really special to me so that we can feel what it feels like to play our brand of football.

Q. What can you say about the contribution to the two undrafted rookies, Windmon and Richardson. Can you talk about the hip-drop tackle?

DAVE CANALES: It's about opportunity. We talked about that last night. Don't miss your shot. When you have a shot, make the most of the opportunities. I had a chance to find Coby Windmon after the game. He mentioned that resonated with him. He had an opportunity here. Opportunities come in a bunch of different ways. His happened because of the injuries we've suffered in that position. He made great plays. He made tackles in the open field, ran around and played fast. That was true.

Q. It's a young team, but you had a lot of veterans step up, Tommy Tremble, A'Shawn Robinson, David Moore, Adam Thielen. These guys have been through a lot of losing this season. How have they been able to kind of guide the locker room through?

DAVE CANALES: Their example of what professionalism looks like, that regardless of where you're at when you have these opportunities, you go right back to work and you take the work seriously throughout the week. You show up. And these games are so valuable for all the guys that get to be out there. To hold our opponents in the highest regard, to hold each game in the highest regard,



they've been able to show the team.

Q. When did you realize Cade wasn't going to be able to play? What does it say that Brady is able to step in?

DAVE CANALES: It was this morning. Brady was prepared. He's worked on it to be ready and go in at a bunch of different positions really. For Brady to come through again and allow us to play football was huge. Again, another opportunity for Brady to show what he can do as well. That was huge.

Q. Bryce last week had four turnovers. How was this for a coming back game?

DAVE CANALES: He just played fast again. He was decisive. You saw scrambles early where he was able to pick up critical third downs there and run one in for a touchdown. It was about just being decisive, knowing where all the bones are buried in his concepts and being able to get to the scramble when the windows open up for him. Again, making nice throws when we needed him to.

Q. I know your team has two games left, but today was your last home game. How do you look at the progress the team has made so far this year?

DAVE CANALES: We look for weekly progress. We take each game as an isolated game, look at those things, work on the issues and try to improve one week at a time. That's been our focus. That's going to be our focus this week with Christmas coming up and a different schedule, can we still get our work done and be focused to play the Bucs.

Q. There was specific parallels to earlier close losses, especially here at Bank of America Stadium. How do those experience, though they're losses, help inform you in games like today.

DAVE CANALES: Being comfortable. As long as we have time and downs. You go to overtime, you've got to go to overtime. You've got to play football and continue to do right longer. That's the message for our group and for the guys. Especially for the defense to get the ball back one more time in overtime after we had to punt on the first drive. So the guys just continue to have that fight that we've had all year. But to finish it the way we wanted to, which is with the win, was huge.

Q. Dave, there had not had been any hip-drop penalties called before the one on Jacoby. What explanation did you get? Seemed like for a bit after that call, it kind of changed momentum.

DAVE CANALES: It was big play. It was certainly a big play. All of the elements looked like they were there. The posture and all those things that they're looking for. And so I haven't seen the replay fully yet so I don't want to comment too much more on it, but the officials are making their calls quickly. And I know there's a lot of pressure on them. When they see something, then ended up going with that call.

Q. Dave, back to Bryce. He took a lot of hits today. What can you say about his toughness?

DAVE CANALES: He keeps popping up, playing the next play. That's the goal is the refocus mechanism that we talk about. Can we snap back and play the next play. He did a great job today.

Q. To go back to Chuba, in another overtime game, had a different result a few weeks ago. I wonder if you can talk a little bit about how he's been able to bounce back in such a critical moment.

DAVE CANALES: It speaks to his character. That's who he is. He's going to go right back to work, and we'll keep giving him the ball, especially in these types of moments. And it was a beautiful finish. It was just the old school duo play. And our guys, they fit up the blocks properly. He ran behind his pads and secured the ball, finished in the end zone. So it was great redemption for Chuba for sure.

Q. Dave, as your team has gone through the series, the highs and the lows, the overarching theme is learn how to win. How many teaching points come out of this game in that effort in learning how to win?

DAVE CANALES: It's huge because there were some good and some bad. There were moments when we didn't execute and were able to give the Cardinals another opportunity. It's just keep playing football. Don't pass judgment on the outcome of the game based on one play, one result that might happen. We've just got to keep playing ball as long as we have time on the clock, as long as they're giving us opportunities. And this was just another stacking another piece for the guys to learn how to finish.

Q. Dave, specifically took advantage of other team's mistakes. The Cardinals had a ton of penalties in the first half, had the turnover. You scored on that, built that lead. From a coaching standpoint, do you kind of have to highlight that type of stuff when you go into the film room this week?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, we do. I know I sound like a broken record, but it's about just continuing to play football.

Regardless of how those opportunities come to us, can we just get right back on schedule to doing things that try and attack the defense the way we were.

Can the defense continue to make their adjustments to the different issues that show up in the game. Today was a bunch of them, you know. Kind of felt like it was a back and forth game there, and even though we had a little bit of a lead, the Cardinals fought right back in, something we talked about Kyler, just the competitiveness of the guy. And Coach Gannon, just they've been building this football team now for two years, and to see them continue to play sound football and make it hard on us. So you it was knock-down-drag-out kind of day.

Q. Did you ever consider going short sleeves like Coach Gilbert today?

DAVE CANALES: I did not, no.

Thank you.

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