

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Coach Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: Great day. Great to get back on the grass, back to work. Shifting our focus to our new opponent, the Arizona Cardinals, and this is a really good team. We watch them on film. They play with a great play style on defense. They fly around. It all starts with Budda Baker. He stirs the drink and he makes all those guys play to that standard and that level. Looking forward to that challenge and that opportunity.

Offensively a bunch of young playmakers that they've had, that they've added, and then just a really good run game that we've seen before, so this is just a great opportunity for us, a great opportunity for us to come together as a team, to execute, and today was the start of that.

Q. With the way that Budda operates, how important is it for Bryce and Austin to be on the same page from a protection standpoint, and what did you see on tape from Austin and where are you at?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, I think it's really critical, just kind of knowing where he's at. They have a cool nickel package. He's so versatile and he can cover a lot of ground. He understands the timing of football and the snap and all those things. He presents different challenges as you go into the line of scrimmage, whether it's in the run game or the pass game. We have to be aware of that. We have to prep our guys, particularly on the scout team, to try to give those types of looks so that we can replicate that and be ready for that.

Q. Austin said last week that they had a new defensive coordinator. The scheme was a little new. He said that may have caused some of the issues in terms of identifying things. How beneficial is it that the Cardinals, while I know there's some new personnel, the scheme looks to be roughly the same?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's good to have the carryover. It's good that we have a late-season game against them to be able to look at and kind of see the attack. How we were trying to attack them, how they were trying to attack us, and the familiarity certainly helps as you prepare for

practices.

For us, again, with that being said, they still do a lot of different things. I respect the heck out of this group and Coach Gannon and the way that they present their defense.

Q. Talking about the confusion that seemed to be there at times on Sunday, how much did that have to do with the plays not getting there on time?

DAVE CANALES: For me, I thought the operation was pretty smooth. There was a couple of times we were up against it. I think that's pretty typical for a Game 1.

Q. What is the latest on Ickey?

DAVE CANALES: He had a great day today. We got him all the way through indie, got into some team drills. He was limited. We didn't feel like we could throw him out there for a full practice quite yet, but he looked great. He looked strong. He was asking for more. We told him tomorrow we're going to pad up, and that's going to be a great day to keep building on this.

Q. How did Yosh look upon film review?

DAVE CANALES: I thought he had a solid game. He had his work cut out for him going against Josh Hines-Allen. He's a fantastic player. He got him a couple times, but Yosh settled in and played a pretty solid game in the run game. Pass protection-wise, like I said, he beat him a couple times.

But for just looking at the whole thing, I just was really glad that we had Yosh to be able to go into that game. We had Brady there to be available for other things as well. Yeah, I think that was it.

Q. I just wanted to follow up on the missed tackles. You spoke Monday of going back to the basics. What tactics do you use to coach up NFL players to tackle?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, we just go right at it. I think the gift of when things -- you come out of a game and there's



some fundamental things that you can focus on, I think it's just a great opportunity to go right back to the basics. Coach E had a phenomenal tackling circuit down there, tracking in the open field, coming out of the stack, second guy attacking the ball, and just getting our knees bent, getting our feet square and finishing the tackle with a good wrap, so there was a good circuit today.

I looked at the guys and saw their energy down there, and there wasn't any eye rolling. There was just, like, you know what, all right, this is on par with how we did; let's improve this fundamental part of our game so that we can continue to pursue the good football we're looking for.

Q. How do you think Mac impacted the game beyond his catches? How did he impact the game, what you saw defenses doing differently to account for him that may have helped you?

DAVE CANALES: I didn't see huge adjustments by the defense taking him into consideration. He had some good one-on-one ops. He won most of them. There was a good opportunity down in the end zone where the corner made a great play on the post throw, but I think just in general, whether we move him around, put him in the single, he just gave us an ability to have another reliable target that attacks the ball like we've seen.

Then I just kind of was feeling his energy going into the game, and he was very confident beforehand, felt like he was prepared, and he had a great day. He graded out mentally in terms of knowing what to do and all that pretty good, too.

Q. As far as last Sunday goes, is it one of those games where you as a coach look at the situation, you get on them, or do you just say, guys, look at what happened, and you lighten up a little bit and you say, you know what you have to do type of thing?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's an opportunity to go right after the things that showed up that we need to work on, and our players teach us what to emphasize. You get what you emphasize.

It's always something different, whether it's offense or defense or special teams, but when those things show up, it just gives us an opportunity to coach it really hard, for the players to be accountable for it, and the constant reminders of how critical and how vital the fundamentals of this game are.

Q. The Cardinals on the opposite side of the ball against the defense have pretty good talent where you guys have kind of shown weakness at tight end or are

running the ball and we say that in the previous game against them. What is the challenge with Kyler and then on top of James Conner and Benson and all that stuff, plus the tight end position with McBride?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, just being really disciplined about our assignments and trusting what you see, the reps throughout the week, trying to get any little piece of information that we can on what they're doing. That's the challenge of it.

I come from a system in Seattle where at one point early in Russell's career with Marshawn back there we did a bunch of different things with the tight ends, with the back, with the shotgun formations and all that. There are challenges that come with it, and so there are certain rules that come with that as well, from a defensive standpoint, so we've got to be disciplined about that.

Q. How do you adjust without Terk in there defensively?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, next guy up. Just wanting our guys to just be able to play the techniques well and be in their gaps, and then when it's your opportunity to make the play, come off of it and bring everything you've got.

Q. You indicated Monday that you were going to push the defensive staff to maybe look at some younger guys. Did you have that conversation, and what came out of it?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, I was honestly just addressing a question. Our staff knows, we all know here, we are developmentally minded. That's our philosophy, whether that goes with our staff, raising and teaching our staff, or whether that's with all of our players. You get 46 guys on game day, three of them are special teamers. You've got 43, these guys all have to play at some point, so I was really just talking about that, like these are the guys. They're all going to have to play at some point, and just continuing to pour into that because the opportunity is here we go, we have an opportunity now. Terk Wharton all of a sudden is not here, now Jaden Crumedy has to play a bigger role. That's kind of what I was alluding to, just giving a little bit of reference and background.

Q. What did you see from Nick Scott in those limited reps?

DAVE CANALES: Oh, high energy, but definitely feeling his way through it. For me, I have a picture of him when he's at his confident and fastest best, and for me when he was out there, he was kind of like a little bit measured, and then I go. So the challenge for Nick is just go. Just go.



Make the plays full speed, the mistakes full speed, and we'll correct it from there.

That's been his calling card. That's the style that he plays with, going back to his college film and what I've seen throughout camp and now play with that kind of tenacity.

Q. From an overall standpoint, what are the vibes at practice? Do they seem more focused? Do they seem relaxed, coming off of the week 1 loss?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, focused, urgency. I think when you play a game like that, it's like, all the guys are -- it means something to them. They were a little bit testy with each other. I don't mind saying that. I like seeing that. It matters to them. They care, and that's the type of focus and energy that we need, the type of passion that it takes to continue to grow our schemes, to continue to play together. It requires that type of accountability with each other.

Q. Obviously it didn't seem like Hunter got on the active roster until Jalen's injury. What did you think about his performance on Sunday, how he's gotten reacclimated physically and where he's at?

DAVE CANALES: I'm so excited Hunter is here. I think just having him in the game, having another guy you trust, know where he's going to be, and I think just as we continue to just build this season, we'll be able to build and create more and more off of things that he's done forever. We have, like, an amazing 130-play cut-up of Hunter Renfrow concepts and passes and things that fit in with our system and things that I'm curious learning about and trying to figure out how to incorporate. I'm really stoked that he's here.

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