

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Coach Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: All right, happy work Wednesday. Right back at it on the field. Great energy. Great practice. Nice and warm outside. Supposed to be beautiful in Foxboro this weekend.

Just great prep for the guys. Just getting right back to work with the focus and the intentionality, the intensity, the energy, all that. That's the challenge. Can we meet the challenge and show up every single day we get on the grass and the guys met that challenge today.

Q. You said you would give us update on Sanders today. What's your level concern about McMillian, Sanders, and Legette?

DAVE CANALES: JT week is week with an ankle, so we will have to kind of evaluate that as we go. T-Mack is day-to-day. He has got a little bit after calf so we'll just take a look at him tomorrow, move him around, and just go from there practice.

Who else did you ask about?

Q. Legette.

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, Legette, the hamstring, same thing. We're just evaluating him each day, see if we can get those guys both back out there. We have to just push them, see what their capacity is, and then make a decision from there.

Q. Day-to-day son Xavier also?

DAVE CANALES: Yes.

Q. This does give you an opportunity to look at some of your depth. I know you probably don't want to give anything away.

DAVE CANALES: Yeah.

Q. When you put new guys into different situations, what are you learning about your depth chart?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's excellent opportunities for us to evaluate the guys and how we can count on them in different ways: Run game, pass game, special teams, different guys that are competing to find a way to help the team.

So today obviously with T-Mack and X not practicing we got to see a lot of Brycen Tremayne, a lot of David Moore out there to be able to just fill in those roles and really just give them the intension and the targets that way.

So the challenge is for X and T-Mack to stay engaged, to see what's happening out there while the other guys are practicing getting ready.

Q. All good with Hunter?

DAVE CANALES: Yes, Hunter is personal. I don't mind saying congratulations to the Renfrow family. Invited another baby girl into the family. Just a really cool moment for us.

As we continue to dive into the season these are the great reminders and the beautiful moments we get to celebrate together.

Q. What did you guys see in Mitch Evans back in the spring when you were scouting him and evaluating him, and what have you seen in the months you've been with him?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, versatility, his ability to help us in the run game as a blocker, his ability to move him around in the pass game, in the play-action game. Just a really well-rounded tight end protection-wise, all these things.

Just gives us the ability to put him in different spots and the reps are kind of evenly distributed throughout -- for last game with JT and with Tommy and with Mitch.

It does give us an ability to be able to roll those guys through and find out how they can help us in different ways.



Q. T-Mack's, is that concerning to you?

DAVE CANALES: We're just checking it out day-to-day and then we'll just keep evaluating tomorrow and through the week.

Q. Back to JT and the tight ends, now that JT is week to work, will the workload get distributed down the line beyond Tommy now that Mitch and...

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, with week to week we'll get to see James Mitchell and we kept him here for a reason. Did a fantastic job in camp, preseason; guy that we really trust who can help us in special teams as well.

Really fired up for James to get an opportunity to come out there and help us.

Q. You guys really took advantage of pre-snap motion and some twists in the blocking scheme. This is a pretty good run defense in New England.

DAVE CANALES: Yep.

Q. Do you think you guys will have to be more creative to have success, or is it just a matter of playing your game?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, combination of both things. Trying to see how they apply the different runs and why are they having success, and for me, looking at the film. They have some really good players up front and it's effort. These guys play hard. They're very active. They're very active with their hands, getting off blocks, trying to help -- even though they're gap sound, sometimes the guys up front, -- Milton Williams for example, you know, just being able to shed a block and show up to help.

So this group is really playing well together. I think outside of a couple big plays in the couple of losses they had, they're playing sound fundamental football, so it's a great challenge.

Q. Jimmy Horn, I know a lot of weeks, has been wearing the scout team jerseys. Did you have three available wideouts on the field today?

DAVE CANALES: We used everyone we had today to make sure we filled in for that.

Q. ...to play more younger defensive players after the opener was like, if we're going to play like we did in the opener, let's go out with our young guys or...

DAVE CANALES: It really wasn't an emphasis. It's just

who we are philosophically speaking. We are developmentally minded. Can we help find opportunities for young guys to help in different ways so we can gather information.

Q. Saw Lathan ransom make a big play to kind of exclamation point the game.

DAVE CANALES: Yeah.

Q. What did you see on that play as far as his technique and grit and stuff like that?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, habits coming to life. This is a guy that every day in practice he attacks the football; whether he's showing up being physical to make a tackle or if you're second man in, he's trying to find the ball.

So these habits become who you are over time, and all of a sudden in the moment you react. His reaction was the tackle was secure, I'm going in for the ball. It was great opportunity for us.

Then Demani recovered it, so really glad to see those guys out there playing physical and off each other.

Q. Jalen Coker, how is he progressing?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, week to week right now. He is progressing and we're trying to gather all the information, get him strong as possible before we can get him back out there. Four week minimum before his window opens and see what he can do.

Q. Been able to see Princely Umanmielen have a personality off the field. On the field is he equally as joyful and how does that play into his game?

DAVE CANALES: The more he gets comfortable -- I think this goes for all our players -- the more they get comfortable in what we're doing and executing, the more we'll see their personality come alive. He's still in this space where he's playing hard and he's trying to figure it out.

That goes for a lot of the young guys who are continuing to learn, to feel that confidence, the mental confidence which leads us to playing fast.

And once you know and you have that confidence where I'm not second guessing my assignments, not second guessing these things, that's when we start to see guys make plays, show us who they are, and that's what I'm looking for really collectively our groups as well.

Q. You talked a lot about David Moore. Especially on

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a week like this where you do have a lot of the younger guys out there, how much do you lean on him to relay messages, teach concepts?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's really just the consistency of how D-Mo shows up. He's an amazing human. Always helping guys around him. Always looking for ways to serve. Then when he's on the field he gives everything he has. That's the example we love about him and the way he represents us. This is the style we're looking for on the practice field, on the game field. How much can I do? Coach, is there any way I can help out? Being willing to play different roles on special teams, some in a backup role.

That's something that we really just love having because he can go in there and catch a punt. He's like, I'm willing to help the team in any way possible and that's the mentality we've to have.

Q. Do you have any background with Mike Vrabel, and anything you see on Patriots tape that is reflective of his personality?

DAVE CANALES: Really just watching his teams, Tennessee over the years and then as a coordinator in Houston. I think the signature is they don't do a lot, but what they do they do really well. That's what he's looking for. It goes to the same thing: If he can get his guys in position where they know what to do, then they can fly around and play physical and make plays.

That certainly is happening. What I see on film, that's happening for those group on both sides, where they're not trying to reinvent the wheel. They have some wrinkles, but it's pretty good just clean football and guys playing hard.

Q. He said he spent two hours watching ya'll's kickoffs. How much, as teams start to look at the funky bounces and everything Tracy and Ryan are doing, being how much self-scouting will you guys have to do to kind of take the next step with that play?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's also learning about our coverage players and where to put the ball based on where our guys are at. I think as guys like Brycen Tremayne, Thomas Incoom, Claude Cherelus, just guys that are starting to make plays on kickoff, teams are going to start looking for doubles in different ways, and we have to just make sure that the kicks fit in with the coverage unit and how we can balance that part out.

Q. You and the Rams are the only two teams that seem to be fully embracing doing what you're doing. Are you surprised more people haven't picked it up

over the last...

DAVE CANALES: I believe that most teams have tried throughout camp and they're -- they know their kickers, and so you can only push them as far as their capabilities allow them. Ryan and Matt Wright really showed an ability to try to challenge the return teams with different angles.

I'm sure all the other teams were trying to spot balls in different ways, but you have to be cognizant of the landing zone and knowing the flipside if you don't get it in there, and giving the team an automatic 35 yard line start if you can't land it before goes over the goal line.

I think it's team to team. I have a lot of faith and confidence in a lot of coaches knowing like this is our guy, these what we can count on him to do.

Q. Seeing the difference between (indiscernible.) (Regarding turnovers.)

DAVE CANALES: Absolutely. It's an organizational belief. It's a team thing. All the guys know that they're accountable for that. You don't carry the ball for yourself, you carry it for the whole team. That's the language we use and the trust factor in, guys when we play clean football and we can just get into our schemes, now we can have success and build a rhythm, now we can set things up.

It really goes for both sides of it.

Q. Assuming you didn't scout Drake Maye last year, but how have you seen his game develop in the last season?

DAVE CANALES: You start with the physical traits, so I did watch him, evaluate his film. I think in this league, regardless of where you are with a quarterback situation, quarterbacks sometimes you end up in another opportunity down the line to evaluate the players to see if they can help you in some way.

So I try to make we have our due diligence to watch him. A big, strong athlete. He's got a phenomenal arm. He can run. What I've seen him do in this limited sample size is playing really clean football, and, you know, for the most part just executing their offense. He has some special throws in there.

Q. ... quarterbacks wearing the wrist bands with the plays on that. What is your philosophy on that?

DAVE CANALES: I think it's player to player. Some players are very comfortable getting -- just getting the

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wristband number in their ear and reading it off, some quarterbacks, like Bryce, Bryce likes to say the play, visualize it and speak to the guys that the play is talking to. I think he feels like he connects more with the huddle, with the group, before we go out there, which breeds confidence.

I've had different guys with different appreciation for a wristband. Geno was more like, just give me a couple of the long ones, some of the clunkier calls. Just give me those on a wristband. The rest of it I'll be fine and be able to handle those. So every guy is different.

Q. Coming off a win with a lot of good things to build on, did you notice like more energy or excitement out there?

DAVE CANALES: Just after the game. I found a group come back in on Monday understanding we have all this work to do in front of us. There is a level of confidence to show, guys, the work, works. If we stick to our processes and we play our brand and our style of football No. 1 by taking care the ball and trying to make the most of opportunities when we have it to take the ball away, what it can lead to.

That part just allows me it double down it. But this is a really focused group, starting with Derrick Brown, who is just like celebrating the win. He's like, this is great. We got work to do. I love that humility of the group to look at it, enjoy it, but say we have to move on, and we have to have the same type of focus we had for this game carry over into the next game.

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