

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Mike McDaniel

Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Carolina Panthers 27, Miami Dolphins 24

MIKE McDANIEL: Thought we got some stuff fixed. We've known the issues we've had and we thought that we're prepared for this and clearly we weren't. Like, you get -- I think we were out-gained 200 yards in the run game. Collectively, from the two sides of the ball, that is not good enough. You'll rarely win, if ever. We got a shot because we were plus two, but bottom line is that on top of you have critical mistakes at critical points in the game, whether they're penalties or the critical situation, MAs, where we're giving up I think there was a fourth down and the last touchdown.

So bottom line is that is not good enough. We are a much better team than letting a 17-0 lead eviscerate, so we will be extremely focused on getting that stuff corrected immediately because we have no time to waste.

Q. Dowdle plays instead of Hubbard. Was that any factor in this?

MIKE McDANIEL: Yeah, I mean, apparently it didn't matter, and I think that's something that in the National Football League, if you expose yourself and you can't get it right during the game, they're going to continue to do the least risky thing and you can't -- yeah, it's not how you win football games in this league, so, we have to figure that out immediately. It'll start on the plane and move into tomorrow and throughout the week so we can be ready to play a Chargers team that will see the tape and go into the game trying to run it just like they did.

Q. You were able to get some stuff going in the middle of the field with Waller and then Julian Hill then that evaporated. Then you go five punts in a row. What changed?

MIKE McDANIEL: Well, I think any time you have any productivity in this league, they make adjustments as well. The critical things were we were in a ton of third-and-longs because we got zero or no production on the run opportunities. Your trying to be balanced as you can.

You're trying to understand or understanding that if they know you're going to pass every play, you probably won't have production that way.

So we've got no rhythm. I think we had a couple first downs in that whole collection of time, but the main thing was they just said we're going to stop your run game with our front and they did. So they committed everybody else to the back and to the pass and unless you're going to take 50-50 ops on receptions versus pick, that's not a good idea. You have to establish stuff on the line of scrimmage.

Clearly whatever we're doing I could have done a better job. Any play that I would have picked other than the ones that I was calling, I guess, stand a chance to be productive. But you're not going to get far if you can't establish the line of scrimmage.

Q. On the other side of the ball, rushed for 240-some-odd yards. Running backs run for 200 yards, took a lot of time off the clock and although they were punting and stuff, it all affected --

MIKE McDANIEL: Absolutely.

Q. That was probably the biggest effect of this football game.

MIKE McDANIEL: Yeah, I think you hit the nail on the head. We had time of possession in our favor in the first half and absolutely did not have it in the second and I think that is something that any game during the course of the season can go that way if you allow it. You can't try to win football games and make mistakes and hope that the time runs out. You have to go win the game. Today we did not.

Q. Psychologically a game like this where you have the emotions, you come out, you're ahead and then all of a sudden what happens what happens. How do you dig out of that and motivate and get ready for -- because this game's not going to stop.

MIKE McDANIEL: No, the one takeaway that I did receive during the game is there was not splintering. There was not phases being frustrated with each other. Everybody

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wanted to make a play and wanted to play 11 people as one and I think, yeah, losses are tough, but who really cares? We deserve for it to feel terrible. In that, you find out exactly who people are.

I have confidence in who the people are in the locker room and the coaching staff, led by me, no one cares about our feelings and that is a hard one deal with but it should be. It's just as if not more for everybody that decides to cheer for us and turn on the TV, so that's not acceptable. We'll never be in -- when you win plus minus and you have a three-score lead, you have to lean on an opponent in both sides of the ball on the line of scrimmage and we were incapable so I'm going to get back to the drawing board and fix that immediately.

Q. What needs to be stressed to this defense? Is it physicality? Is it something schematic in the run defense?

MIKE McDANIEL: I think all things aren't on the table. What I was frustrated with is I thought we had similar issues at the beginning of the Jets game and I thought within the game we tightened up considerably considering aforementioned, we gave up probably on handoffs the same amount the rest of the game as we did the first drive. So you're hoping that you can build on some momentum.

Schematically and from a technique perspective, we have to get guys playing on the same page. There's no if, ands, or buts about it. You don't give up that many line of scrimmage yards unless you're uncoordinated in certain ways that I need to make sure that guys don't fray and try to handle it themselves. We collectively need to build a wall. If play calls need to change for that to occur, then play calls need to change. But the -- it just can't continue to go on like this and it's already gone on too long so we'll get back to the drawing board.

In the National Football League, no one cares about your feelings. You lose a game like this, you better come together and from the foundation out, you need to build on sound things that we believe in that we know our players are good at and everyone needs to be accountable and attack and not wallow. My expectations is no one will do that.

Q. Mike, I know you said you didn't sense any splintering of the team within the game. Did you feel any complacency at all? Not within, but did you feel complacency within the team?

MIKE McDANIEL: To be quiet honest, that's something I consider on the front end of a three-score lead. This year we haven't had that. We had a two-score before and so I

was very... I was monitoring that live, making sure that guys didn't lose their edge, and I didn't feel like it I thought we were one drive away and we had some good answers offensively and then ultimately we didn't. That just happened in succession and I was worried about guys kind of from a focus standpoint kind of packing it in, but I didn't feel that.

It remains to be seen. The tape never lies with that regard, so if I'm seeing guys less tenacious or choosing not to do the same things that were occurring in the 0-0, 3-0, 10-0, 17-0 portions of the game, we'll have a gigantic problem that you can't -- we were verbalizing it and I didn't feel it, however, we couldn't evolve within the game on both sides of the ball. So I have to give a plan of action and we have to attack that starting first thing tomorrow.

Q. Tyrel Dodson was out with a head injury. (Inaudible) in him and Jaylen Wright, the decision to go inactive?

MIKE McDANIEL: So, the T-Dot. You have to get some more information. You're correct on that he was pulled because of a head. I don't know where and when. It was just communicated with me and Jaylen Wright was not something we were totally planning on, but we felt we needed the body for the two other phases, so we went heavy on defensive special teams and it wasn't an indictment on Jaylen. Had a great conversation with him this morning about the whys and whatfores so I'm expecting him to have an outstanding practice week to prepare to go ahead and be involved against the Chargers.

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