

# Carolina Panthers Media Conference

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

## Brian Schottenheimer

### Visitors Postgame Press Conference



Panthers 30, Cowboys 27

#### **Q. Why do you think you had so many problems against the run today?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: You know, I want to look at it. They controlled the game on both sides. You got to give them credit for that. We knew they were a physical football team. We weren't surprised by that. They were able to run it and we weren't.

This is a game where you got to win the line of scrimmage, and we didn't win the line of scrimmage today. I told the team that. It's disappointing.

I got to give them a lot of credit. They ran hard. They blocked well. We have to be better. We'll look at it and get it fixed.

#### **Q. Do you believe you have personnel to work with Flus' scheme?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: Yeah, no question about it. We got to coach better, play better. The physicality of it all. We're a physical football team. We didn't show it today. Give them credit. We have to be better.

It's not just the defense. It's the offense. We threw the ball all over the yard, that was great. At the end of the day we want to be balanced. We weren't able to do that today. We have to look at that as an offensive staff, see what they did to stop the run.

#### **Q. How demoralizing is it as a play-caller on the offense when you have to be perfect, can't blink?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: I don't look at it that way. You're just playing the game. Our defense made some big stops in the fourth quarter. We weren't able to punch the ball in. When they stop 'em, we got to capitalize.

I think, again, we got to the fourth quarter, which is what we always say. You say you can't win the game in the first,

second and third. Got to the fourth quarter, had a chance to win. They outscored us 10-3. We got to be able to score touchdowns in the red zone. We didn't do that.

#### **Q. Six, seven minutes left, got the ball, everything went backwards. Screens...**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: First one was a screen. They stiffed it out. The phasing wasn't very good. Couldn't get to the corner. The other ones weren't screens, they were checkdowns.

This team does a good job of batting the ball. They played very passive when they got ahead of the sticks, Clarence, they played pretty passive on second and third down. They forced us to check it down and took it away.

#### **Q. Did you consider letting them score at the end?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: We did. We talked about a lot of different things. It's one of the those things, I don't want to get too much into game strategy, we were talking about a lot of different things there.

We felt like we didn't do enough to give ourselves a chance to win. There was a chance. We had a good block at the end, maybe thought we had a chance to get the block. Give them credit, they made the plays today when they had to. That's why they have the victory.

#### **Q. If you believe you have the personnel to run this defense, do the players that run the defense believe in the scheme?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: That's the bigger question. I would think so. I would hope so. What, are we six games in? Yeah, I would think so.

We plugged one hole in the passing game a couple weeks ago, right? Certainly we've shown the ability to run the football, we've shown the ability to stop the run. But there's a consistency that's not showing up. We got to be better. That starts with me. That starts with the coaching staff, putting these guys in the right position.

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Give Carolina credit. They were the more physical team today. We knew it was going to be a physical game. I'm man enough to stand up here in front of you guys and say that. I don't like it. I don't like saying it to the team. When you turn on the film, that's what you're going to see.

**Q. Why do you believe that Eberflus can get this fixed?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: That's a great coach. That's a great coach. He's been around. Everywhere he's been, he's had good defenses. It's not just Matt by himself. Matt's trying. The players are trying. This is not a lack of effort. It's not that.

Again, we have to be able to play more complementary defense. Early in the season, we were getting hurt throwing the football. This game, we got hurt running the football. We were not surprised. We got to tackle better.

Our gap control is not very good right now. That's the big thing I'd say to you. Our gap control is not where it needs to be. We're not fitting gaps right.

Shoot, I think first half it seemed like there was almost probably 75, 80 percent of their runs, the guy was four or five yards before we had contact on him. That's not good enough. We know that. We're going to address it.

**Q. The fourth down they were able to convert, have y'all had to communicate what's plan was?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: We feel good. We had DaRon in that situation one on one. Bryce made a good throw and away to Hunter. They moved the sticks. Big play in the game, of course, but not the only play in the game.

**Q. Your offensive run game, where do you feel it lacked?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: Penetration. Not a lot of clean windows. The run game's got to start like they did, you get movement at the point of attack. That's what opens up movements when the linebackers flow, then you cut back off of that. We didn't get much movement. It's a big, powerful group. They're built that way.

I think it kind of was pretty consistent throughout that they played with lower hats and they got more stalemates than we got movement.

**Q. You and your offense, your guys have preached throughout the year, it's part of the game, have you sensed any frustration from your guys?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: Absolutely not. Our offensive guys cheer for our defensive guys. Our defensive guys cheer for our offensive guys.

Again, people want to talk about the culture and the connection piece, right? That's where it comes in. It comes in for moments like this. That locker room's hurting. I'm hurting. Why? Because we let an opportunity slip to win another championship. It's frustrating as hell.

You don't point fingers. You look at the film. We're going to see it. It's going to jump off the film at us, the things we didn't do well. We'll get 'em fixed.

I don't worry about this team starting to point fingers in any way, shape or form.

**Q. Talk about Pickens and the run he's not.**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: Unbelievable. Again, when we got GP, everybody wanted to talk about him and his story and his background and all that stuff. That guy has been truly a pleasure to coach. You talk about a talented young man that loves to play the game of football.

But he and Dak, man, you see a little bit of it, but then you have to leave. It sucks. I'm not changing it so you guys can't stay and watch (smiling).

They work non-stop. They're talking non-stop. That's a relationship that you love to see because two talented players working together, as a coach, that's what you want.

**Q. Seems like he's playing full of joy.**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: He loves football. I would put him up against anybody in this league about how much he loves football. He doesn't always love Wednesdays and Thursday, but he works his ass off on the practice field. He loves being on the grass.

I love the energy and juice he brings to our football team. It is infectious. I would never say receivers are unstoppable, but damn, he's pretty good.

**Q. Does it frustrate you you're so up and down as a group?**

BRIAN SCHOTTENHEIMER: Of course, yeah. You'd be crazy if you didn't. Our standard... I stand up in front of you guys all the time and talk about building a world-championship football team. We weren't that today. I'm not going to sit here and say, This is so bad.



But of course. We work hard. We coach hard. These guys practice hard. They work in pads. But we got to be better. I guarantee you there's going to be things that show up with us not playing with great hand placement, fundamentals. That's where we'll start, make sure the effort is where it needs to be.

Of course we're frustrated. But doesn't mean the work stops. It means you just have to man up. This is what we signed up for. Signed up to do this. There's no better job than this in the world.

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