

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: Beautiful day. Beautiful opportunity for the guys get back out there and get ready to have our nice walk-through tomorrow, get on a plane, and take this show on the road.

Guys are really focused and they're excited about this opportunity.

Q. Does that mean Chuba is good to go on Sunday?

DAVE CANALES: Yes, he is. Yeah, he looked great. Had a solid week of practice. We'll have Chuba and Rico back there, Trevor, and be able to just utilize both those guys to help the Panthers.

Q. You talked about next-man-up. On the outside linebacker, who shifts into Princely's place as the No. 4, Incoom or perhaps Boogie?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, they're both available. They both been practicing and ready for that role, so excited for those guys to get an opportunity to help us as well.

Q. DJ Johnson, next week could he be a quick fix? I know I visited the Packers on Tuesday, but I'm not sure that he signed.

DAVE CANALES: Could be. Could be. We're going to look at some guys and take all options into consideration.

Q. How much of the old Chuba-Rico thing right now is sort of trial and error in figuring out what will work in terms of utilizing both guys in a game plan?

DAVE CANALES: Oh, just counting on both guys to execute when they're in there. It allows me to just call the next play. I don't have to really overthink who's in the game as far as what we want to execute in the run game and the pass game.

So just excited about the opportunity to have both guys help us.

Q. Is the situation you'll start out with a plan and then you'll ride the hotter hand? Is that what you think will happen?

DAVE CANALES: We'll see on Sunday.

Q. Dave, what happened with Damien?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, just a shoulder injury/chest. We weren't sure exactly what that was. We did the full workup, did imaging and all that.

We'll just take a look at him again today, this afternoon, tomorrow, and it'll be day-to-day really to make a decision whether he can help us on Sunday.

Q. Do you know whether he'll make the trip?

DAVE CANALES: He'll make the trip certainly, but what his availability is on Sunday, kind of have to make that a game-time decision. Love to have D Lew out there. Got to do the best thing for him and the team.

Q. Dave, if Damien can't go, that will mean that ya'll have had six different starting combinations on the offensive line this year. How does that -- how does that impact the chemistry of the line and your offense as a whole?

DAVE CANALES: It's a real compliment to the preparation of this group and guys that keep stepping in and doing the job well, and a tribute to the coaches to prepare the guys and be ready.

That's what it requires in this league. You got to be focus and locked in. Sometimes guys don't get all the reps in the week and something may happen in the week, you know, where they have to be prepared to do that.

So it calls on this focus. It's a great reminder for the whole group to just keep working as if you're going to have to play, and to have that kind of mentality is really important for us.

Q. Is there any possibility that Brandon Walton could



be activated to the 53? I think his practice squad standard elevations are up. He has played at that guard position before. Is there any possibility that he could be activated this week?

DAVE CANALES: There is a probability. We also have Nick Samac who we got from Baltimore, and Jake Curhan who came got from Arizona. So guys that we been preparing. Brandon got in there, too. He took some reps this week as well.

We have all the guys prepared and ready to go and we'll make the best decision going forward.

Q. What about Corbett potentially playing guard?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, that's a great one. He has a lot of flexibility. His first position really was playing guard, so he gives us an opportunity to be able to put him in there and play some guard; and then you also have another center on game day.

So another possibility there.

Q. Punt return, comfortable with Trevor back in as the top option?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, absolutely. Counting on Trevor to field those balls and make sure that we're taking advantage of all the hidden yardage in special teams, right? Catching it is the first point. Let's make sure we do that.

And then he's a special runner and we are looking forward to him taking advantage of those opportunities.

Q. Coker definitely going to be active Sunday?

DAVE CANALES: Yes, Coker will be up and he's ready to go. He had a great week, so looking forward to him being up on Sunday.

Q. Will he also field punts, possibly the safe returner?

DAVE CANALES: Who is that?

Q. (No microphone.)

DAVE CANALES: He could be, yeah. He's been practicing it all through spring, all through camp, so he could be a logo punt type of guy. Right now we want to give Trevor the opportunity to touch the ball and make an impact for our team.

Q. Dave, team hasn't won on the road yet. Bryce had

his share of struggles on the road. Is there a sense of, hey, we're playing really good football. Like let's just get this -- let's get this over with, our first win this season on the road?

DAVE CANALES: We look at every game as a great opportunities, as championship opportunities. I don't want the guys' focus to shift on anything extra. If we're giving extra attention that means we weren't giving enough attention before.

That can't be the approach. The approach is all these are so important for us, and the challenge, the opportunity for us is to take the focus and process and the preparation and make it come alive.

I do know one thing that's really important when you're on the road, is the energy comes from us. It's about poise, it's about resilience, it's about that focus that it requires to go series in and series out, make adjustments, and just keep playing ball.

You don't have the fans at your back. It always has to come from us first, from the coaches and the players, working together, communicating together.

So we have a great opportunity to do that this week.

Q. You understand we got to ask the question. Have you made a decision who will start at running back or who will get the bulk of carries?

DAVE CANALES: We have and all I'll say is both guys will help us and we'll make sure that happens by the end of the game.

Q. You had said this week you were going to look at how ya'll did things on the road. Are you going to make any changes with the operations?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, just some subtle tweaks, things we talked about collectively, Jeff Brown and I, talking to other staff members who have been around a long time, and I just think it's worth competing. It's worth finding and trying to find another edge, a way to get the guys comfortable making it -- try to feel as close to home as possible.

I can't help but think about some of the teams and the challenges that they face. You talk about some of the teams around the league who play on Monday night, Sunday night, Thursday night, and their routine gets screwed up all the time.

It's the ability to focus. It's the ability to prepare in the



week in different modes. Not just when you're on the road in a normal -- playing Sunday to Sunday which has been our rhythm.

So this, we have to be able to just take our process, trust that it works, and then go and execute.

Q. What are a couple of those tweaks?

DAVE CANALES: I'll keep that in-house, but just some stuff to look at and stuff that I've talked to the players about also and is being prepared for some subtle changes that may put us in more of our comfort zone, just like we do at home.

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