

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: All right. Great day. Great to get back on the grass. It's always what brings us back. It's the work; it's the focus required, as we got another opponent, division opponent, going down to Atlanta this week and excited about just getting this thing back on track in terms of our execution, our fundamentals, some of the things that we talked about coming out of the game.

Q. Is Derrick's knee his surgically repaired knee?

DAVE CANALES: It's on that side, not related. This is just something that came up, and we decided to just limit him a little bit today just to try to get him back on track. He'll be ready to practice tomorrow.

Q. Are any of those injuries IR worthy?

DAVE CANALES: They are not.

Q. With those short-term injury outlooks, pretty decent amount of names, how do you kind of factor in the plan this early in the week when you do have, just generally, that many?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, we just have to consider all our options and look at who can help us, get some guys up in those positions if they're not able to make it. I think outside of Trevin, Trevin will be week to week, really, right now. And the shoulder is aggravated. He's been dealing with some things, as you've all seen, in games. Wasn't able to finish the game, and just we put all of our brains together and really saw an opportunity to just try to get him on top of this, get out in front of it, get him back to his full confidence and strength and mobility and all that. That's Trevin.

Lathan injured his hand in the game, had a little bit of a surgical procedure to clean some stuff out, and that just happened yesterday. So today was -- we couldn't put him out there in a practice in any way, shape or form. We'll track him day to day see if we can get him out there in some capacity tomorrow, and then not sure what his status will be like for the game. It all depends on how this thing

heals up and calms down.

Q. So Trevin will not play on Sunday?

DAVE CANALES: Yes. Trevin will be out this week.

Q. How about Rico?

DAVE CANALES: Rico is just dealing with a quad. So we just decided to give him the day off and treat it and just take him off his feet today a little bit. The plan is to get him back out there tomorrow. We'll evaluate him in the morning, but the plan is to get him out there to practice, to take some reps and get himself going.

Q. And the hand procedure, do you have any details about what that was?

DAVE CANALES: I don't really want to go into specifics, but had to have -- basically, generally, he had a wound cleaned out. Anytime you have some type of a surgical procedure, we gotta be careful about it getting banged around, especially when it's fresh. But I've seen these things turn around quickly, but we have to be smart and take it day to day.

Q. With Rico and the quad, seems like that's something that popped up in the Green Bay game and you guys had to monitor last week. Knowing that he's had those physical kind of situations and he cramped up earlier, does that lead you to kind of think that maybe getting a little bit more rotation in there may make sense even though you kind of rode him the last couple weeks?

DAVE CANALES: Could be. My thought is to just continue to try to play him the way we've been, but Chuba got in there, you know, when he had to come out a little bit in the game and ran hard, had some really nice runs. Again, it's a good situation for us, a great opportunity for us to have both guys that I really trust to be able to do that.

Q. Do you think Chuba has kind of gained his footing again just over the last couple of games, kind of showing his burst?



DAVE CANALES: He certainly is looking stronger and stronger, and this is attributed to his hard work and the way that he attacks taking care of his body and getting himself back to where he wants to be. So really just like tip my cap to Chuba for the way he's attacked it. That's the way he attacks everything, and he'll have his opportunities in there, and I expect him to continue to contribute.

Q. With Trevin out, what kind of opportunities does that open up behind him and what do you see from those guys there?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. I can talk about Claud Cherelus who got in at the end of the game, and he really did some good stuff, played some physical ball, knocking things back, made a really nice tackle inside the five-yard line.

They were moving the ball pretty good in that drive, but he certainly flashed, and he's been doing an excellent job on special teams, so this creates an opportunity for Claud and the whole group. They all have to be ready to go. It's what we ask of our guys, prepare like you're about to go in and have that mentality, and Pete Hansen has done a great job of preparing these guys that way.

Q. You've obviously been in the league for a while, but the veteran on the practice squad status only couple years old. How has that kind of helped the outlook with injuries and planning and knowing that you have somebody like Krys Barnes, for instance, on the practice squad that you can go to him?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. It's been very valuable over the course of the last year and a half to have guys that are here in the building getting the training and have playing experience, which is so valuable to have a guy like Krys Barnes who has called defenses. He's been the Mike, the green dot in different places, and that always gives us a lot of comfort. And it's also just that room. As they have conversations and they're watching film, the more eyes you have on things, it just really strengthens the group.

Q. Speaking of green dot, will Christian get it again?

DAVE CANALES: We're working through that.

Q. And then Nic Scourton, what have you seen from him in recent weeks? And also he kind of spoke up a couple days ago and talked about the practice from last week, something that you also addressed, but is that not usual to see that kind of, I don't know, leadership, I guess, from a rookie like Scourton?

DAVE CANALES: We really want the guys to earn

respect, and the way you earn respect in this league is by how you play, how you prepare and the hard work that you put in. I believe Nick has done those things early on in his career here is to show consistency in how he practices, how he prepares and watches film. He's taking coaching.

AC Carter has done a great job with Nic just bringing him along. He seems to add things every week and play with technique. And a lot of stuff he can clean up from the game, certainly. You know, that's every week. But just like his mentality, I like the way that he just attacks it and the juice that he brings on game day chasing things down. So I'm really proud of the way he's played.

Just about the comments and all that stuff, I think it's an opportunity. It's a learning opportunity to say, okay, for us, for our guys, like speak for your own performance. If you want to make a general comment, you know, about, hey, when we lose, we're upset; we're disappointed. You know, but the specific part of it like that, we can do a better job of just keeping those things within us, you know, and the stuff that we talk about after the game on Monday and all those things.

Q. How did the team respond? You mentioned a practice or more last week not being up to standard. How did they respond today?

DAVE CANALES: It was an excellent response. Really all day in the building there's a sense of focus and this appreciation that we have to approach every single game the same way. This is a championship opportunity. It's not a lie. It's not selling something. It's true. All these games, especially when you play your division opponents, these are so important opportunities for us as we continue to set up our season going into it.

You hate to look back and say, wow, we missed an opportunity because we didn't play our best. And it always comes down to the same things. It's about fundamental execution. It's about making our blocks, making our tackles, having great technique and doing the right thing play in and play out. It's going to always come back to that.

And that group certainly understands that. We have a process that we believe in, and the goal is to get back on that, and today was a good step in that direction.

Q. JC was pretty hard on himself Sunday. Like how have you seen him respond and how crucial is that to have your leaders hold themselves accountable?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. Accountability is important for all of us. It starts with me. And whenever we come out into a



game and it feels like we're off as a group, I have to look at the way that I set up the week, the way that we approached the guys in my messaging. I have to evaluate that part, talk to the different coaches that we have on staff and bounce ideas and say, how can we get these guys more prepared? Let's talk about when this happens, when you come off of a win going to Lambeau like that, the refocus and the reset to continue to work and capture that part.

Those are all important, and certainly JC, certainly the different guys on our teams taking accountability for the part that they contributed, that's talking about their specific performance, you know, and I love guys taking that. And JC also has to understand, too, this is a group effort. This is all of us who didn't play up to our standard that day.

Q. Bouncing back from bad losses, what is it about that sort of opportunity to refocus, and is there anything about maybe going on the road this weekend and sort of refocussing and sort of getting together in that regard?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. This game is humbling, because every single week you play a group of professionals, regardless of what the record says. These are pros, and there's phenomenal players in every group, and if you don't play to your best, if you don't execute and we don't play complementary football together, you can lose every week. And you can also win by playing a certain way and by taking care of the details and the critical parts of our game.

So it's a remainder, and it's a wake-up call, and for our team, now with me, at least for a year and a half, like we have to make sure that we lean on our processes, we lean on the things that we count on to get our bodies right, to get our minds right, so we can be confident and we can play fast on Sundays.

Q. How does the player side of Dan Morgan help you through some of these moments with the up and downs and what you guys are going through?

DAVE CANALES: Dan is an incredible resource, especially because he's been a captain. He's been a leader. He's been in the middle of this. And so there's an expectation that he had for his teammates. And so when he sees things, when he reflects on and I go and we sit down and talk, I can always kind of pick that part of his brain to say what does this feel like to you being on the really good teams that you've been on over the course of your career. Or dealing with injuries, dealing with off-field issues, all that. He's lived a lot of these things, and so he's an amazing resource that way and has a really positive approach about it, too, about finding solutions to things.

Versus trying to find excuses for why things happen, he's always good about finding solutions, okay, so how do we go about this, how do we attack this issue.

Q. T-Mac has pretty wide variance in his first and second half splits. What are you noticing from him in the second half and the way coverages are attacking him maybe differently than early on in the games?

DAVE CANALES: To make it more general, I think this is specifically talking to our pass game as a whole. And we're all part of that, from the coaching staff to the players to the protection unit and all that. And this is something that we're continuing to attack, that we're working through, to try to make this part of our game come alive.

We've had flashes of it, and we can see the flashes that our guys, our different players bring. And we have to be consistent with it, and it's our job as a coaching staff to make sure that we do the right things to put guys in position to be successful and not make it so easy for a defense to hone in on where T-Mac is in formation and what is he running out of these. We gotta protect the angles of the cut.

And we gotta move guys around and make sure that the other guys come alive. I'd love to see Jalen and Xavier come alive in their ways in the tight end group, which I have a lot of respect for. All these guys can be really useful. We just have to put it all together and find our rhythm.

Q. This is a Falcons defense that's really gotten after the quarterback. What jumps out when you watch them on tape and how do you negate that?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. It's effort and depth. They have a really good group of rushers, whether it's inside or outside. And then Ellis comes in there in a mug type of situation, and he's got an excellent way of being a part of the stunts and adding himself into a five-man rush.

And they use their DBs also with different blitzes, and I think Jeff Ulbrich has done a really great job of having variety in how they attack the pass game from a rush standpoint. But at the end of the day, they got some talented guys, and they got some young speed on the edges. And they got Leonard Floyd, too, and on any given play he looks as good as he ever did.

So this is a group I really respect. We're aware of that. We have to be mindful of the different ways they're going to try that create that rush. And bottom line is it starts with effort, and this is a group that really plays hard. They've looked like that since the beginning of the season.



Q. Jimmy Horn because you were getting more yards when you've had him in the game. Has there been any consideration for him on special teams?

DAVE CANALES: He's practicing. Yeah, he's practicing, getting ready for the return game and all those things.

Q. Will he step back in at right guard?

DAVE CANALES: We're working through that right now. We have some good options, both guys that I really trust. And for me it's like another opportunity for competition. I think it brings out the best in the guys. So we're working through that.

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