

# Carolina Panthers Media Conference

Friday, November 28, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

## Dave Canales

### Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: All right, beautiful day. Nice and crisp. Supposed to have similar conditions; possibility of a little bit of rain on Sunday. But it's good to get out there and feel that, run off a little bit of Thanksgiving, too.

And guys just moving around, having a good time. Really grateful to be working at this time of year with these guys and putting the whole plan together.

**Q. Dave, didn't see Jimmy Horn today. Everything good with him?**

DAVE CANALES: He's fine. He's healthy. Personal reasons. So went back home. He'll be back tomorrow.

**Q. As far as the guys that haven't practiced all week, is it safe to say you're ruling out the two players with the concussions as well as Chandler and some of the other guys?**

DAVE CANALES: Yeah. Pretty much the list of guys that we thought we were trying to get back out there to see if we could move them around, we weren't able to do that.

So that's Chandler, that's Jaycee, that's Claude. And Christian, yes.

**Q. And Horn?**

DAVE CANALES: And Jimmy. Jimmy will be fine.

**Q. Can you say who is going to start and play instead of Tre'Von and Jaycee?**

DAVE CANALES: We got a bunch of guys we're working on having in there, a little rotations. Chau Smith-Wade will be available there. Kaleb Evans will be available as well.

And inside linebacker, Krys Barnes, he did a really good job last week. We expect him to be in there with Tre'Von. Bam Martin-Scott has to be ready to contribute as well.

**Q. Safety?**

DAVE CANALES: Safety, have our three, and then Isaiah Simmons, plan on bringing him. He will be helping out on special teams, and he's been in the meetings just ready to go if we need him.

**Q. From the standpoint of the secondary with so many moving parts and how much you guys like to move parts how difficult has this been in this week trying to figure out the plan for when you go to big nickel or when you have your dime coverages?**

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, opportunities. This is something that Lathan has really been working on for a while now. He had a chance to be out there with Nick Scott, communicating with him. Demani. Demani has been really a part of what we're doing. He's into it. He's ready to rock as well.

Of course Chau Smith-Wade, he will be playing mostly nickel and corner. He's a part of that conversation as well in terms of having the communication and making sure we're on the same page.

I trust these guys to get it done and they had a great week of preparation.

**Q. Chau hasn't really played a lot of outside since he's been in the NFL. Like in your experience, is it easy for guys to kind of click back into something they did in college but haven't done for a couple years, or does it take time to knock the rust off?**

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, you work through it. At the same time, he's got a lot of reps out there, a lot of time on task with his eyes on the edge and playing that way. So trusting in that part of it.

And then of course just throughout the course of the season, throughout the course of camp, he's been out there and done different things.

So it's not strictly in his nickel role, and so really counting on him to just come and help his teammates out he'll be



ready to go on Sunday.

**Q. (Indiscernible) also unavailable Sunday?**

DAVE CANALES: Yes.

**Q. Jake Curhan, obviously you work with Cur for a little while at Seattle and played really well against the Packers. What does he do well at right guard?**

DAVE CANALES: Generally Jake is a really intelligent guy, and understands our schemes, what we're trying to get done. He has a lot of experience, so different fronts, different types of movement, he's used to those things.

And then on top of that he's massive. He is a big man and he's got great power in the run game, and in the pass game he just sets tight and uses his hands. That's what I've known about Jake for a long time now, whether it was tackle or guard, just his ability to process the game and make the adjustments that are required during the middle of a game.

So I trust Jake a lot. Glad he's here. He's got a great opportunity this week.

**Q. Seems like you're going to need more than just two elevations from the practice squad, especially with the offensive line. I think you guys are down to seven on the active roster and Brandon has his -- he's met his limit. When you have to figure out who is going to the 53, like what are those conversations like with Dan and how much does that have to be like kind of an overarching thing, like maybe this could be a two- or three-week look?**

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, there is a lot of strategy to it. Of course you got to consider the three call-ups that you get for practice squad players and then figure out from there what is our depth situation like on the 53 and try to make the best decision on who is probably going to be on the -- if we move them up, who is probably going to be on there the longest.

So we have all those conversations with Dan and Brandt and I. A lot of strategy goes into it in trying to get the right mix of guys. Sometimes you're able to just elevate the guys that you have here on your team, and sometimes you go to go outside to build the full depth.

First and foremost it's about the game. Then it's also practice and being able to have a great practice and having the right amount of receivers, DBs, et cetera, to do that.

So a lot of stuff goes into it.

**Q. Dave, you'll haven't lost back to back games since week two. What do you attribute to that mindset, being able to bounce back like that?**

DAVE CANALES: Our process and just the belief that we're trying to find our best football, and making sure that we compartmentalize each game, win or lose. Just look at the game and what the result was. Be specific about it so we can make improvements and try to shore up some of the things that we missed, and then try to replicate the things that are working for us.

So that mentality, our pursuit, get better every week. Our pursuit is to have continual growth fundamentally and especially from a scheme standpoint, the details that it requires.

Teams get better and better the further along we go into the season where you know what you're running, your opponents they know what you're running. So there is a lot of execution that happens on a fundamental level when people are more aware of what you're trying to do in the different phases.

**Q. What kind of week did Mike White have repping for I guess Stafford?**

DAVE CANALES: He did an excellent job. Ejiro was very complimentary of Mike and Andy of being able to try to replicate the speed of play, how they break the huddle, they get up to the line. Shifts and motions all have to be really crisp, and our guys did a great job all across the board for a couple days, and really appreciative of our scout team making that come to life, because we have to be ready for that pace of play.

**Q. We've asked, but just the challenges of facing Jared Verse and what -- how you might try to combat that?**

DAVE CANALES: Jared Verse and Byron Young, both guys. They have a good rotation also behind them. But Jared Verse packs a punch. He has a lot of power on the edge. He's disruptive. He'll fool and you jump around at times, so you have to make sure you keep your feet in the ground. That's the biggest thing, is feet in the ground, get your hands on early. Ball snap, hands got to be on, because this is a really shifty movement style of front.

And then of course just their pass rush. They're relentless and he looks for his opportunities. I appreciate the style of play even when it shows up on -- we were watching field goal, field goal, block and they're giving great effort. It's Fisk inside and 8, and they give a lot of effort every time

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they're on the field.

**Q. Dave, I asked Bryce the other day about the Rams coming back to LA when he was in high school; do you remember the Rams leaving LA?**

DAVE CANALES: I do. I was as Rams fan back in the day. So you kind of have pick. You're in LA: Are you going to be a Raiders or Rams fan? I was a Rams fan at the time. It was Jim Everett, that whole crew. I remember them leaving and being so pissed.

At the time Dan Marino was my favorite player, so once the Rams left LA I was like, all right, I think I'm a Dolphins fan now, because I'm always following Dan. So there was a little back and forth.

To get the Rams back in LA meant a lot I'm sure for sure the community and all the people that were still rocking their Rams stuff for my whole childhood.

So, you know, I don't know, that was before Bryce, so he probably doesn't remember that.

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