

Carolina Panthers Media Conference

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Coach Dave Canales

Weekday Press Conference



DAVE CANALES: All right, on our Focus Friday the guys are locked in, they're excited. There is an intensity about the group that I can feel from the guys, and it's a good thing.

It's a focus that I really appreciate. The details that go into this day where we tie the whole game plan in, first, second down, third down, a little bit of red zone, all that to be able to get that accomplished. Love where we are. Fired up for this weekend.

Q. Is there something you feel on Fridays that you can kind of say looking ahead to Sunday that I feel like they're going to be ready or just not quite sure?

DAVE CANALES: You know, I've been in the NFL for 16 years and we have had great Fridays and lost; we've had horrible Fridays and won. What I'm looking for is the focus. Looking for the intentionality to make sure that guys are on the plan. There are things that you still have to work through and make sure that we have communication about. Just communication up front on the offensive line sometimes with the run combo or different things like that or the landmark for some of the red zone throws that you start to work on.

Same thing on the defensive side. There are things that you work through, but there is a focus that I'm looking for. The energy has to be right and the energy was right today, so I'm excited about that.

Q. Dave, did Tre'von aggravate that earlier shoulder injury?

DAVE CANALES: He did coming out of the game. Just talking to him and trying to reevaluate him each day to see if we can get him to be a little bit more. We weren't able to get him to a point where we felt confident putting him back out there right now.

Q. Will Claude get the start?

DAVE CANALES: Claude will, yes.

Q. What did you see out of Ickey today?

DAVE CANALES: He was able to do more, so that was encouraging. We're going to have to just keep evaluating him today and tomorrow, so he really truly is in that day-to-day type of thing where we have to make sure that he's confident being able to execute all the things he has to at a tackle spot in the run game, on the backside, setting his passes.

So we'll keep working on Ickey to see if we can get him out there.

Q. Game time decision?

DAVE CANALES: Probably, yeah.

Q. With Turk out last week kind of suddenly, how do you think Bobby Brown stepped in for him and does his performance last week kind of give you confidence that he can do another good job this week?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, Bobby was disruptive last week, getting off blocks really well and playing with his hands and playing big and athletic like and is. Was really fortunate to have him be able to step into that role.

Q. And how important is it to have a disruptive defensive line against a rush offense that hasn't quite shown how great it could be, but as you know, can be quite dangerous?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, it's really important. While we count on everybody fitting their gaps and playing off each other, when it starts up front and our big guys can disrupt blocks and free themselves up at times, you know, to get a shoulder or get a hand on the running back to slow him down, it really does help the linebackers.

And oftentimes they end up making the play themselves, so really important.

Q. Dave, Rico said the other day or made the comment



that when you're trying to run at Vita Vea you're running at a really large human. It's hard to run at him, hard to run and away from him. How much do you have to take just him into account when you're scheming things up?

DAVE CANALES: You really do. You know, the big question is do you run at or away, because he's for as big as he is he is a phenomenal athlete and he's been playing football for a long time, so he understands concepts and how to get himself into position, and just like we were talking about with our defensive line, block disruption and trying to get off those things is a really big part of what he does.

We're aware of that and we have to be really disciplined about our pad level and our combos as we are working with him.

Q. Pete Carroll is a guy you call off and on during the season. Have you talked to him recently about what's ahead, playoff run like this that you haven't been a part of?

DAVE CANALES: I have not.

Q. Dave, T-Mack showed up on the injury report this week. He looks good?

DAVE CANALES: He looks great. Yeah, had a great practice yesterday. Came out and put another one together today. You know, at this point of the season the season gets really long and we've used him a lot and really counted on him.

He's done an excellent job being responsible with the roles we've asked of him. He's gotten a lot of mileage. At this point of the year you start to look at those guys, if you can give -- put a little bit more in the tank, get him back out there, worked out well for us and he put two great days together.

Q. We asked T-Mack I think in late October about the impact David Moore has had on the receiving room. That was with David out obviously with an elbow injury. Will his role as a player hype man, as a team, I don't know, coaching liaison, will his role expand do you think now that he's out there on the practice field and potentially playing this week?

DAVE CANALES: He really has continued to lead through this whole time, and handling his return to play, attacking that is really big for guys to see. Like this is how you go about it and get yourself ready, stay ready, and stay fit. Especially when it's an upper body injury; got to keep your

legs right. He looks fresh.

He sets the example really well for that group, and he's been connected with the whole time and been around talking to the guys. I expect he'll continue to do that.

Q. (Indiscernible) knee is more of an issue going back in protection or going forward in run blocking?

DAVE CANALES: Those are all the things that we got to figure out as far as making sure he can do his job.

Q. ...said something earlier today that Jason Pierre-Paul is somebody they could elevate this week. When it's something like that that has a long resume but not much lately, how do you account and prepare for that?

DAVE CANALES: Taking a look a little his pass rush cutups from the past and just seeing what his primary, second moves are. So just being aware. He can be a guy they use and we got to be ready for that part. I think a guy in his position, he's played so much football, as long as his conditioning is in the right place he has a toolbox, he knows how to play the game. So that's something we will be aware of.

Q. How does your history with Todd kind of impact the chess match?

DAVE CANALES: I just try to use the information that I was able to gather while we were there while we were together. The good and the bad of that is -- the good part is I know what the package looks like. That's also the bad part, is you don't know which part of it you're going to get.

So there is a little bit of a chess match game that goes on that way. We have to be aware of the areas and D&Ds that he likes to try to bring pressure in the different coverage mixes.

But if I get into a game where I'm chasing all of Todd's calls, that's going to make for a really long day. I have to count on things that we can execute, that we can play fast with first and foremost so we can be really decisive. That's what it's going to come down to, is just being decisive within the things we can do well.

Q. Dave, you had a couple guys signed off the practice squad to other teams this week. How does that complicate the workflow for you?

DAVE CANALES: Yeah, we have to get people in there, especially to hold a great practice. DeeJay Dallas, you know, love the fact he got an opportunity to go down



Jacksonville, a team that's doing really well, to help them in different ways.

But, again, soon as DeeJay goes out, we got to get another running back in here. Trey Tyus has done a fantastic job for us, but we can't expect him to carry the entire load for our practice.

Then on the flipside, Jerimiah Moon came off really what I thought was his best practice as a Panther a week before he gets claimed by the Pittsburgh Steelers. A great opportunity for him as well. A team he's familiar with. An opportunity to go and play.

We haven't had a chance to call him up at all this season, so I just wish those guys the best. But at the same time, we got to get guys out there to make sure they fill those roles so we can have great practices.

Q. What was watching Thursday Night Football like last night? It was a crazy game. Two teams that the Panthers, one quite familiar with, one will be familiar with. What was that like seeing it?

DAVE CANALES: It was just really exciting to see division opponents give everything they had, pull out all the stops, and find ways to play their best football. It just goes to show you just don't make a judgment about the outcome of the game early on. Sam Darnold had a couple interceptions early on. Settled in and had a phenomenal second half all the way through overtime. So you just keep playing ball, and there is something about teams that just find a way to win.

The punt return for a touchdown was amazing.

And flip on the other side and look at the Rams who really had a chance to control the game, were moving the ball so well, running the ball, Puka Nacua had a phenomenal day. All those things were working well. Two teams at their best. That's what you love to see. My takeaway is like I just want us to play at our best. I want to make sure we put our best foot forward especially in a division -- with a division rivalry.

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