



HOUSTON TEXANS vs. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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POSTGAME QUOTES FROM HOUSTON TEXANS

OWNER BOB MCNAIR
HEAD COACH BILL O'BRIEN
LT DUANE BROWN
OLB JADEVEON CLOWNEY
ILB BRIAN CUSHING
TE RYAN GRIFFIN
WR DEANDRE HOPKINS
QB BRIAN HOYER
CB KAREEM JACKSON
CB KEVIN JOHNSON
CB JOHNATHAN JOSEPH
WR CECIL SHORTS III
DE J.J. WATT

TEXANS OWNER BOB MCNAIR (Transcribed by Ryan Cantrell)

(on today's game) "It was just an outstanding performance. Our defense is just, you know, keeping the opposition under 10 points the last four games, and I think (Drew) Brees had thrown touchdown passes in the past 45 straight games until today, so that is over."

(on the play of the defense) "They are just playing great and the offense is developing more consistency. We ran the ball well today and Brian (Hoyer) had a great day throwing the ball, special teams played well and everybody played well."

(on winning four games in a row) "Well, that is what you have to do. Now we have to go out and try to win five. We are playing well and like I said, if we keep playing with this type of energy and playing the way we are, we are competitive with anyone."

(on what happened internally with this team) "I think the defense, number one we got (Benardrick) McKinney back, today we had more players on the field healthy than any other time. I think it shows up and I think we made a few changes here and there. I think we are playing very aggressively and with a lot of confidence and our young players are coming along, like (Kevin) Johnson as an example, he is playing really well."

(on the performance of DE J.J. Watt) "Well J.J., the only way they can avoid him getting a sack is by holding him, they just don't call it every time. I mean if you watch it, they are literally holding him every play, so he is just that kind of player, he is so disruptive and plays so hard it turns everybody else on."

(on the job that Head Coach Bill O'Brien is doing with this team) "I think he is doing a fine job. We have a lot of work to do and I think he has everyone pointed in the right direction and on the same page working together. That is what it takes, offense, defense, special teams all doing well."

HEAD COACH BILL O'BRIEN (Transcribed by Omar Majzoub)

(on today's game) "I just think it was another really good team win. I just told these guys that all three phases are contributing. You can't say enough about how our defense is playing. I thought the offense moved the ball really well. I think it's really good to – no matter what the score was, to end the game with the ball like we did. I think that four minute offense at the end was really a good drive by the players and by George (Godsey). Special teams has really come up big for us throughout these four wins in a row. The deal is this though guys, it's on to the next. It's a very, very difficult Buffalo team that we face next and a very, very tough opponent."

(on if this is what he envisioned bringing QB Brian Hoyer to the Texans) "Yeah. Bringing him in, I knew he knew our offense. I knew he was a great guy. I really enjoyed coaching him when I coached him in New England. I knew he



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was an accurate guy. I knew the ball came out fairly quick. I knew he was smart. So, I think it was something where you move to a new city, everything is a little bit new. Everybody had to get used to the new surroundings. Look, in the end, what he's doing for us right now, it has to continue. That's the key. We can't turn it over. We've got to get us into the right play. We've got to do a good job of coaching him and he has to be able to take that to the field and be kind of a coach on the field, which is what he's doing right now."

(on the Texans tight end play today) "I've thought about this a lot, (Ryan) Griffin was unlucky, got the knee injury. But before that, he had been really coming on strong, end of last year, OTAs, training camp. It was unfortunate that he was hurt and it's good to have him back. He's an athletic guy. He's a tough guy. He's got good hands. He's a good route runner. He can get open versus man-to-man coverage and not just zone coverage. That makes him a really good weapon for us."

(on TE C.J. Fiedorowicz) "C.J. has worked hard. C.J. is a very hard worker. Comes from a great college program where that was instilled in him. He has an idea of what our expectations are here of the tight end position. I think he's really tried to get better every single day. That's why he's really kind of enjoying playing pretty well right now."

(on the team gaining confidence and clicking) "I think we've got to be careful with that though. I think this is a tough league. I think that you have to understand how you got to this point and you got here through hard work. A great work ethic, really on the practice field. These guys have really practiced hard. They've put in a lot of extra time in the film room. They've gone out there on the practice field, we've had a good rhythm to practice. That's been really important. We've had competitive practices. Our leadership has done well. That has to continue. If you think about your "swagger" or whatever you guys want to call it, that's when you get beat. So you have to keep understanding how you're in this position. That's because of the work that you're putting in. You've got to do it again this week."

(on the Texans defense playing well) "I think it's a credit obviously to the players. The players have really understood what we're trying to do on defense. They've practiced very hard to get it right. I think it's a credit to the defensive coaching staff, led by Romeo (Crennel), that he's been able to put these guys in positions to make plays and really mixed it up. It's kind of been what we want, a game plan-type defense. I think it's a credit to those two groups of guys, especially the players. The players have really risen up and gotten back to a position now where they're playing really good defense. And again, like I said, it's got to continue."

(on the team starting fast) "The issue there – I think we had a pretty good beginning of the game. We really stressed that throughout the week. But then that second quarter wasn't very good. I think, in order for us to really be where we want to be as a team, that type of quarter has to get better. We have to be more consistent. We have to be a team that can be an offense that sustains. That can sustain that level of play through four quarters. I would say probably 75 percent of the time, we did sustain that. But that 25 percent, we've got to get that to where it's more consistent. Then you'll see a really good offense. I think our guys, again, I give our offense a lot of credit. We're very hard on our offense. We have high expectations for them. I think there's probably days they walk in here and they're not really thrilled to see me or (George) Godsey, but they go to work and they've gotten better every single day. I think that's a credit to the players."

(on Defensive Coordinator Romeo Crennel) "Romeo has coached a very long time. Romeo's a five-time Super Bowl champion as an assistant coach. He's seen it all. He's been a head coach. He's a very patient guy. He's a very positive guy. He's very bright guy. Players have a lot of respect for him. He's won three Super Bowls as a defensive coordinator. I think he knows how to win. He understands that every team is a little bit different. I think he's done a good job, along with the whole staff. Everybody has contributed to really putting our guys in positions to try to take advantage of the skills that they have. I think that's a credit to him. And then again, I think a lot of the credit has to go to the players for going out there and being able to play the way they're playing. I think that's a real credit to the players."

(on the defense feeding off DE J.J. Watt) "I think you'd probably have to ask them but you know he's a big part of what we do, obviously. The guy is a great player. He's got just a great motor, skill set. He can change a game on any play and I think when he gets the crowd going and he makes a sack or he bats a ball or he does something, he does. He lifts our team. But I think there's other guys that do that, too. I think when Brian Cushing really thumped a guy up and tackles a guy hard in the running game. I think when Vince (Wilfork) really song somebody inside. I think when Benardrick McKinney - you see our safeties are playing better. Johnathan Joseph, nobody talks about him enough. I mean, this guy is playing at a really high level. He actually called out the fourth down play. He knew



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that – from his experience in the league, he knew that was the play that was coming. He knew it. I think everybody deserves credit on that defense. But obviously, J.J. is a big part of it.”

(on holding Saints QB Drew Brees in-check) “Well, I think in this league when you go against these great quarterbacks, the only chance you have is to mix it up. If you stay in the same coverage down after down, you’re going to get burned. I don’t care how good your secondary is. I think the credit goes to the players to be able to understand that. The different coverages that we use, we probably used about seven to eight different coverages I the game when you think about third down, red area, first and second down, two-minute at the end of the half, so the players did a really good job of understanding that and communicating with each other how each coverage related to what they were seeing formation-wise. Give credit to those guys.”

(on QB Brian Hoyer spreading it around) “Yeah, that was a big part of the game plan because we knew that - this is a great coaching staff over there in New Orleans. We knew that they were probably going to try to double (DeAndre) Hopkins. Obviously we target Hopkins quite a bit. The other guys had to make plays versus man coverage. Whether it was Nate Washington, Cecil Shorts, Ryan Griffin, the backs, checking it down to (Johnathan) Grimes and I thought Alfred Blue had a nice game. Chris Polk did a good job. C.J. Fiedorowicz. It was important to keep spreading it around.”

(on the team playing more physical) “Credit again to the players. The players have done a great job of really working hard in practice. I give credit to going back to pads, being in padded practices once a week, which is what we’re allowed to do. Those have been tough practices. I think that’s carried over to the field. They’ve been able to block better and they’ve been able to stop the run better, tackle better, take on blocks better, get their pads down in the running game, and run people over. I think that’s a credit to the players, but it’s also something that we’ve really stressed on Wednesday or Thursday, whenever we chose to go in pads.”

(on the offense scoring on the first drive of the game) “I think the key was at the beginning of the game, we stopped them. They punted to us then we went down and scored. It was complimentary in the fact that we stopped them, they punted, (Keith) Mumphery got a pretty good return, and then we took that pretty decent field position and scored. That’s complimentary football. I think we actually did it a couple times today. A couple times we didn’t after Kareem’s (Jackson) interception, we don’t get points there. That’s something we’ve got to be more consistent with. If we can really understand that complimentary football for 60 minutes, we’ll be in a good position here week to week. But it’s been better than it was, that’s for sure.”

(on the 2014 draft class starting to come together and contribute) “I think that people- whatever they say about slow starts for rookies, I think everybody has to remember that in 2011, this league changed a lot with the new CBA. I think it was really difficult for young players to come into this league and be able to play right away unless they were like extremely talented. Like an extremely talented receiver or cornerback maybe or whatever it may be. The closer you play to the ball in the offensive or defensive line, it’s really different. It’s a totally different game than college football. The fact that you can’t work with these guys as much as you used to be able to, that’s a hindrance to the development of younger players. I think that’s been a big point that I think we all have to understand. Look, I’m only a second year head coach, but I think the more we keep taking about this, if we want to see a great product on the field, we have to be allowed to work with our younger players more.”

(on if he was aware it was the first time the Saints hadn’t scored in 155 games) “No, I’m not. I wasn’t aware. I have a lot of respect for them. Sean Payton is a coach that I’ve looked up to for a long time. I’ve known him for a while. He’s a great football coach. Drew Brees, great quarterback. I think our defense is playing at a really good level right now. But again, it’s like 155 games, that’s great, but Buffalo is on the horizon here. We better not rest on our laurels.”

(on controlling time of possession and how much that has to do with the defense) “A lot. They’re ability to get off the field on third down. One of the things that I thought we did a really good job on defense today, when they ran it, I don’t know how many we had, but we had a lot of tackles for loss. I would say we had a least three or four tackles for loss. That put them in long yardage situations, which helped our third down and our ability to get off the field. That’s the complimentary football that we’re talking about.”

(on the defense playing terrific) “That’s for you guys to judge. I think the key – I really believe this, in this league, if you start thinking about ridiculous levels that you’re playing at, you’re going to get beat. I think every week is different. It was a great team-win. Our defense is playing really well. I give a lot of credit to our players. I really enjoy watching those guys play on defense. But again, we’ve got to come in here on Wednesday and we’ve got to be



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ready to turn the page to Buffalo. That's been the key because if you think about the levels that you're playing at and this, that, and the other, and you forget about what's on the horizon. New York, I've been there. It's not an easy place to play. You're going to be in for a wake-up call. I think our players have to understand how they got here and that was by, again, 16 one-game seasons. Now, we're on to the last five. We've got to really understand that and concentrate on Buffalo."

(on being able to mix in CB Kareem Jackson and OLB Jadeveon Clowney slowly) "That's a credit to both those positions. It's been great to get those guys back. They were both injured. Kareem had a really good game today I thought. JD (Clowney) is getting back from injury. I thought he was explosive today and made some plays. The fact that we could really sustain a level of success on defense with the corner position the way it was and guys like Whitney Mercilus and John Simon. That's a credit to those players that while those guys were out, we were still playing good defense. That has to continue. Everybody has to keep playing their role and doing their job really well."

T DUANE BROWN (Transcribed by Stefan Nolet)

(on the performance of the offense) "I'm very proud of the way our guys came out. We came out, had a fast drive, got a touchdown, the defensive gave us the ball back, we scored another touchdown. I thought we did a great job up front of running the ball. We knew that was a point of emphasis, as always. We still have some things to clean up -- penalties, turnovers, things like that we don't want to have going forward, but overall I thought it was a great effort."

(on finally being able to score a touchdown on the first series) "That was great, and we really expected that. We respected their defense, but we had a great game plan, and we knew that we'd come out with the energy that we were capable of playing with, we'd definitely go down and get some kind of points. The guys followed through on execution, and we were able to do it again on the second drive."

(on where he feels the team is right now) "I think we're in a great spot. We're definitely on an incline. We just have to keep pushing. We know it's not going to get any easier from here. We have a tough team that we're going up to next week, and we just have to continue to play clean, play hard, and I'm just happy where we are right now."

(on how big it was to get off to a fast start) "It was very big, especially accounting for the quarterback the Saints have, the offense they have, we knew as an offense when we got on the field, we needed to start fast and get points, and we were able to do that and kind of put our foot on the pedal early. The defense did a great job of keeping those guys off the field and continuing to give us the ball in great field position, and we just continued to capitalize."

OLB JADEVEON CLOWNEY (Transcribed by Ellie Pardee)

(on what is different with the team lately) "Playing together, we're playing complimentary football. I said it all last week. We just need to keep feeding off each other and coming together and making plays."

(on what it means that he's part of a defense that didn't allow the Saints to score a touchdown in a game for the first time since 2005) "It means a lot. Like I told those guys, we're playing together. Everybody doing their job out there, we're making plays and getting off the field."

(on if he thinks CB Kareem Jackson would have scored a touchdown if he hadn't accidentally gotten in the way) "I don't think so. I was looking back like they closing in on you, Kareem, come on, I didn't know if I was going to block that or go block in front of me. They were closing in on him fast, I just told him on the sidelines."

(on if he thinks the pressure they were putting on Saints QB Drew Brees starting getting to him by the second half) "We were hoping so. We were trying to get to him, keep him from making plays. He's a good quarterback and we were trying to just make our goal to put pressure on him all game and try to make him throw bad balls."

(on if the Miami game was a turning point for the team) "Yeah, we're winning, so of course it was a turning point. We lost that game and we came together in this locker room and we said everybody was against us, we got each others back in this locker room and we've just been playing like that."



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(on what the key to the four-game winning streak is) “Practice, practice. We practice hard and we work on film, study more than probably any team in the league, but it’s helping us learn the plays going into the game and you get in the game and you see something line up, you’re like I know this play, so you just go in and play the play sometimes.”

ILB BRIAN CUSHING (Transcribed by Francisco Casillas)

(on Drew Brees not scoring a TD today after 45 straight games) “It’s a good performance, we came out executed game plan and played hard.”

(on what to pin-point to where the defense is and have suffered a couple of tough losses) “I think we just had enough of playing like that. We just started really simplifying things and playing hard and just had a bad taste in our mouth in a couple of those games and internally promised each other that it wouldn’t happen again.”

(on being tired of losing) “Yeah, and losing in the fashion that we were. I think that those two games were personally the worst losses I’ve ever been a part of, but we’re over that and we completely changed and turned the page and obviously playing way better and way more effective and playing up to our potential which we knew we had.”

(on building by that momentum week by week) “Yeah, it’s a confident group. Guys are having fun out there and just flying around, making plays at all levels on the field.”

(on building after the win against Tennessee) “Yeah, definitely. It’s just one of those things that we finally if felt right, I think we just clicked and did really good. We’re flying around and kind of just all realized how good we can play.”

(on his level of play) “Just feel really good. The healthiest I’ve been in a long time and today I wasn’t as active as I personally would like, but it’s a win and that’s what’s most important. That’s the biggest thing and personally I just feel really good and just want to go out and play better each week.”

(on where this team is now after winning four straight) “We are on the rise, but at the same time we have to take care of business week by week. We’ve got another big game coming up next week and that’s just the NFL. We got to keep winning and if you don’t know, the other team in the conference is winning too, but we got to take care of our business and that’s obviously Buffalo next week. It should be a really big game up there.”

(on how big was to get CB Kareem Jackson) “A great talent, but a great teammate. It helps the team and it’s fun to play with him. It’s a guy I’ve played with for six years now and enjoyed every experience every game that I’ve had and I think all the DBs and all the rest of the guys will say the same thing.”

(on what kind of work done with ILB Benardrick McKinney) “There’s no work like practice and to go out there and execute and talk and just to see his growth and development, it’s been really cool. You know, a guy that came in here and obviously he’s a physical talent, but you could see him growing and maturing and definitely his game has gotten a lot better so it’s fun to play with him and see that growth.”

(on has anything changed on practicing harder) “We practice hard the whole time and that’s one thing, this team works hard. We work very, very hard. This team doesn’t give up and it’s a very blue collar tough kind of team and we take a lot of pride in that. Maybe just paying attention to details more, cut some of the mistakes out and really just have as flawless of practice as we possibly could.”

(on how great it feels to see the hard work come to fruition) “It feels good. That’s what you do it for. I mean, it has paid off and it’s directly correlated to the way we’ve played. Practice has been really good. We practice really hard and physical too. I mean, we are one of the few teams that really go out there and bang once a week like we do, don’t feel sorry for each other and just play physical and play hard.”

TE RYAN GRIFFIN (Transcribed by Stefan Nolet)

(on his touchdown reception in the first quarter) “I was pass protecting at first, and my mental clock kind of went off and I knew Brian (Hoyer) was in trouble, so I just tried to make a play and get out to the flat. He put it on me and I got in.”



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(on how the pace of the offense has led to success) “It was big. We wanted to start fast, and I think we got that done with the tempo. Getting to the ball quickly really helps get us into a rhythm as an offense.”

(on his 30-yard catch and run) “I tried to cover up the ball and make sure nobody was right next to me to punch the ball out, and I just got up field and tried to split the defense.”

(on coming back after missing the first half of the season) “It just feels great to be on the field with these guys. Being hurt for those whatever it was – nine, 10 weeks – just being up in the box, not even on the sideline, I didn’t even feel like part of the team. Whether I contribute or not, I just feel happy being out with these guys. It’s my family out there.”

(on what has changed for the offense in the past four weeks) “Just getting in a rhythm offensively. We’ve just been working hard day in and day out. Practice reps, and Brian’s (Hoyer) come along and everybody’s on the same page.”

(on if there was an attitude adjustment on the team) “Maybe there was. I come in here and do my job, and I feel like that’s what everybody else does. As long as we keep doing that, we’re going to keep getting winning results.”

WR DEANDRE HOPKINS (Transcribed by Ryan Cantrell)

(on how does it feel to win) “It feels great. It was a team win. We came out and do what we wanted to do, started off fast, so it was a great win for us.”

(on how important was that up tempo offense to get you rolling) “It was important. That’s something that we preached at practice, to start off fast, and we knew if we did that everything else would fall into place after that.”

(on the biggest key to the team’s turnaround) “Just coming out and wanting to win more than the opponent, starting fast, and the defense coming out and doing what they are doing.”

(on how big it was for you to be able to score on the first possession) “We have been picking it up, ever since the bye, so I wouldn’t say we have been struggling the whole year. The first half of the season we struggled with that, but that’s football. You make changes and you go out and correct it.”

(on the creativity of the play calling) “Just coming up and doing whatever we need to do to win. If that’s wildcat, giving Cecil (Shorts) the ball or Cec (Cecil Shorts) throwing the touchdown to (Alfred) Blue, whatever we’ve got to do to win, it’s been working.”

(on what he saw from QB Brian Hoyer coming back today) “A guy that wanted to win. A guy that has been working hard to earn his position and came out and played a great game.”

(on if you are seeing what you are practicing translate to the field on game day) “Oh yeah, without a doubt. We practice how we play and that is something that we have been preaching.”

(on if that practice philosophy changed anytime during the season) “No, not at all.”

(on the Saints game plan with him today was to be more physical off the line of scrimmage) “No, the Saints plan today was double-team 10.”

QB BRIAN HOYER (Transcribed by Laci Theriot and Ellie Pardee)

(on the touchdown pass to WR Cecil Shorts III during the first quarter) “Easiest touchdown pass of my career for sure.”

(on how big the turnaround after the bye week has been for this team) “I think we just started just playing better really. I think I knew the type of character our team had in that second half of the Miami game. We could have come out and just laid an egg and it could have been really bad. I think when we came out and kept fighting you know just as we ran out of time, it wasn’t a good half. I think that kind of showed the character of the guys we have, and I knew we would be okay. I knew it was going to be tough, but we stuck together and believed in each other, and



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now we are playing good football. Our defense is playing lights out. I mean to hold those guys to two field goals, unbelievable job. Offensively, we are running the ball better, which as a quarterback, anytime you run the ball, I think it makes it easier. You know, we are just playing good complimentary football. We've got to keep getting better. It's only going to get tougher from here on out. Now it's going to be December, and if we want to make a run, then we've got to play our best football."

(on if this is how he envisioned the team playing when he signed) "Yeah, for sure. I talked you guys a bunch when I first came here. I played against this team last year. I knew the defense was going to be tough. I knew the playmakers they had. Obviously, I knew Coach O'Brien and the offense. For me, it was just an opportunity I didn't want to pass up. And now, here we are, in November 29th, and we just got to keep improving. I think that's the key. Don't sit back. We have a group of guys that are hungry to come out and play better each week. I think if we keep that attitude, that's what we have to do to sustain the success."

(on what it was like to score on the first drive) "Yeah it was awesome. I think it's always been emphasized, so to finally get it done, hopefully that breaks the streak, and then go from there. I think you know all along, anyone who has watched our offense, as soon we get rolling, that's when we have success. So I think we are doing a better job at first and second down, and keeping the third downs short. I think that's really the key. I think when we do that we are in better shape. Then we've got to keep it going. We can't score the first two possessions and then kind of lulled to sleep a little bit. Obviously, a really dumb interception by me. For the most part, we did it again coming out at the second half. That's huge, I think. Like I said, we are kind of feeding off of each other. We are feeding off the defense and they are feeding off of us. For them to see us to go out, put two big scores up, and come do it again in the second half, I think that's good complimentary football."

(on the unexpected touchdown to TE Ryan Griffin) "Yeah, I think a lot of it was with them coming in with a new defensive coordinator, you study as much as you can to prepare. They did some different things. On that look, I wasn't really sure what they were doing. I made sure that we were protected just in case there was blitz, and then Grif did a great job blocking his guy and realizing it wasn't the blitz that I thought it was, and got open in a flat. He had a great day. To get him back involved, (TE) C.J. Fiedorowicz had a few catches. I think getting those guys involved on the offense really helps."

(on if they went into the game with the plan to throw to the tight ends) "Not really, I always go in just trying and thinking about the game plan and how I've been coached. Like I said, that definitely wasn't schemed up on that play. He was in protection and then he realized it wasn't a blitz that I thought was coming. He did a good job. The o-line did a great job giving me time to look around. Then he got open. On the other one, I threw it, and I thought he was going to score. I had got knocked down, but I am looking at him running. It looked like he was pulling away from guys. I think it's safe to say that he is back. It's his third week back. He's going a good job."

(on if the defense thanked him for keeping them fresh) "Well, I think that is a big part of it. Those guys are playing a really good job so for us to stay on the field it does keep them fresh and I think we have talk about it all along, we need to come out and establish the run and I think those guys did a tremendous job, especially at the end when they know you are going to run it, and you go out there and continue to run it and end the game with the ball, I think that is a real testament to the improvement those guys have made and kind of the mentality."

(on how excited he was with the defensive play during the game) "That was awesome, I mean usually a team comes in they usually defer so for them to take the ball and then for us to go right down and score I think that kind of set the tone for the day. Like I said, we can't have these lulls where it's two scores and then we're not doing anything for a while, so we've got to keep improving in that area but I think like I said, everybody is feeding off each other. Special teams are doing a great job, and for us, I know for me, in order for us to watch that defense, it gets me fired up when I see them make a big play or a sack or whatever. Knowing that the other thing is we're going to get the ball in good field position."

(on starting fast today and if there was something specific they changed to have success early) "Not necessarily. I think a lot of times people ask the question why aren't you starting fast, but sometimes the plays just don't work, the defense makes a good play, so I think today we started off with a long run for a first down, then we get moving, we get a few no-huddle plays and then really the second drive we hit a few big passes and I think it's just good when you get that rhythm and we have to do a better job of continuing to do what we did today and really start fast and get those positive plays and then when you do get to third down it's third and two, third and four, it's not third and eight, third and 10. It's tough to convert in this league when it's that down and distance."



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(on what was different at the start of the third quarter that made them click so quickly) "I think the same thing, I think we hit a few runs and then they had some defensive penalties and then hit (Ryan) Grif (Griffin) on a long pass and then all of the sudden you're down there and we stayed in the pass game a few and then I think with that passing game we kind of had gotten off a little bit, so George (Godsey) did a good job of calling a run and then (Alfred) Blue did a good job behind that offensive line punching it in."

(on how much better this team can get) "I think in order to reach our goals we have to continue to get better. I don't think this is us peaking yet, I think for me, I look at this game already reviewing it, there's things that I definitely could have done better and I think when everybody sits there and evaluates themselves, I think they'll say the same thing. It's not going to be perfect but there's some stuff we've definitely got to clean up offensively like I said. We can just go out there and score two quick ones and then not really have anything for the rest of the half. I think there's a ton of room for improvement and we've got to stay hungry and I think we will."

(on if there were any concerns today coming back from injury) "Just anxious I guess. You want to get back out there and play, obviously get hit. I don't think you ever want to get hit but you want to get that first initial hit and get up and respond. So I think it was good to get back out there. Obviously, the fast start helped a little bit and I felt good."

(on how fresh he felt coming into this game) "I think the whole process that I went through really prepared me to know that I was coming in here and I would be ready to go. There was no question about that. It's also, when you go through that situation you kind of step back and you watch your team from a different angle. I think for me it made me more hungry to get back out there, especially seeing the success that they had last week. I just want to be out there and be part of the team."

CB KAREEM JACKSON (Transcribed by Stefan Nolet)

(on playing after returning from injury) "It felt good just to be back out there with the guys. These guys have been playing great the last four weeks. To get back to out there in the mix and to be a piece of the puzzle today, to help the guys out, as far as a defense, as a team to go out and get the win is definitely big for us."

(on his interception) "I just had a chance make a play on the ball. In those types of situations, I think as a defense, we've been making those plays lately. For me to be able to make that play was definitely big for us as a defense. They were driving the ball in the red zone. That's what kind of separates good defense from mediocre defense. We've definitely been playing at a high level lately. I just wanted to come back today and be a piece of the puzzle and just keep this thing going."

(on the defensive performance against the Saints) "It just shows the progress we've been making as a defense. As a secondary, day in and day out, we've been putting the work in to elevate our game every week, and it's been showing on Sundays. We just want to keep it going as a defense, as a total unit and as a team. We continue to mesh together. We're doing some good things right now, and like I said, week in and week out, we're just going to come in, put the work in and just kind of put it all out there on Sunday."

(on what ending the Saints' streak of scoring a touchdown in 155 games says about the defense) "It's just a testament to the work we've been putting in for us to go out and communicate and to be on the same page each and every play. As a back end, we pride ourselves on being on the same page, going out and executing the defense and making plays. We've been able to do that the last couple of weeks, and like I said, we just want to keep that going."

(on what the defense has been doing differently since he got back from injury) "Communication is a big part of what we're doing now. We're all on the same page, we're making plays as a defense, we're creating turnovers. The front seven, those guys are rushing the quarterback, they're doing some great things as well. They're giving us a chance to go make plays on the ball, and we've been able to do that. In the last four weeks I've been out, those guys have definitely been doing the same thing, doing a great job of it, and like I said, when I came back today, I just wanted to continue to help the guys."

CB KEVIN JOHNSON (Transcribed by Stefan Nolet)



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(on having CB Kareem Jackson back in the lineup) "That's type of player he is -- a game changer. He's one of the better corners in the league for a reason, and it's good having him back. Obviously, we all saw the impact on the game he had."

(on what keeping the Saints out of the end zone says about the defense) "I just think it goes to say that we're getting better, and that's our goal, to every week get better. We learned from the beginning of the season, and we're just trying to improve and when you come back to work next weekend, and hopefully have a better performance."

(on how much the defense can improve) "We come out here every day like the sky's the limit. That's the way we practice, and we just have to keep working."

(on what the key was to containing Saints QB Drew Brees) "Like I said, the coaches put us in great positions to make plays all day. Just giving them different looks and going out there, competing and having fun."

(on how much more aggressive the secondary can be with the pass from DE J.J. Watt) "He's one of the best players in the league for a reason, and it's very good having him on the team."

CB JOHNATHAN JOSEPH (Transcribed by Stefan Nolet)

(on playing the best defense of the season) "I think we're playing good right now. I think every week, there's always something you can get at, and that's what I'm focused on. This game is a great game for us today, but you have to learn from it and move on from it also."

(on how much the pass rush makes the secondary's job easier) "It's a good feeling just knowing that the quarterback is not going to be back there patting the ball all day. You have to lock in and keep your eyes on your man, but at the same time, be aware that you have (Jadeveon) Clowney, Whitney (Mercilus), of course J.J. (Watt) and all those guys in there rushing the passer also."

(on CB Kareem Jackson's interception) "That was big time. Obviously, he's been out with an injury, and I think just overall, just for him personally, to be able to get that interception, he's gotten his feet back wet again, I feel. And then anytime you make a big play like that in the red zone, it's big for your team. So that definitely put even more life back into us as a defense, and as a team also."

WR CECIL SHORTS III (Transcribed by Francisco Casillas)

(on the fast start and getting the monkey off your back) "Yeah, coach talked about coming out here and starting out fast, and that's exactly what we did. We came out and we executed really well. Defense shut it down out there and we did our part."

(on feeling a sense of urgency today) "Yeah, we didn't want to give the ball in number nine's hands. He is very good over there with the offense and as you could see, he has a history of doing well over there. Our defense did a great job today and on our side of the ball, there were some things we could do better, but I think we ended the game great on that last four minute drive and definitely put enough points to win."

(on his touchdown) "It was a good play call. We worked on that throughout the week, Coach Godsey (Offensive Coordinator George Godsey) and OB (Head Coach Bill O'Brien), and talked about it on the sideline and it worked well. That's the easiest touchdown pass for Hoyer."

(on guessing what the Saints would do after having a change at defensive coordinator) "We were prepared. I think coaches do a great job in preparing us each week. I mean, we even looked back at Oakland last year, that's were (Defensive Coordinator) Dennis Allen was in his previous stint. We were well prepared for the game. Not too much surprise, there's always going to be adjustments throughout the game, that's the game of football. They change something, we have to change something too. We were prepared."

(on the creativity of the offense) "Its fun, especially when it works. When things go well and get positive yards on those plays, it makes the game a whole lot fun."



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(on anything that stands out in these last four games) “Honestly, I think we are playing better as a whole team. Everyone is complimenting each other. Special teams feeding off the defense, they feeding off of us and we continue to play like that the team will play well.”

(on difference from the Miami game) “We never gave up, we knew what we were capable of. It’s a tribute to the coaching staff. Continue to believing in us, continue to work hard. This is one of the hardest working coaching staffs I have seen, so a tribute to those guys and we got to keep it going, cant stop here.”

DE J.J. WATT (Transcribed by Stephanie Weaver and Christiana Johns)

(on what it’s like for the defense when the offense scores on the first drive) “It’s great. It’s a great start to the game. It really gets the momentum going. It gets the crowd going. It’s the right way to start, especially against a football team like that, a very good team that likes to start fast. It was a really good way to start our day.”

(on what it means to be the first team to hold the Saints without a touchdown since 2005) “That’s a long time. That’s a very high powered offense with a very good quarterback and very good coaching staff. I think it’s a credit to our coaches for a good game plan. I think it’s a credit to our guys for executing it. It’s everybody doing their job. Everybody up front on the backend executing their assignment, knowing what their supposed to do, and doing it very well. I think we did a great job of that today.”

(on if he got into Saints QB Drew Brees’s head) “I don’t know. You’d have to ask him but that’s my job so I hope so.”

(on what his game plan was today) “Get to the quarterback as often as I can. It doesn’t really matter to me who I line up against, who’s over there. It’s just my job to find the quarterback and to get to him. I think our guys do a great job of helping me do that. Back end does a great job with their coverages. Our guys up front do a great job. My teammates make my job easy.”

(on if he stood up over the center once or more than once) “I’m not sure.”

(on if he can make that call on his own) “Sometimes, we had a combination of things. It can happen either called or uncalled. Do you want the whole playbook? I can give you the whole playbook if you want.”

(on Texans Owner Robert McNair’s remarks on how offenses hold him on every play) “He said it not me. He’s a smart man. He’s a very smart man. I would listen to what he says. I often do.”

(on if Saints QB Drew Brees said anything to him during the game) “No. Drew and I respect each other very much. I have the utmost respect for Drew Brees. No, I would never talk trash to Drew Brees.”

(on what the key is to the team’s turnaround) “I think we’re playing good football. All around, I think we are executing our assignments. I think everybody is staying within themselves and doing their job very well. I think on defense we are tackling well. We’re executing our jobs. Everybody is playing their gap. Everybody is doing well. The coaches are putting together good game plans. As you play, you build confidence. As you go throughout the week, you build it through your work. I think we’ve been doing a great job at practice. I think we’ve been doing a great job in the film room. It doesn’t just happen. Things like this don’t just happen. A turnaround like this doesn’t just happen. It comes from work. It comes from putting in the time, and I think our guys have done that.”

(on if the defense spoke internally after the blowout losses) “I think it was pretty clear that we sucked at that point, so something had to happen. We had to play better. So far, we have been doing that, but it is a week to week thing. You have to do it every single week. You can’t let up. You have to have that chip on your shoulder. I think we’ve done a good job of that so far, but it’s up to us to make sure that we keep that chip, and we keep playing and practicing the way that we have these last four weeks or so. And we go out there, and we attack the week the way that we have.”

(on how much better the defense can get) “I don’t know. That’s kind of an objective question. For us it’s just going out there every single day and practicing as hard as we can, putting together the best game plan we can and then executing. If we go out there and execute the way we have been, we’re a pretty good defense. That comes from



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putting in the work. That comes from putting in the time, and our guys have been doing that. We can rely on each other. Everybody knows where everybody is going to be. We just need to keep doing that.”

(on being the second fastest player to reach 70 sacks in the NFL) “It doesn’t really mean a whole lot. It’s very cool, no doubt, but they’re numbers. I just go out there and try and get as many of them as I can and wherever you fall, you fall. Right now it’s about doing whatever I can do to help my team win, and right now we’re doing a good job of that so just trying to do whatever I possibly can.”

(on how remarkable it is that only one other NFL player reached 70 sacks faster than him) “Yeah, I guess so.”

(on NT Vince Wilfork’s play) “I think he’s playing really well. I think he’s doing a great job up in the middle. He’s what you want a nose guard to be. He does his job well. He forces them to put two guys on him, and he takes those two guys on very well. He’s a smart player. He’s a very physical player. He does his job very well.”

(on NT Vince Wilfork’s chemistry with defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel) “It’s great. Obviously, they had history together. I mean you’d have to ask them about their chemistry. I don’t know. How’s your chemistry with your wife? I couldn’t tell you about that. I don’t have one either don’t worry.”

(on if he is lining up wider than earlier this year) “I don’t know. I don’t think so. I don’t think so.”

(on how much success is physical vs. mental) “It’s a combination of both. It’s both. You have to have the physical skills to be able to do your job, but then you also have to have the mental aspect where you know how to attack and what they’re going to try and do to attack you. It goes throughout the course of the game as well because teams try and change things throughout the course of the game whether it’s adding blockers, whether it’s changing the scheme. So you have to always constantly be on your toes because they’re always going to give you something new. The Jets did it last week in the second half. The Saints did it today. They add extra guys, they do different things to try and offset what you’re doing so it’s a constant chess match that you’re always playing and trying to win.”

(on if he would host a comedy show after his playing career is over) “Please, these are easy targets over here. I’m really not that funny, I promise you that. It’s just, I know these guys well.”

POSTGAME QUOTES FROM NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON

QB DREW BREES

S KENNY VACCARO

TE BENJAMIN WATSON

HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON (Transcribed by Ellie Pardee)

(opening statement) “Just a couple thoughts, obviously it’s tough to lose a game like that. I thought, I told the team this, I thought after the early portion of the game we settled down defensively, we got the field goal at the half, was kind of encouraged by that. We really, story of the game was their defense and our inability offensively to really sustain a drive. We couldn’t stay on the field, really took an effect on our defense because look, they’re a good third down front and part of it is your first and second down efficiency and it seems as if most of the game we were in those long yardage situations. We didn’t play well enough. Credit them, I think that’s a good football team. I said that early in the week with regards to how they’re playing their front. Surely I think when we put the tape on we’re going to see a lot of things that we need to clean up offensively. That was the one thing coming off the field where it was, man, we struggled with any type of consistency. We’d run the football, we had a few big runs, but outside of that, it wasn’t good enough. It wasn’t much better really in the passing game, so any questions?”

(on what kind of impact Texans DE J.J. Watt had on the game) “Obviously there are certain things we’re going to pay attention to play-wise. I think when I do see it, it’ll be a little bit easier to answer than just trying to guess.”

(on lining up receivers differently in this game) “Yeah, that’s just an unbalanced look to try to put two bigs over there and still give us a route and play design that wouldn’t be affected by it.”



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(on points of emphasis in this game) "Timing, tempo, yeah, absolutely."

(on if he felt like the win was more because the Texans played well rather than the Saints didn't play well enough) "Well, look, I think probably when you put the tape on and you watch it all, it's going to be both. It's a good defense. We knew that going in and yet we got MA's (missed assignments) on routes, guys busting some basic, basic things. We're on the ground in a couple zone schemes, I mean there are some things I know when we watch on tape that we're going to be upset about, and yet they're going to make some plays. We'll have a better chance to see it here tomorrow."

(on the first time the offense hasn't scored a touchdown in a game since he's been the head coach, if he's been more frustrated after a game than this) "Oh yeah. I mean look, yeah, there have been certainly any of those, there's a number of losses that get you frustrated, so let's not look for the most frustrated ever headline. It's disappointing to lose a game like that and certainly it's disappointing to not score a touchdown. That'd be a fair assessment of it."

(on what he saw out of Texans QB Brian Hoyer) "Well I thought early on, man they had a good flow and tempo going. They had a good mix of run and pass. I thought we did a good job of handling (WR DeAndre) Hopkins. He's an extremely good player, now obviously some other guys benefited from that type of coverage. I thought after those early drives, thought we settled in, did a few good things defensively and we just were on the field too long. Time of possession wise didn't help them out at all offensively, but we'll have a chance to see it when we look at it."

(on the variety of weapons on offense) "I think early on it was the tempo, then went no-huddle. I thought we settled in and played better as that game wore on. Obviously they had a touchdown to start the second half. I'm sure when we look at it there will be some things, I think that their efficiency running the ball was problematic when you look at what the yards per carry average was, but the totals, if you looked at some of those numbers you'd say well this team probably won. Clearly compared to our totals and again, coming off the field the first thing is really our struggles on offense. I thought it was, I thought it was clearly evident and disappointing."

(on Texans Head Coach Bill O'Brien turning around his team this season) "Listen, have a ton of respect for him, obviously when you're playing in an NFL season, coaching in an NFL season, there are peaks and valleys, long stretches sometimes in a good way, sometimes not. I think that toughness and resiliency is reflected throughout his team and they're playing good football."

(on the play of Louisiana native Texans RB Alfred Blue) "He's come on, obviously with the injury to their starter, he's had a few good games and they've been able to find some consistency I think a little bit more today maybe than in other weeks, but they had good balance and they had the ball a lot. Again, I go back to, there's an attrition defensively if offensively they're not able to control the time of possession a little bit better."

(on Senior Defensive Assistant Dennis Allen's first game as defensive coordinator) "I thought it was smooth. It was fast, and I thought the preparation during the week, I was pleased with. There will be some things that we've got to clean up, but overall it was organized and efficient."

(on K Kai Forbath having a career long field goal and what the communication was like to decide to kick it) "Well we talked about it. Obviously there's no wind. It was kind of right on the cusp. It was either that or punt and I felt like we were needing something. I didn't feel like it was outside of his range, it was just a matter of whether you get a clean hit, and you just worry about trajectory when you're kicking a longer kick like that. It was a big play for us."

QB DREW BREES (Transcribed by Edgar Veliz)

(on the play of the offense) "We had 12 third-downs, I'm venturing to guess that a lot of those were third and long situations. We talked about it coming into this game we needed to be really good on first and second down, very efficient on first and second down so that we were in third and manageable situations. You get in third and long against these guys, you are asking for trouble because obviously they dial up the pass rush - they're a very good pass rush team, they have very good cover guys on the backend. It is just tough sledding when you do that. We did that and you see what the results were. I would say, as we go back and look at why we were not successful on first and second down, I'm sure we are going to see a lot of very simple things, it was really execution. Give a lot of credit to their defense and their plan. They played great, both in the run and rushing the pass and on the backend. They played a very good game. I think there were some things we did offensively that put ourselves in a bind, kind of behind the eight ball in those third and long situations, really because a lack of execution. Maybe unnecessary



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penalty here and there. Those add up though. It is one thing here, it is one thing on the next one, all of a sudden the first half is over and you feel like you never really had a chance of getting anything going. That's the frustrating part, I know how much better we are and today we certainly didn't show that."

(on not scoring a touchdown today) "I can't say we didn't have our chances, certainly there at the end. Two times, really three times we were in the red zone. In the first half we kicked a field goal down there, in the fourth quarter we were down there in a little bit of a 'we have to score mode and I felt like we had a chance really on both the times we didn't score to have come away with a touchdown. Credit to them, there's some execution that could be better on our end."

(on the impact of the defeat) "They're a good football team. They are playing for a lot just like we are. Every game we know is going to be hard fought and there are little things here and there that are going to determine the outcome. We didn't do those things today, to even really give us a chance. So, I'm confident that we've shown ourselves to play at a very high level. I think we've faltered here and over the last few weeks, but we still have a lot to play for with Carolina coming into town. It will be a big divisional game for us."

(on the play of DE J.J. Watt) "Well, J.J. Watt is a great player, in all facets of the game. It is not like he is just a good pass rusher, he's high energy, full-throttle every play. He's disruptive no matter what you're doing, whether you're throwing the ball or running the ball. Definitely a guy you have to have a plan for and try to neutralize. I felt like he got after us a few times today, but the situations lent themselves to allowing him the opportunity to go after us. Again, I'm always going to look at our execution and say 'man, things could've been better,' but there were times where you feel you are doing everything right and he just makes a play. You understand that it is going to happen when you're playing against a guy like that, he just happened to make a lot of them today."

(on if the offensive plan centered on screen passes) "Yeah, we didn't want to feed their ego. We knew that they feed off those type of situations where they can pin their ears back and rush the passer. That really puts you at a disadvantage, there are times that you have to resign yourself to the fact that you may have to punt this thing and play the field position game a little bit. Just put yourself in a more favorable position, otherwise you go back to don't let their best player beat you. If you put yourself right into his hands then shame on you. There were times that we had to be a little bit guarded about what we were doing just to make sure that (J.J. Watt) didn't end it before it even started."

S KENNY VACCARO (Transcribed by Lance Jaramillo)

(on Brian Hoyer's performance) "I thought he did good. Like I said about the first 15 plays, the coaches have that scripted, I think they practice that all week, so that's their time to execute and I think once we got settled in, we did a good job."

(on not being dejected by this loss) "Yeah it's tough, we talked about having a second season and staying in the hunt, at the same time, you got to respond, I mean I hate to repeat myself, but we got to bounce back and that's the way it is. We're going to get better defensively, offensively they'll get it cleaned up. We're still one of the top in the league and on defense I can see the progression."

TE BENJAMIN WATSON (Transcribed by Lance Jaramillo)

(on what The Texans did to disrupt the New Orleans offense) "They were able to get some pressure. You look at third down, we didn't convert well on third downs, we had a few three and outs there. We weren't able to sustain drives. The defense did a good job of disrupting our rhythm. We knew coming in they were going to be very good up front and they played better than we did up front today."

(on if The Texans have the best defense he's faced this year) "It's hard to say. There are a couple of ways to define this - one of them is statistical, one of them is who won the most games, I mean there are so many ways to define best. I'll say this, the league has known all year there are some good players on that defense, not just 99. They've got good players all the way across the board. So, they do have a good defense. Best? I don't know, but I know they play very good team defense."