



## POSTGAME NOTES AND QUOTES

### HOUSTON TEXANS VS. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2015 • MERCEDES-BENZ SUPERDOME SAINTS HEAD COACH SEAN PAYTON

“Obviously we have a lot of different combinations of guys going, penalties are still troublesome. The hidden yardage tonight was pretty significant when you have a return that comes back. We'll take a peek at the tape. That's one I brought up postgame with the players that we have to get cleaned up. That will cost us a game. We'll come in tomorrow and we'll watch the tape. The players are off tomorrow, but Tuesday they'll be back in reviewing this game and we'll have a practice Saints on Saints with a short week obviously (and on) Wednesday then preparation for Green Bay.”

(on the offensive starters playing one series a little different than in other Week three preseason games) “It has been much different for me than what we have done before. It is a different roster right now; we have a lot of more experienced guys. The thing we try to look at closely are just the amount of snaps guys are receiving up to this point. The guys haven't missed any snaps and that was really a big part of it. The guys that I felt like hadn't missed any snaps, there were some early outs on defense as well and that is just the approach we took.

(on how much the fear of injuries affects early exit of starters) “I think there is always that fear, but that has been present for as long as I have been coaching this league in the preseason. You take into account what you are seeing, but more importantly the snaps some of our veteran guys are receiving. When we are talking about Zach (Strief) or Drew (Brees), I am seeing a ton of work and we are seeing it in practice and we feel like it's sharp, it's just us trying to be smart about who is playing. It's never easy.”

(on Marcus Murphy and Edwin Baker's play today making it more difficult to cut down at that position) It does not make it any more difficult it just reaffirms what we have been seeing. Each week he's (Murphy) been close. I like the player. He's (Murphy) making this team. I think Baker did some good things, Baker played well. Obviously, it's difficult when you have a lot of guys making plays like that. In the return game, back to what I was alluding to, there have been a handful of kick returns he has been close on and the same way in the punt game, unfortunately, we had one called back. Baker had some good runs. Obviously, the fourth down long run on the toss play. He is a physical player; he has been with us so we had him a year ago.”

(on Willie Snead higher in the rotation tonight) “Part of that is a reflection on how quickly Brandin (Cooks) and a few of the others are out. Those other guys all end up earlier in the snap count. Without having seen the tape, it appears he made some good plays.”

(on Delvin Breaux tonight) “That would be hard to comment just without having seen the film. I would say he's been really playing well in practice. I like what we have with the player. He is smart, he is tough, he has good ball skills, but without having seen him on the film I think that would be early,”

(on concerns about the pass rush) “We got one (sack). I told them ‘look we can have a second line tonight’ with our first sack. Obviously, we have to improve in that area. I would say so (have concerns). It becomes a lot harder to play defensive back if we can't get to the quarterback or affect the quarterback. We pressured more tonight which was a little bit of the plan. There were a lot more one pressures or zero blitzes. If you were just watching I'd bet there were at least 15-20. But that is something that is a work in progress.”

(on the chemistry and time together the guys who will start have gotten) “They're receiving a lot of time together. We don't ever just think we're going to flip a switch, but those guys have received a lot of time together. We had a whole week with New England. It's back to the question that was asked earlier, do you want to see them get three quarters tonight? Do you want to see them get a quarter? If one of them gets injured, it's trying to be smart, especially when they are veteran players so we'll see.”

(on significance of Ryan Griffin entering the game late) “When you are trying to play a bunch (of players), it's more difficult, he'll play more in this game coming up Thursday. We typically have tried to, I think Pete (Carmichael) and Mike (Neu) have done a good in practice job of saying here is who is getting a lot of work with the two's and the three's. If you are trying to get four in, it's hard so Ryan will receive more work versus Green Bay.”

(on Marcus Murphy) I think he has pretty good vision, I think he is explosive. I thought he did some good things, not only in the return game; he did some things offensively underneath the coverage. I think there is a knack he has. He is not a returner that is going to try and run around the defense, he is going to run north and south and I think he is pretty quick, quick to accelerate.”

(on if you evaluate red zone offense at this point in the season) “Well, yes we do care about it. You evaluate it, you pay attention to it and you would feel a lot better if there was a touchdown on that first drive instead of a field goal. There are a handful of things after watching the film I’m sure tomorrow that I will put down as a point of emphasis for us on Tuesday’s practice. Tuesday is an important practice for us. We are not on to the next team, it’s something that you look at closely and you’re not just going to turn the switch when (you) start the regular season, but we are not doing that with the amount of times that we’ve been practicing. There’s area(s) that each week you look at and say this is something that has to be better. Penalties obviously jump out, pass rush, those are things that stand out.”

(on his initial thoughts of Garrett Grayson’s performance) “The first thing that comes to mind is the time clock with our game is much different than the college game so you’re pulling your hair out with ‘let’s go, quicker, quicker, quicker, in and out of the huddle, to the line of scrimmage’, so that is something that he needs work at. I made a comment to Pete (Carmichael), I said ‘look we are down two scores, we are going to need three quarters at the rate we are playing’, the tempo we are playing. I think he made some good throws. I’m sure there are a couple where he is trying to force it into coverage. We’ll see on the tape, but I think overall that speed of the game, and I’m not just talking about the speed of the players of the game, I’m talking about the tempo and timing of the game is noticeably faster at this level and is something that he has to work on.”

(on the pass rush pressure needing to be manufactured) “Part of our install was to get more of our pressures in today. In other words, get a look at them on film and practice them. Whether or not that becomes something we have to do more of, if we feel like we are not getting enough of a rush is still to be determined. Hopefully, we are able to have a pretty good balance and mix there where it’s not just relying on pressure. That is something we have to work on.”

(on Willie Snead and Josh Morgan and if they earned their way playing with the first team) “It’s really first half-second half, the ones as it pertains to Drew (Brees) and you have the offensive line, but the challenge is you go through the roles so you hit each position and the plan was with the offensive line you are going to get 12-14 snaps and take certain players out. Brandin (Cooks) and Drew (Brees) were going to receive a real limited amount of snaps so we have some general guidelines with the phases of how we are going to rotate players and yet there is going to be some exceptions. We got (Tim) Lelito more work, we got Akiem Hicks more work; Marques Colston, for instance, maybe hadn’t received the snaps so he played a little more tonight. We wanted one thing to happen tonight with these guys like Josh (Morgan) Joe (Morgan), Snead, the safeties, the corners; these positions where jobs are on the line we wanted to make sure we came away from the game with those type of players receiving at least 20-30 snaps. We didn’t want to come away having to make evaluations on guys having eight snaps so that was purposeful, that was planned.”

(on the receivers still crowded at the bottom) “I think there are a handful of guys competing, but it’s impossible to go through that right now. My mind coming off the game is upset about the penalties, one sack, we’ll sit down after watching the tape and begin to discuss some of these position groups but obviously there is some pretty good competition going on in a few of these spots and I’d be willing to say most of those areas guys were north of 25-30 snaps so it should give us some additional information to evaluate.”

(on if it's hard to evaluate the team collectively with have to evaluate so many positions individually) “Sometimes it is, that is part of the preseason. It’s always a challenge. I think the time when we had practice with someone else, that is always important because you get a chance to see another team, but I think that is always a challenge.”

(on ever making a decision on a player based on one play) “No, I don’t think I’d ever do that. I think it has to be a sum total. It’s more difficult when I guy returns a kick for a touchdown and its one play. I’ve seen that be 2-hour meetings.”

(on how close the kicking competition is) “Close. We're still talking about it in the third week of the preseason. I'd say it's close. It was good to see (Zach) Hocker hit the long one, but it's close. I said this last week, we are hoping that there is an easy separation and there hasn't been.”

(on the NOLA message written on his jacket and if the events of 10 years ago (Hurricane Katrina) ran through his mind while on the field today) “It did. I was kind of mad, I hadn't really thought about it and I don't think anyone else really had, but it is 10 years today which was obviously the devastation more so than the hurricane itself. In hindsight we would have had a patch or something. It just seems fitting. I was at the pregame meal and started going through, everyone who has lived here has seen the homes with the insignias on them, but actually looking up and seeing the quadrants, east, north, south, west, it's pretty interesting to study or learn about how they were used with regards to any home being searched. I wasn't specifically aware of what each one meant; I just knew it meant a house had been searched, so today some time I remember looking it up and it was kind of a spur of the moment I think.”

(on Jalen Saunders and Marcus Murphy and the return game overall) I would say this; there have been some good signs. The penalties will drive you nuts, but again there is another element in the kickoff that whoever returns has had a green light. I think you earn that green light in the regular season. Typically you use some judgment with how deep the ball goes, how high it is, but there are some returners in this league where if you are coaching them it's you got it, you go, you don't have to worry about it and those returners have earned it so that has allowed us to evaluate more returns as opposed to touch backs. I like it when the young player, regardless of where he's at in the preseason is saying it's not a question of whether I am going out, its where am I going, I'm coming out. I like that; I think it gives us a chance to evaluate some guys. I think Marcus is taking advantage of some of those snaps. We saw more kick returns up until tonight and then we obviously get a few punt return looks for him. The personal foul on the long return is stupid. It's dumb football. That's the type of stuff that will drive you crazy. We have to get that corrected.”



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(on Brian Hoyer and Ryan Mallett) "I thought that those guys played solidly. The offense moved pretty well. One of the things that we have to work on is in the red (zone) area. We did a decent job at times, but other times we kicked field goals. We have to finish drives better. Overall, I thought the offense moved the ball pretty well today."

(on whether his action and production today is what he wanted to see out of Brian Hoyer) "I want to see that from the whole offense. I always want to see an offense in rhythm. Every time the offense goes out there, regardless of who is playing what position, we want the offense to get into a rhythm. I think that at times we were in a rhythm. Other times, we have things to work on. That is what the preseason is all about. We will get back to work on Tuesday. We will keep doing that, keep working."

(on play of the quarterbacks) "He (Ryan Mallett) was backed up on his own two yard line on one of the (drives). And the other one, I think that he was backed up pretty deep in his own territory. He got us out of there on the one and gave us some room to punt. That is part of it, too, doing a good job on third down there. I think that both guys, again, moved the ball. The offense moved the ball. I thought that Tom (Savage) had a couple of good drives himself. I thought that the offense moved the ball pretty well today."

(on depth at QB) "I feel very good about our quarterback position."

(on the performance of Jalaen Strong) "Jalaen looked like he made some tough catches, some contested catches, which is what he did in college. It was good to see him do that. He's playing faster because he's not thinking as much. That was good. It's not an easy offense to come into as a rookie. I think that he has improved. And he has to keep improving. He can't level off. He's got to keep improving."

(on Kevin Johnson) "Kevin Johnson is a competitive guy. He is in tight coverage. He's got good transition. He's a smart player. He is a tough kid. I have been happy with the way that he has progressed so far."

(on allowing the Saints to move down the field for a score on the first drive of the game) "It was too many plays. I think it was a 12-play drive. In the end, I think they (the defense) bowed-up in the red area, which was good to see. The red area defense, I think, overall was pretty good today (no touchdowns allowed in three trips). I would say that we gave up too many plays in between. We have to do a better job of trying to get off of the field a little sooner, third down and things like that. I thought the red area defense was pretty decent."



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#### **RB/RS #48 MARCUS MURPHY**

(on overall preseason experience) “It’s just a growing experience. As a rookie, you have to learn the ropes of the team. You have to come out and learn the playbook and become comfortable with the offense. Working with the older veterans and the guys that have experience has been helping me out a lot.”

(on things to work on in last preseason game) “I just want to continue to get better and keep growing the skills that I have, as well as just show the coaches that they can be comfortable and confident with putting me in during clutch situations or any time that they need me on the field.”

(on being more than a special teams threat) “I can see myself as a playmaker. Special teams, offense; wherever you need me, I just want to be able to make a play.”

#### **WR #83 WILLIE SNEAD**

(on ease of game as he gets more reps) “I’m definitely getting comfortable, that’s for sure. I’m getting back into the rhythm, playing the game how I felt in college, so I just have to get more reps and more playing time.”

(on how more playing time felt today) “It felt great. I just feel like the coaches are starting to trust me now by giving me more reps here and there with the first and second-string teams. I just have to make sure that I make the most of every opportunity that I get.”

(on thriving in difficult situations/catches) “It’s just my ability to catch the ball. If it’s a tough catch, in my mind, I just feel like if the ball is in the air, I’m coming down with it. I pride myself on catching the ball every day, catching everything. Whenever I do see the ball in the air or it looks like it’s going to be a tough catch, I just compete for the ball and just try to make a play.”

#### **WR #10 BRANDIN COOKS**

(on readiness of first team offense) “We’re ready to go, but with that being said, we still have some stuff to clean up. We are all excited for week one to show up, because we are ready to rock.”

#### **RB #27 EDWIN BAKER**

(on touchdown run) “It felt great. I was happy I was able to showcase that ability. I pride myself on speed, and speed kills, so I was happy that I could showcase that tonight.

“It was a nice little outside toss, I got a great kick-out block, and then I was just seeing green grass, so I took off and went. That was pretty much it.”

“I’m taking advantage of each snap, because I don’t know how many I’m going to get. I am just trying to make each and every last one of them count, and that’s what I did tonight.”

(on whether he thought of TD as one in an NFL game or step toward making the roster) “I would say both, because right now, we are living the dream. I would never take this opportunity for granted, so I definitely want to reflect on the fact that I am scoring in the National Football League. I haven’t wanted to do anything else since I was 5 years old, but I also have to take into account that it is a business and I also have to understand that, wherever things may go, that I just have to stay positive and control what I can control.”

## **CB #40 DELVIN BREAU**

(on whether Texans throwing in his direction was frustrating) “Yeah it was frustrating. I can’t control their offense. The coaches want to see what I can do on defense. Whenever an opportunity came my way, I was just going to be ready to make a play.”

(on lack of targets being a positive) “It’s early, but I’m just doing my job. I try to stay as close to the receiver as possible, and I saw the quarterback look a few times, but he saw that it was tight coverage, so he had to throw the ball somewhere else. It was just a great opportunity to be out there and come out in the Super Dome.”

(on his emotions coming on to the field for the first time) “It was unbelievable. My dream actually came true when I walking out of the tunnel and hearing the guy call my name on the (public address system), as well as just hearing the screaming fans. It was one of the best feelings I have ever felt.”

(on getting grief about lack of college experience) “No, I haven’t really gotten that. A couple people have joked about it, but I don’t worry about that stuff. I didn’t get my opportunity to play then, but I’m here now, so that’s pretty cool.”

## **LB #91 KASIM EDEBALI**

(on lack of sacks being troubling) “I wouldn’t say it’s troubling. We are in the preseason right now, and a lot of different guys are playing, so you just really want to build on that. It’s a process. It’s the preseason, and you want to put different people in different positions to see what they can do. It’s just one of those things you have to work on. You watch the film; production is not there yet, so we just have to keep building on it.”

(on sacks being more a scheme or technique based skill) “It’s just taking advantage of one-on-ones. That’s an emphasis of ours, to win our one-on-ones, so we’ve just got to go watch film again and get back on the practice field to keep working on our craft.”

(on roster cuts coming up causing player talk) “I wouldn’t say that we talk about it, but it’s just one of those things. You are just in control of yourself, so you just want to keep working and doing the best that you can, as well as help this organization win football games.”



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#### QB #7 BRIAN HOYER

“I think we wanted to come out and start the game fast. Coach O’Brien is always telling us to start fast, whether it’s a game or practice, and he’s always putting us in situations to get us prepared to start fast and put together and drive and go down then field. And then that creates us getting into a goal line situation and then learning how to punch it in and score. And that’s what we did on the first drive today.”

“Our entire receiving corps have really done a great job this entire pre-season. They work really hard and study hard, they run great routes and they understand what’s going on out there. And then it’s great to see our main three guys taking the time to show the other receivers we have how to do it – that means we have a lot to look forward to as a group.”

“It’s good to come out and start the game and move the ball like we did. That means what we are doing is moving this team in the right direction. And (Coach O’Brien) just told us to take a day off and come back to work Tuesday and take advantage of these next couple of days and get prepared for the season opener against Kansas City.”

#### QB #15 RYAN MALLETT

“I don’t think I had to shake off anything. We were backed up (at the two-yard line in the third quarter) and I was trying to get us some space and better field position. I felt real good out there and I finally had a chance to play a little bit and get into a good rhythm. It was great to go out there and execute the game plan, and to throw and catch with my guys.”

“It felt real good to go out there and get into a rhythm with all of those guys (receivers) and move the ball. We had one long drive that I think went 17 plays, and that was great to see.”

“That one long drive was great to start off the third quarter. It was great to establish a long and sustained drive with a lot of successful plays. We got into a great rhythm and it felt good to communicate well and execute the plays called.”

#### RB #28 ALFRED BLUE

“All I’ve tried to do in training camp and into the preseason is stay positive, learn the plays and make the team. All I can do is continue to learn my craft and make a contribution.”

(on his touchdown run in first quarter) “It felt good. The first few games this preseason we tried seven times I think to cross the goal line on a run, so this time it was the mindset for all of us that we would not be denied. And when we had the chance today we got it done and I crossed the goal line and scored.”

“It was great to return here and play in front of family and friends. There were a lot of LSU fans and fans of the Saints out there – I heard a lot of fans yelling during the game and that’s always great to have people cheering your name because I played at LSU.”

**WR #10 DeANDRE HOPKINS**

“I think Brian (Hoyer) is really starting to understand the offense. He knows he can trust me on my routes, and if he throws it up there he knows I’ll have a chance to catch it. As for Ryan (Mallett), you saw how much of a competitor he is out there. In the third quarter he came back out there and corrected his mistakes. That didn’t surprise me at all.”

**DB/RB #31 CHARLES JAMES**

(on a 73-yard TD run called back by penalty) “It was the best thing that’s ever happened in my life. I don’t care it got called back. All of my teammates ran out onto the field and they were out there supporting me. All I wanted to do is run into that end zone. The offense line did a great job blocking for me, but unfortunately it was called back.”

“I’m just a guy trying to make this team. And anything I can do to help this team win, I’ll do it. That’s just me; I’m just an energy type guy and I love playing anywhere they put me and helping my teammates win.”

**CB #30 KEVIN JOHNSON**

(on breaking up a potential touchdown on the first possession) “They (Saints) were in a goal line formation and I read the play and got a hand in and broke up the play. It helped out our team to win the game because instead of six points it was only a field goal.”