



ARIZONA CARDINALS AT MIAMI DOLPHINS HARD ROCK STADIUM

Dec. 11, 2016 | 1 P.M.

POSTGAME QUOTES

Miami Dolphins Head Coach Adam Gase (transcribed by Michelle Stone)

(Any word on QB Ryan Tannehill, the status of his injury?) – “We don’t have [word] officially yet, but it doesn’t look good. We’ll get it confirmed tomorrow.”

(Sloppy game out there with the weather and all things. Seven turnovers I believe was the total at the end of the football game. Are you happy with the way your team bounced back after a very difficult week last week?) – “We found a way to win against a tough team. There was nothing pretty about that. We knew it coming into it. We talked about it last night. It was going to be about who could hold onto the ball and who could handle the fact that it was going to be off and on rain. Our guys did everything they possibly could to try to do that. We had a couple plays where it was competitive, and we let the ball slip out a couple times on offense. Our defense did a great job. They just kept fighting and finding ways to get us the ball back.”

(Can you talk a little bit about QB Matt Moore? It seemed like the first couple [of plays] you were kind of conservative handing the ball off and then when you needed to move the ball down, he came up with a couple of big throws. Certainly, the big throw to WR Kenny Stills when he had a lot of pressure on him and Kenny made a great adjustment on that play. Can you talk about that a little bit?) – “My thought process initially was to try to get him comfortable with me calling ... I haven’t called a play for him since (preseason Week 2 at) Dallas. So, it has been a minute. I just wanted him to be able to hear me call the plays. It’s one thing to do it in practice; it’s another thing to do it in this situation. I was trying to get him into the flow of the game that way. I was a little conservative early, but when we needed it, we knew exactly what we wanted to go to. We were talking about that quite a bit with the quarterback group. He executed exactly what we had talked about a couple of days ago. The guys did a great job. Everyone stepped up and did their part.”

(Is the concern that QB Ryan Tannehill has an ACL?) – “Yes.”

(The resilience that your team showed once again, what can you say about it? Where does that come from?) – “I think we’ve just got a bunch of fighters. Guys were ... When we started this thing off, we said a lot of the right things, and it was more about going out and doing them. I think once we got out of training camp, and we started off the way we started off, I think there started to be less talk, more action. Guys really took it upon themselves to find ways to get better, find ways to execute more consistently. That’s why we’ve had the results we’ve had in some of these tight games where they lean back on their preparation, they’re executing correctly – and at the end of the day – guys are making plays.”





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(It's one thing to lose whatever player – X, Y, or Z – it's another to lose your starting quarterback, potentially. What do you tell the team in terms of moving forward?) – "You've got to go next man up just like every other position. That's why we signed Matt (Moore) back this offseason. It was one of those things where he looking, we were kind of looking, and at the end of the day – when we had our meeting – we felt like it was the right fit for both of us. I just know that I'm glad he's here."

(Can you tell us anything about QB Ryan Tannehill's demeanor? I saw reports that it appeared he had tears in his eyes on the sideline.) – "I couldn't tell you, because I had a couple other things I was trying to deal with at the time and waiting for them to tell me what was going on and no one would really come talk to me at that point, so I figured it wasn't good. Eventually, I just grabbed one of the guys and asked him how everything was going, and they were like, 'We just have to get the final results the next day.'"

(Knowing how tough QB Ryan Tannehill is – he has been so durable over the years – as a coach but also someone close to him, do you feel for him not being able to go at the end of this one?) – "For a guy that has done what he has done here, the shots he has taken all season ... He throws a good ball. It was a good play. We felt like we were finding ways to move the ball against a good team. For him to not really see it coming and couldn't really defend himself, it's just a rough way to get knocked out of a game. He's tough. Whatever it is, he'll bounce back. He'll find a way to be out there, whenever that time table is."

(Have you seen the hit?) – "It's football. I don't know what to tell you. It's what this game. It's sometimes ... Things happen."

(Could you touch on your defense a little bit? LB Mike Hull coming in to fill in for LB Kiko Alonso comes up with the interception early. It seemed like he played pretty well.) – "I thought that our entire defense did a great job. We had more than just Kiko out. Guys stepped up again and found a way to do the job they needed to do today to get us a chance at the end. We talk about it all the time. All of these games, especially this part of the season, it's going to come down to ... Whoever has the ball last, usually that's what it's going to come down to. Our defense did a great job of getting the ball back, and then the offense did a great job as far as finding a way to get us close. Special teams, that last one, it looked like they came around the edge pretty quick, so I'm just glad it went through."





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(How much of the sloppiness of this game was the weather conditions?) – “All of it. It’s tough to do anything. You saw ... We go under center and fumble the ball; they do the same thing. It was not easy by any means.”

(What did you see of the extra point that DT Jordan Philips blocked and S Walt Aikens returned?) – “I just saw Walt running with the ball and hoping that he scored. It’s always a nice surprise when you get a free two points.”

(Have you had a chance to talk to QB Ryan Tannehill? Did you say anything to him?) – “Not yet.”
Miami Dolphins Safety Walt Aikens (transcribed by Ken Mendonca)

(Was that your first return for a 2 pointer? How did that feel?) – “Yes, that is. It feels good man, I was tired. It’s a long run for two points. I mean, the scoreboard, it was definitely worth it.”

(What was the mood on the sideline after Ryan (Tannehill) got hurt?) – “We know it’s the next man up mentality. And that’s every position on this football team, we knew Matt Moore would come in and do what he needed to do. That’s just the way it goes in the NFL, anybody goes down, you got to have the next man ready to step up.”

(Playing on special teams, how good does it feel when it shows up on the scoreboard like that?) – “Oh it feels great, especially if you pride yourself on the special teams like we do, and you know how serious coach Rizz (special teams coach Darren Rizzi) takes it, and we went out there and executed today. It wasn’t perfect, but we did enough to pull out a win.”

Miami Dolphins Defensive End Andre Branch (transcribed by David Norwood II)

(Talk about the win. First of all, how important was that last stop for the defense on their final offensive drive?) – “It was major. We knew we had to go out there, and make a stop, and give our offense a chance, and that’s we did. We came up with the plays, and resulted in a win.”

(I know the loss of [Ryan] Tannehill really kind of dominated the talk of the locker room today, how are you feeling about the situation?) – “It’s tough, very, very tough. He’s the leader of our team but we’ve been preaching this for the entire season. It’s the next man up mentality. Ryan assured us that he’ll definitely be in this still be leading us, just not on the field. So for us we got to pick it up on defense more, and whatever we got to do to win the next game is what we got to do.”





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(For you specifically, you were all over the field today, getting to the quarterback, getting to the running back, what did you see out there personally?) – “We watched film. We knew what we had to do, and we knew it would be a big game for the defense if we did our job. And if we do our job then the plays come. ‘VJ’ (defensive coordinator Vance Joseph) has a good game plan, and we just stuck to that, and the plays were there.”

Miami Dolphins G/T Jermon Bushrod (transcribed by Frank Brill)

(What are your thoughts on the hit on QB Ryan Tannehill?) – “I mean that’s what happens when you go low. That’s just what happens and we’ve got to continue to ... I don’t know man. We fight to protect quarterbacks. That’s just a tough situation.”

(Should it have been a penalty? Should there have been a flag thrown?) – “I don’t know, I don’t know. I’m not going to comment on that. I just wish it didn’t happen.”

(If QB Ryan Tannehill is out for the final three games, do you rally around QB Matt Moore?) – “(We’ve) got to. Whatever we’ve got to do to win. I mean that’s the situation, if it has to go there, then that’s the situation that we have to deal with. Matt’s been in this league for nine or 10 years, I believe. He’s played in a lot of games. He’s started a lot of games so if things go that way, go in that direction, then we have to rally behind our guy. That’s all we can do.”

(What does it say for QB Matt Moore to be able to come in and perform and get you guys in scoring position?) – “He put the ball where it needed to be. He made the correct checks and that’s all you can ask your quarterback to do is put us in a position to be successful.”

Miami Dolphins K Andrew Franks (transcribed by Jason D. Silver)

(This is your first game-winning field goal in the NFL, correct?) – “That is correct.”

(Obviously, it wasn’t very long, but still a little bit nervous with all that’s on the line?) – “For us, this was a big game coming in. Arizona is a great team. One second left on the clock. No matter what length the field goal is, you really want to make it. The kind of field conditions we had – and the crappy weather – it was sort of a hit or miss all day, I think, with the field goals and PATs and everything. But getting that one in the books I think was huge for us.”





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(Did you have to block out the field conditions, or did you do anything specific in terms of testing it out before you kicked?) - "For me, (after) halftime, I really tested it out to make sure the field was not too soggy. I think for the most part, it's (about) checking it out on the sideline. We've kicked in this plenty of times during practice and throughout the season, so for me, it's nothing that special. Where I am on the sideline, I'm just checking out the field, making sure that ... Because we've got our one little patch where our kicking net is, (we are) using that basically as the field. If that has been pretty beat up – pretty soggy – then I know the field is going to be like that, too. It's really something that we've dealt with before during practice and during other games, so for me, it's just something you've just got to deal with."

(How tough were the conditions for kickers?) – "It wasn't as bad, I don't think. The rain definitely made the operation I think a lot more hectic. The footing was slippery, to say, is an understatement. I think (with) the operation (when) you're getting a water logged ball, you never know what you're going to get when you get it from the refs. I think that was the biggest thing was the operation. Great credit goes to Matt (Darr) and John (Denney) for having an awesome operation all day."

(How would you describe the craziness of the day on special teams with the blocked extra point for a touchdown and then on top of that, their kicker misses an extra point, kicks a 56-yard field goal?) – "I think it sums up the situation that it was. The weather was, I think, a huge determinant of how things went. I think the weather was part of the reason why (Chandler) Catanzaro missed that PAT and had that one hit the post, and the whole block for that matter. I think it really shows that we're going to keep on fighting and every little point matters. I think that two points that Walt (Aikens) ended up getting, that was a huge swing that put us up eight, I believe. At that point in the game, that was a huge determinant."

Miami Dolphins Linebacker Mike Hull (transcribed by David Norwood II)

(Talk about your play in today's win.) – "I knew it was getting better, getting the first interception of the game, the first series. (I'm) just glad we were able to hold on to get the win."

(You said all week you were prepared to step in and that you wouldn't be nervous.) – "Yes, I don't think I was nervous at all. Obviously, there were some things with communication that needed to be cleaned up, especially down the stretch; but we'll get that cleaned up and just very fortunate that we were able to pull out the game with the win."

Miami Dolphins Wide Receiver Jarvis Landry (transcribed by David Norwood II)





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(I know it's a blend of emotions going through your head right now after QB Ryan Tannehill got hurt.) – "It's always a troubling thing when you see somebody go down and they don't get back up. For us, we have no details with his condition or what's going on; but we're going to handle things as if he's our starting quarterback."

(We saw you had a moment with him on the bench. What did you tell QB Ryan Tannehill?) – "I just told him that we're going to get this win for him, no matter what. I don't care if we have to play eight quarters, nine quarters, we're going to get this one for him and I promised him that and we made it happen."

(What was it like when he came back out to the sideline?) – "He was still involved in the game, which I give him a lot of credit. I don't know what he's going through, but for him to come out and still be involved in the game, helping guys out, telling guys what he sees, in (Head) Coach (Adam) Gase's ear, as well. It says a lot about Ryan Tannehill."

Miami Dolphins Quarterback Matt Moore (transcribed by Sara Perez)

(First of all, as close as you are to QB Ryan Tannehill – you hate to see any of your teammates go down, but somebody that you're in a meeting room with every day and spend so much time with – how hard is it to see that happen to a guy like that?) – "My heart breaks. I know how much that guy puts his heart and soul into this and hard work. I just hope it's nothing crazy. I wish him the best, but it's hard to see. I just wish him the best, and hopefully it's not terrible."

(What was going through your mind as you were getting ready to warm up and go on the field for your first series? Weather had been miserable all day and was going to be that way throughout the rest of the game, and that's what you were going to face) – "I was thinking, 'I haven't done this in a long time.' The weather, obviously, was not great, but I just went in confident (and) wanting to move the ball. It was a close game at the time, and I wanted to finish strong and get the win. Execution and tempo and command and confidence – that's what was going through my head."

(Can you take us through that last drive?) – "It's funny, I only remember the passes. I know we were trying to run it there still, and we got a good call on the cross to Kenny (Stills). We caught them in man coverage, and Kenny did a nice job separating and hit that one. Later on, we had a heck of a call and caught them in a little crusher there and was able to throw it up to Kenny. Again, I didn't see the finish,





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but (it was a) good catch and put us in the spot to win the game. Credit (Head) Coach (Adam) Gase, really putting us in good situations for the potential to have success.”

(Was any panic going through your mind when – I think it was RB Damien Williams running the ball – at the end and the clock was running down and you had to get a timeout?) - “It wasn’t a clean center-QB exchange. Then I got stepped on and then that whole thing goes on. Not the way you wanted that series to end. I knew we were at about 11 seconds, I think, when the ball was snapped. I know he was trying to go down. Thankfully he did, and we got the timeout. All eyes on the field goal then, and those guys executed, so it was good.”

(I saw you and QB Ryan Tannehill sharing an embrace in the locker room. Can you paraphrase...) – “I told him I loved him. I said, ‘This team – regardless of what your situation is – this team still needs you,’ and he agreed and said, ‘I’m there.’ He said, ‘Let’s go win one game at a time.’”

(Did QB Ryan Tannehill give you any indication either way?) – “No. I just knew he was shaken up. Again, I don’t know exactly what’s going on. Just looking at him, I knew he was upset, so I just tried to bring him up that why and still let him know that he’s a huge part of this team, and he will be moving forward.”

(Five years ago when you had the starting job – far different circumstances – the fact that if QB Ryan Tannehill is done for the year, at 8-5, real playoff chances, what is this opportunity like for you and this franchise?) – “It’s huge for both parties. It’s unbelievable. My focus right now is (to) get ready to go. If I have to go, then be ready to go, and that’s it. You talk about where we’re at as a team, you can’t ask for much more. The ball is in our court. We just have to execute and play one week at a time.”

(How much rust do you feel like you have to work off?) – “Time will tell. Time will tell, but I felt pretty good out there today. Obviously, the conditions weren’t great. I feel pretty good. Coach does a good job – (Head) Coach (Adam) Gase and Bo (Hardegree), our quarterback coach – they put me through the runner during the week, every week. I feel good, but clearly, there will be some. I haven’t done it in a while, but I don’t know ... I’m going in confident and feeling good.”

(You’ve been doing this long enough to be confident in yourself, obviously. Was there anything in that fourth quarter from the team, coaching staff that made you feel reinforced that, “Okay they believe in me. They believe we can do this?”) – “A bunch of guys said some nice things, but they would say that to anybody in that situation. I’ve been here a while and these guys know my





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position on this team and my role, and I don't think there was any doubt or hesitation. I believe that. I'm comfortable in there, and I think those guys are comfortable with me in there."

(For the people who haven't seen you in five years, can you tell them what your style is as quarterback?) – "That's an interesting question. I'm obviously not shy. I'm not one to not throw it down the field. This will be the first time ... Well, today really was the first time playing under Coach (Head Coach Adam) Gase. The preseason is what it is, but (this was) a real game, the style ... My whole thing is to execute this offense. What is my style? I'm a pocket passer who likes to throw it down the field. That's how I would put it, but that doesn't matter. I think if you're in there, you have to execute the plays called. At the end of the day, the ultimate deal is to get the win, so whatever style that is, that's what I'll be."

(You were on the injury report this week with a shoulder. Was that something that happened during practice? How did that happen, and how long have you been dealing with it?) – "Shoulder – there's always soreness. But something little happened this week at practice, and (I) just kind of worked through it and didn't have any issues today."

(Do you feel 100 percent? Football 100 percent?) – "Yes."

(Does your practice week change from the standpoint of getting in an hour earlier or staying an hour later?) – "Probably not. Ryan (Tannehill) and I are there, and we're doing our thing. I don't think my schedule will change. Depending on what the deal is ... Naturally, you say as a backup you're ready to go, and you're focused, but I would assume if he can't go that the focus will be turned up a little more. It changes naturally for all the reasons you would think it would change, but as far as time goes, that won't change at all."

Miami Dolphins Head Coach Wide Receiver Kenny Stills (transcribed by David Norwood II)

(This game today, you guys extended your home win streak to five games, made a lot of plays once again. What do you think this win says about this team that you guys were able to win today?) – "I don't know what it says, but I know that we take each week one week at a time, and we know what we're capable of when we're on top of our game. We came out with the victory, and that's what we're looking to do each week."





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(QB Ryan Tannehill's injury – did you see anything on that play? Have you had a chance to talk to Ryan?) – “I didn't see what happened on the play, but I've had a chance to talk to him and tell him that everything is going to be alright and that we're praying for him.”

Miami Dolphins DE Cameron Wake (transcribed by Ted Leshinski)

(With the way that the game ended, how much of a challenge did you guys feel from a defensive standpoint to hold and force that punt?) – “Well, that was a big series for us, obviously. We wanted to get off the field and get the offense the ball back. We knew what the situation was. We knew how much time was left and what the opportunity was. It was a big series. We had to get on the field and get off the field. We spoke about it while the offense was on the field, before we went on there, that 'Hey, we have to go back out there and get the ball back to them quick so we can get this game wrapped up.'”

(You guys struggled defensively last week in Baltimore. What were you able to come back and do this week that allowed you to play the type of defense you played out there today?) – “Well, the whole goal this week was to focus on yourself. It wasn't necessarily about what they were going to do. It was about making sure you had your job lined up, keyed in, and you nailed the plays that you knew that you had to nail. All week that was the focus. We had some plays last week – that was a long time ago – where things that we don't typically do, guys playing out of character. So (we wanted to) get back to playing assignment football, do your job, trust your brother or teammate to do his and I think when that happens, we have a good outcome. Again, today was another one of those days when it took everybody. Everybody had to do their job. As I said, it turned out good for us.”

(Did you go into this game feeling it was a big game after going into December and having a tough one last week, coming back and feeling like you needed to come away with a win here?) – “For me, big games are every week. The next game is the biggest game. For us, obviously, being 1-0 after this week ... We came off of an uncharacteristic performance last week and we wanted to get back to playing our style of defense and playing our style of team ball on both sides. It was a situation, like I said, where it came down to the offense doing their job, the defense doing their job playing complementary football and doing it when it counted. And obviously, special teams sealing the deal. Again, across the board – offense, defense and special teams – everybody had to be on par and do exactly what they needed to do to get this W.”

(As a defensive player, when you see your quarterback go down – we don't know exactly what the injury is but it doesn't look good so far – how does that affect you? How do you feel about





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that?) – “It’s unfortunate to say injuries are part of the game. It’s sad to think that there are very few other people that play sports that have to say that. But when he did go down – and I don’t know what the diagnosis is, I’m sure they’re on their way to get that figured out now – whether it’s him, quarterback, or any other player, you want to make sure that the next guys up step up, the rest of the team as a whole. (Ryan Tannehill) is a big part of this team, obviously. (He’s) a big part of the wins that we’ve had, the success we’ve had. Not just the next guy up, but every man on the team has to step up and try their best to fill that void. Matt Moore obviously came in and he did his job. Again, (Moore is) a guy who I have tremendous confidence in from obviously playing with him for such a long time. (He) came in and did his job and allowed us to put us in a position to win the game.”

(If QB Ryan Tannehill can’t go next week will you guys defensively feel the need to elevate your level of play to help backup QB Matt Moore?) – “I hope we don’t have to elevate. If you’re elevating next week, then what was the issue with this week or last week or the week before that? So I think we have to go out there and continue to play assignment football. Play aggressive style the way we’ve been playing, things that have gotten us success in the past. But to take it another notch up, that notch should have already been done way back when training camp ended.”

(You’re on the few players who has played with Matt Moore when he was a starting quarterback. Describe his game. What do you remember from 2011?) – “Great football player. And not just playing with him as a starting quarterback. I’ve had the opportunity to chase him around even last week with practice reps and other drills that we do. I know he’s a great leader. He has a tremendous mind for the game. (He) throws the ball well. He manages the game. He does all the things you would expect a quarterback (to do). Obviously he’s a starter, so he has all the tools that he needs to be a productive player. No surprise that he went in there and did what he did, like I said, put us in position to win the game.”

(The weather conditions made for offensively a sloppy game. How do you guys like it on defense?) – “Ah, 85 (degrees) and sunny would have been nice. But, hey, that’s football. It is what it is. You can’t really predict that part of the game. It could be 85 and sunny. Next week it might be 20 and snowing. That’s just the nature of the business. But you have to go out there and put those conditions out of your mind and focus on your job. So whatever it is on offense, I’ve never been on that side, but I know we still play attack-style defense, whether it’s raining or snowing, or the sun is shining, 100 degrees. That’s just background noise for us. We’ve just got to do our job.”

(When the conditions are poor, you have awareness that the ball could be slipping out. There were fumbles left and right. Does that change how you play a little bit, with just awareness that





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the ball could be popping out?) – “Again, that’s something that we do, hopefully we do, whether it’s raining or not; but obviously today the ball popped out a few more times than probably normal. You definitely have to make sure that if it’s out, you want to get it, so the good guys will win. I like to think that guys are playing situational football. If it’s going to be out on the ground, let’s get it.”

(You guys were able to pretty much contain them for three quarters. What happened there in the fourth quarter where they were able to put some more points on the board?) – “I’m definitely looking forward to looking at the tape. I know we had a couple of penalties that kept the drives alive. I think that (those are) some of the little things that we have to clean up going forward. Every week we’re focusing on getting better. But the reality is, at the end of the day, you want to do whatever it takes to win. That was a drive that I’m sure some guys wish they could have changed some things; but when it mattered, guys went out there and did their job, three and out, and gave the offense the ball. They went down and they scored and we win.”

(Not to harp on it too much, but it seemed like that turnaround for them happened right after QB Ryan Tannehill’s injury. Did the team as a whole, did they need to refocus? Was it a shock that Tannehill was out?) – “Not to harp on it too much, I don’t know. That wasn’t the issue. Again, whether it was a shoelace, a knee, hamstring, guys go down all the time. We rotate guys and I think for the most part, like I spoke about earlier, Matt Moore is a guy who everybody on the team has played against, played with, whether it’s practice or otherwise. So, I don’t think that’s something that guys were focusing on too much.”

Arizona Cardinals Head Coach Bruce Arians (transcribed by Frank Brill)

(Opening Statement) – “You’ve got to be really proud of a bunch of guys who had to step up in this game because we had guys going down left and right. We played the fourth quarter without a nickel and ‘Betts’ Defensive Coordinator (James Bettcher) did a hell of a job coming up with some things to play defense and to keep us in the game and offensively we were down to our last offensive lineman, and if we would have gotten the ball back we would have had to make another shift. I’m proud of them; they gave a great effort, the last three minutes of the game we didn’t win it. We played a hell of a fourth quarter up until the last three minutes. We make all the stops, and of course it starts pouring when we get the damn ball back and it’s very, very tough throwing it at that point in time. You’re obviously not going to run it with a minute and fifty (seconds) so you’ve got to throw it and the first ball slips out of his hands. They made a nice play, we blitzed them, they made a nice play to get down there. I thought we created a fumble but it was close. We just didn’t make the plays, didn’t make the plays to win the game.”





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(How about the special teams play that cost you seven points?) – “The poor snap on the extra point gets two points, and the ball hits the upright, and that’s five big points, and in this game that’s the winner. On road games they always are the winners.”

(Did the rain affect you more than you would have thought normally it would have?) – “Rain is one thing, pouring down soaking wet balls is another. Obviously RB David (Johnson) drops it, QB Carson (Palmer) drops the snap when we were going to toss it around the corner for about 20 (yards), but you still have to do it. We practiced with a wet ball on Wednesday, and didn’t have any problems- but when it continually pours when you have the ball, which was kind of odd, it’s tough, it makes it tough.”

(What do you tell your team after this one, obviously there was a lot made of needing this win?) – “The playoffs are what they are. We’re going to show up for work Wednesday and get ready to play New Orleans at home. Again, let it all end up in the end, but we’re showing up for work Wednesday and go to work whether the playoffs are in our out, I don’t really give a care.”

(WR J.J. [Nelson] gave you a nice boost early and late, is it nice to see those two plays from him?) – “J.J.’s had a real good month. He’s added the things we thought he could add to our offense.”

(What did Defensive Coordinator [James] Bettcher to adjust when you were down so many DB’s?) - “Well, it took a bunch of blitzes away, all of our zone blitzes because no one plays nickel, and basically just played man to man, and rushed five as much as we could, and still try to stop the run. We had ‘Britt’ (WR Britton Golden) back there at safety when SS Tony (Jefferson) got hurt for a play, and thank god he could come back in.”

(Is this win tough because the way you came back, this could have really been a lift for this team?) – “Oh there’s no doubt. There was never doubt in my mind that we were going to win the game, until we got the ball back and it started pouring. I knew it was going to be tough sledding then.”

(It looked like they were almost going to shoot themselves in the foot at the end there, one second, was it questionable?) – “I thought it was very questionable whether that second was on that clock. Thank god... home teams do not run the clock, the NFL does or you’d really have a storm.”

Arizona Cardinals DT Calais Campbell (transcribed by Jason D. Silver)





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(Obviously this is never the result you want coming back to a place where you called home at one point. Just how tough is it to now swallow this pill?) – “Yes. Every time you lose in the NFL it always hurts, but especially when the game matters so much. This is pretty much a playoff game for us. We knew we needed the W real bad. We fought hard for it. We had a lot of circumstances that didn’t go our way. I feel like it rained little harder every time we were on offense. But hey, that’s just the way it goes. It’s just football luck. Some balls came loose; didn’t bounce our way. The other side, they did. It’s just one of those games. Everybody fought hard.”

(Obviously the elements are part of the game, but like you said the rain definitely played a factor for you guys here.) – “Yes. We don’t get a lot of rain where we’re from. It’s here and there but we don’t get a lot of time to practice in that. But when in doubt football is football. You have to line up and play no matter what the circumstances are. I’m proud of the team for fighting. I wish it would have been a different outcome but in the end we fought hard to give ourselves a chance.”

(You seemed pretty emotional leaving the field. What was running through your head?) – “I don’t really like losing. This is an important game. I felt like it just sucks to lose it because I felt like we had opportunities to win it and we just didn’t capitalize. You start replaying all of the opportunities you could’ve made and different situations. Just hurts.”

Arizona Cardinals WR Larry Fitzgerald (transcribed by Armando Gonzalez)

(How tough is this game to swallow for you guys?) – “It’s a tough pill to swallow because down to the very end we had a chance to win this ball game. The gambit of the emotions swings and how fast it happened, it’s tough to digest right now. We knew we had to win out in order to give ourselves an opportunity to compete for a playoff spot and not being able to come out of here with a win hurts.”

(We know that the elements are of part of the game but I guess coach said it best ‘it seemed like it rained a little harder when you guys had the ball each and every time’)- “Coach always talks about not making excuses. We knew it was going to be wet. We knew it was going to be wet Wednesday, Thursday, Friday - we knew it was going to be rain. They had to deal with the same conditions and they turned the football over similar to what we did and we just have to do it a better job of handling adversity. It was tough footing, catching the ball, handling the ball it was tough all day.”





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(As a perfect pass catcher over your career, how do you prepare for weather like this?)- "It's difficult because in Arizona it never rains, we're never really dealing with increment weather out there, but I've played in these type of conditions before in college, high school and everyone is playing with it, everyone is dealing with it so I wouldn't say there is a way to prepare. You just have to deal with it when you're in it."

Arizona Cardinals Strong Safety Tony Jefferson (transcribed by Ken Mendonca)

(You guys fought back today. Can you talk about the emotions of today's game?) – "It was a good, hard-fought game in the rain against a tough AFC team, and we didn't make the plays in the game that we needed to make."

(How much did the rain impact today?) – "We're professionals. We got to hang onto the ball, got to catch the ball. There's no excuse for that."

(Was there anything the team did differently to get you back into the game today?) – "We were just executing. Guys were being in their gaps and doing our assignments. Every once in a while, we'd catch ourselves in our gap, and they'd split us. So, I think we did a better job second half."

Arizona Cardinals Running Back David Johnson (transcribed by David Norwood II)

(Obviously, the elements are part of football, but how much did the weather play a part in your guys' performance today? The South Florida weather can be a beast sometimes, but really make an excuse. The elements are part of football.) – "You can't make an excuse. Like you said, the elements did ... It did rain, it did storm, but I can't make an excuse on anything I did and just have to adapt to it."

(Coach mentioned before the game this was kind of like a playoff game for you guys, and I'm sure you guys approached it the same way.) – "Yes, very much. It was definitely a playoff game. The atmosphere was that way. We came out and (fought). I tried to come out and do as much as I can. Hopefully ... We got to look at the film, see what I need to work on, see what I need to correct."

(Talk about the differences for you in the defenses you're seeing this year. Obviously, you were kind of a secret last year and now you've broken out, you're a huge star. Can you talk about the defense focusing on you and how you had to step up your game?) – "Yes, that's definitely what's going on. Defenses are keying in on me a little bit more – double teaming me, putting their safety or





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DB on me. So, I really do have to focus more on attention to detail, making sure my routes are good, making sure I'm using all my advantages – my leverages – and making sure I know exactly what I'm doing especially – like I said – when there's a DB on me."

Arizona Cardinals WR J.J. Nelson (transcribed by Armando Gonzalez)

(How disappointing is the loss when it looked like you might pull it off there at the end?) – "Yes it very disappointing, especially it coming down to a last second field goal. Knowing that we were able to win the game and how well we fought back toward the end; scoring and then getting a two-point conversion, holding them to a three and out, getting the ball back. It's tough."

(Do you like those end arounds because you can take advantage of your speed if you can find crease like that?)- "I mean yes, I've been running them ever since I was little and I'm glad coach was able to put me in and make that play and I was able to do what I was able to do. Especially with (G) Mike (Iupati) and (G) John (Wetzel) having those great blocks, it was just up to me to get in the end zone."

(How quickly did you know you were gone?)- "When I made the cut (Laughter)."

(How much did weather impact this game in play calling, execution and everything?)- "It was a big deal. We like to throw the ball, we like to throw the ball down field and with the ball being soaked wet. I mean it's no excuses. Like I said, we play in any weather. It's football weather, so it's no excuses."

Arizona Cardinals QB Carson Palmer (transcribed by Ken Mendonca)

(How tough was it dealing with the rain today?) – "It seemed like it was doing it every time we got the ball. It was turning on and staying on, and then it would stop, yeah just one of those games."

(How do you guys overcome all these self-inflicted issues?) – "Just keep fighting. You don't back down, you don't quit. You just keep fighting."

(How tough was this pill to swallow?) – "It was tough. You know, to get back into the game and have a chance, and then to lose it with one second on the clock. Probably the worst way you could lose it. The most painful way you could lose it."





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(Obviously the elements are part of football, but the weather definitely played a factor with your offense flowing the way it normally does.) – “Oh definitely, definitely it did. You know it’s just something you have to overcome and we didn’t overcome it.”

(How would you describe just how tough it is to throw a ball when it’s pouring that much?) – “Well when it stops it’s not, but when it’s just coming down, coming down, and not a drizzle, it was coming down the thing is just...we all had a tough time holding onto it. It’s just greasy.”

(What’s the visibility like downfield when you have that much rain coming down? Can you see your receivers?) – “It wasn’t an issue for us. I didn’t think it was an issue for me.”

(Do you think this game was indicative of your season?) – “Yeah, I mean, it’s just one of those things. The ball has not bounced our way. We just fought. I mean (Taylor) Boggs playing tackle, he’s a center. Unfortunately Ulrick (John) went down, D.J. (Humphries) went down, I think Earl (Watford) was playing back at tackle, those guys are just fighting, they keep fighting, it doesn’t matter. The next thing, we’ll have (center) A.Q. (Shipley) outside at left tackle, who knows? But those guys just continue to fight regardless. You just tell them to go play a position and they go play it.”

(How do you think this team will react now? I mean mathematically you’re in it, but realistically out.) – “You know it’s just one of those, you can’t believe we are where we are. But there is no other way to do, but continue to fight. This team will not give up. We’ll continue to fight, that’s all you can do.”

((Head Coach) Bruce Arians came in and said that this game probably means we’re not going to make the playoffs. That must have been very weird to hear. Was it?) – “Yeah, it was terrible to hear. I don’t think that’s set in yet.”

(About the play where you go for the extra point and they take it back for two) – “Yeah, I mean, it’s just been one of those seasons. In the first half it seemed like every time we (the offense) were on the field the rain was pouring down, and we talked at halftime, we said alright in the second half it’s going to switch. Every time they’re on the field it’s going to pour. And it’s just one of those seasons. The ball has just bounced the other way, and to get to the playoffs, to make a run, you got to have a season, no matter how good you are, the ball bounces your way when you’re one of those kinds of teams, and unfortunately it just hasn’t been that way for us.”

Arizona Cardinals CB Patrick Peterson (transcribed by Jason D. Silver)





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(Obviously every loss stings but just the fact you had an opportunity to come to the crib and do something, and it just didn't go the way you probably wanted it to go.) – “Yes. Just extremely proud of the way we fought in that game. Just shows the character we have on this football team although going into the fourth quarter down 12 no one dropped their head, just wanted to continue playing the game one play at a time. That we did, it just came up short. Had the last drive, I believe it was a minute and thirty something seconds left, got a big return, got across the fifty, pretty much got into field goal range, we sent the kitchen sink at them. They got it, still made the catch, we tried to kick them out of field goal range, the quarterback recognized the blitz that we had on, threw the ball up quick to his receiver to make a play for the go ahead field goal for the win.”

(Being a South Florida boy I'm sure you warned your guys about this weather down south and it definitely played a part today.) – “Yes, I was actually telling my guys my mom said it hasn't rained all week, I hope I don't bring it with me. Looks like I did. But, for the most part it was a great game. Thought we had a great week of preparation leading up into this game. We did a lot of things that put ourselves in the hole but also did a lot of things to get ourselves up out of that hole. Two critical blocked field goals, and... I'm sorry, a missed field goal and a blocked field go to go to two pretty much. Put them in a position to win the ballgame. But we just have to continue fighting. Continue doing the things that we needed to do to win these last three games.”

(You made that key stop on third down, you made that great play, you ran back to return the punt, your finger was in the air you felt really good about the team's chances. What could this have done for the Cardinals had you pulled this off?) – “It could have done a lot. Obviously we would've still had playoff hopes. We don't know what the situation is right now, but with three games left it's tough to make a playoff spot with four games out. We're not totally eliminated yet but getting this win today would have been huge for us. We fell up short. Just have to go back to the drawing board and prepare for the Saints.”

