

December 3, 2025

Head Coach Dan Quinn

Opening Statement:

“All right, good to get rolling with everyone. I know we visited a little bit on Monday, but even though the game stung badly, I also showed the team, man, there was a lot of response to the next play. And that was something I've talked about with them quite a bit. Long drives on offense, you get setback, doesn't mean the drive's over. You go battle for it and defensive stops in the fourth quarter and that same response of next and not being about it kind of applies to right now as well. And not letting a Sunday affect a Wednesday, that's Wednesday losses. And I loved the week of practice last week, like of course that carried over into the game. And so that's kind of the energy that I'm looking for, going back into practice again, it's easy with this group, man. They love one another. They love to compete and so there's a hardness about them. As a coach, you can tell when a team has a look, like they're ready for the next fight if it has to go longer, whatever. And so, I said they are like doing hard shit with hard people mentally and physically. And that's what this week's about, man, like, getting right back to it. It was my favorite week of practice last week. Just the energy they had, the improvement that we made. And so, now that's the chance to go do that again. And we're digging harder to do that.”

On if he missed play calling and if doing it again has energized him in any way:

“Missed, yes. Energized, no [laughs]. Do I like it? Yes. But I would say energized during the game for sure. I would say like the other like six days and like 21 hours, no, but the game part of it is like, calling is a lot of fun. The players energize me. That's honestly the truth of it all. Why I love coaching. I like being around them. I like teaching. And so during the game, like I'm on the trip with them, you know, and so riding it with them and I want to make sure I'm giving them every chance they can to play at their best.”

On if it's easier for him to take over play calling now as opposed to how the team was set up when he first joined:

“Yeah, that's fair and I think that's also accurate because there's other things that come across that you need your time and your attention, but then you're learning the staff too. When you're a first-year coach, you're learning one another and how that routine goes. And so like, our staff definitely grew tighter this year. And so now I'm definitely leaning in more onto others. And I think I spoke on that with [The Athletic Commanders Beat Reporter] Nicki [Jhabvala] one other time to utilize this talented group of guys. And [Defensive Coordinator] Joe's [Whitt Jr.] also been at the very front of that. We have a battle rhythm together that was easy to get into together and [Assistant Head Coach] Brian [Johnson] and [Assistant Quarterbacks Coach] David [Blough] and other guys, you know, on the staff to do that. I definitely leaned in hard on them, which definitely would've been harder earlier.”

On if his support from the offensive coaching staff here is similar to how it was with the Atlanta Falcons:

“I'd say it's probably that times, and I think that's probably true for our league in some ways that that's expanded, that's evolved. You know, if you'd asked me is it the same as it was in '25, I would say certainly not and that's a good thing too. Like I enjoy the game management where we're at the timeout, when to use time, when to use clock at the end when it works, that's a good call [laughs] when it doesn't – but as long as you're good with the process you went through to get there this game had so many moments of, even at the end of the game, you know, shot it wasn't there, throw it out, still saves time for the field goal. Like those were big moments. But yeah, [Former Senior Defensive Assistant for the Atlanta Falcons] Bob [Sutton] and others have been a part of that. But yeah, I'd say it's expanded more now. I think that's probably true in the NFL.”

On telling the team ‘We may have lost but we are not lost anymore’ and on how the defense has improved over the past few weeks:

“Okay. For the first part, I would say capturing standards together. I think that's what it's about of the battle for it. I thought in an unusual sense it was maybe our best group game still with a loss. So, it's hard to say it was our best game because you had a loss. But I thought from a performance, if you didn't have that part, the performance side, I thought this was connected. This was punt for field position, this was getting a stop, this was making a play. So those were things that I liked and I saw some people playing some of their best, like all for [CB Mike] Sainristil and [T Josh] Conerly [Jr.]. Those were two that really, I thought elevated up and that's what I want to see, like elevation and improvement. So that was the first part. And on the second part, I think we had a ways to go, but I think playing really hard with less mistakes. I've always thought they were playing hard and then mistakes and here's a big play and that, so like I never had questioned that part of it but having the ability to go as fast as you can, but on that tightrope of making the right decisions. And so that's a big deal and I think we're making progress in that way because I had never questioned anybody's effort. And no, I think we're going that hard, but staying on that tightrope of less mistakes, I think that's a big deal.”

On adjustments and preparing for Sunday’s game against the Minnesota Vikings:

“You do have to; some games are like that where there's more things to go through to prepare in different ways. It's kind of some of the fun parts of the NFL. This player can't ruin the game. This scheme is unique. How do you work that at practice? Sometimes when a team has similar schemes, you don't even use cards very often, just so you can get the same speed and the same matchups. And then in a game like this where there's some different looks, you want to make sure you have contingencies to go through things and that's one of the challenges of it for sure.”

On getting useful information out of practices and games to prepare for next year:

“For sure and like although we're not going to have a winning record, like that does not back off of like winning standards and habits and things that you want to do, like elite standards. I think of a guy like [S] Jeremy Reaves, like controlling the things he can, like you want to talk about a guy who hustles, that's like not ever the case. And so, when you see people who have exceptionally high standards for things, of course that rubs off. I even showed that to the team. Here's [TE] Zach [Ertz], you know, becoming one of the leaders all time of catching receptions at tight end, but you're going to see him on the jugs today, tomorrow, the next day. Like he doesn't get tired of those things that really matter. And those standards, they're boring. They're like monotonous and like, no man, you don't ever think you have it. So yeah, it matters a lot. The practice is due, but it's also a lot of fun to compete together and essentially, man, like that's also what we do. Like it's an awesome op for all of us to put out our best and like that's my job to help a player become as good as they can

be. And that's that Zach that year or you know, somebody in their first year like that doesn't change.”

On WR Noah Brown’s potential to come back this week:

“Very much in the green high. So, I got good optimism and [knocks on the desk] that's all I'm going to say about that. [laughs].”

On carrying confidence throughout the rest of the season:

“Yeah, I think I probably framed it a little differently to say when we had the week and the preparation that we did, like you can't help but go battle for it. There's not like a silver lining that I take from that. What I do take from it is this is the small, this is the tweak, this is the margin. Like, there's not like a perfect game and none of us are going to play it, but the fact that we played faster with less mistakes, that means, man like drive faster, you know, like you're closer even more. And so, we're going to find those things that push us over the top. But, if you have the effort and the speed like that, man, you got a lot of things that can go your way. So, when I was talking about next play might have been a big penalty, you still got to go score or you know, fourth down conversion because you're in overtime and this is what you have to do. So those are moments that yeah, you gain from that. Not as much from the final score. Like when you lay it out there, like that's kind of part of being a competitor. Like you got to put it all out there and knowing that you might get your heart broken some and like, that's the life we live here. And so, it gets criticized, it gets celebrated. And so like you just try to like absolutely battle for it and knowing that like you're not going to win every game, but man, like if you can throw out good games, good performances, learn from them, like I can stay consistent doing that as opposed to the high and low of it. So, you get it's frustrating. What do we got to do? You know, you have like normal emotions where you know, regular dudes in that way, but you do want to keep finding like there's more under the tank in the tank, so like, let's go get it.”

On how being able to hold the Denver Broncos to two sacks will build confidence going against the Vikings:

“Similar but different and on the edges, I thought that was a nice job by Josh [Conerly Jr.] and probably his best game as a Commander. And I'd kind of joked with him earlier, I said like, look it's hard to know like how you're improving right now. I said a year ago, man, you're fired up to play Indiana or Ohio State and like, yeah, I can block that guy. And then now you're blocking guys every week that are like, man, this dude is really good. And all of a sudden your skills keep improving. So, you see that jump take place with a lot of the first and second year players because their confidence is gaining, they're getting momentum. And so not comparing yourself to [T] Laremy [Tunsil], but like, am I improving? And I think that's an important piece for a young player and you do gain confidence in that. And our whole game sometimes is comparison this versus this and this versus this, but sometimes like, am I improving? Am I getting better? And so, I was super pumped to see him do that. It's an important part of every game, you know, line play, run actions. I thought that helped, you know, in our game this week that here's a team that if you can run it and you can stay committed to it, you don't let them pin your ears back and go. And that'll be similar this week as well.”

On what he’s seen from WR Treyton Burks behind the scenes:

“Yeah, I think it's the unseen work. When [General Manager] Adam [Peters] and his group knew a lot more about him just going through the process from draft, to that. I got a chance just to have fresh eyes, man, and I try to do that with every player here. Sometimes when a person's on another

team, well he didn't do this or he did that. And so like, let's just see what it looks like here. And I think a player like Trey deserves that, have a fresh set of eyes here. And I told him that coming in, man, this is your space and you could feel a hunger to go for it. The unseen work was coming in to learn a new system. Some of our verbiage and communication is unorthodox, but it's not standard NFL wording and formations and groupings. And so it's not just like add water, yeah, we used to call this that. And so, seeing that type of work, you could feel how important it was after his injury to his finger, 'Nope, I'll be back.' Or it knew it could be a couple weeks. No, no, no, he wasn't having any part of that. That was not an option that he wasn't playing. That's what I felt from him, in the game heading into Denver, big brace on it. 'Nope, I'm good.' He was catching everything with it. And so that's what I see. I see a guy that's hungry to prove it and I think you're just going to keep seeing that."

On why it's important to finish the season strong:

"The last part, the standards, that's what you said. And man, as teammates and from the players for certain, they deserve the best from us as coaches and the best from one another. They have busted their ass to get it right. And so, performing well and getting it right, that's a really important part of it. And I do love that about our team, about talking about the standards and wanting to go battle for one another, that's such a real thing here. And so, when you put that much into something, the feeling of going for it and doing it together, like man, it's hard to express how strong that is and certainly it is with this team. So, it's really important building those habits for everybody who's coming back into here knowing this is the standard, this is what we like, it's not rules, it's standards and it's not something you follow, this is how we do things. And I think that's a big difference."

On what has stood out from the team during the losing streak:

"I think I'm going to keep coming back to resilience, but I was pleased on this game. There was a next play mindset and as disappointing as it was, the example I used, they scored on the very first drive, went right down the field and scored and there was zero flinch on the offense and it wasn't like, 'Oh here we go,' none of that. And so, the same, we got stopped in the fourth quarter offensively, the defense was ready to go get a stop. And so, I thought there was this resilience for the next play. If that one went to six quarters, we were going to be down to fight, whatever. They just had that. And so, I think when you see a team have resilience, that's a big deal. What I saw in Spain, I loved the energy and toughness and doing things together. Neither of these games worked out for us and stung a lot. But there are things that I liked about their competitive nature, their toughness and those things matter in our game. They matter for the standard here. And when you get to demonstrate it and express it, man, it may not be seen on the outside [of] the walls, but for damn sure it is on the inside."

On learning to make the right decisions on defense:

"It's a little bit of both. The inherent part, sometimes I think what you're speaking of is like instincts, you know what to do, how to do it. Sometimes that can come with more zone. We've played more zone recently. It won't always be that case. Sometimes it's by the plan, this is better for right now, but it does allow you to have some vision on a quarterback. Knowing where people are, spatial awareness, part of that's instinctive, but communication plays a big part of that too. Knowing where a certain player is, where emotion is. So, I think it's a combination of instinctive players but also, say it again, do it again. We definitely streamlined some things to make everything run faster and to do that there had to be maybe one less hesitation, one less step. Even if it was more vanilla in some ways, that was the trade off now to start, build, build, build."

On an update for QB Jayden Daniels and on his level of optimism that Daniels will play this week:

“Optimistic he’s going to get a lot of reps for practice. I’m going to take it all the way through Friday. There’s still functional evaluations to go through, but gameplan and practicing and that part is good. You’ll see on the side it’s, I’d say it’s a little more challenging to work at quarterback when you’re not doing the same contact. So, we’ll have to simulate as much as we can, but he’s off to a good start. But we’ll go all the way through Friday for sure, but he’ll get a lot of reps at practice.”

On if Daniels has been cleared for contact:

“He has not been cleared for contact. That would be a game decision, but they’ll also wait for the whole week too. They have more testing and movements to examine, so that’s where we’re at.”

On not kicking the long field goal on the first drive against Denver:

“It was definitely the former, not the latter. So, it was the snapper, new kicker and so I thought this is not the first one I want to try going into it. So, if we could get into that spot and I liked, this is some field position where we can go, we’ve got excellent special teams. If we can pin them down, we can go into that spot. And that was the thought going in. There are certain thresholds that we would try in the regular part of the game and then obviously those extend at the end of the half or the end of the game. So, had it been the end of the half, that would’ve been well within his spots to go.”