



**BUCCANEERS HEAD COACH JON GRUDEN QUOTES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2008**

HEAD COACH JON GRUDEN

(On Antonio Bryant still having stamina late in the game after being on the couch last year)

"Well, he wasn't really on the couch. He was working out. Hopefully, I think, he was looking to get one more opportunity to show that he belongs in the league and what kind of man and receiver he can be. He's in great shape. He's the first guy here. I see him in the lobby at 6:00 a.m. waiting for Coach [Richard] Mann to get here. He never missed a day in the offseason. He's in tremendous shape. That's what we always say about the two-minute drill: We need our best pattern running, we need our best pass protection at the end of the game. It's hard to do because conditioning often is a big part of that. But he had great life in his legs for the entire game and it's a credit to him."

(On Brian Griese's overall performance)

"He was great down the stretch. It's hard to duplicate that. It's hard to beat that, what he did in the last 30 minutes, 25-30 minutes of the game. We had some balls that were catchable that weren't caught. We had a great touchdown drive in the first half, the first quarter. He was victimized, I think, when he threw a complete pass and Maurice Stovall fumbled it. We got stopped on a third-and-one to kind of stymie some drives. Other than a couple balls that he threw to the other team, interceptions – one of them was tipped, there's nothing you can do about that – I thought he played an outstanding game against a heck of a defense. It was loud and we weren't able to run the ball, obviously, very effectively. We put a lot on him and he hung in there and responded for us. A great performance."

(On Griese not being sacked in the game)

"I think it had a lot to do with our ability to come from behind and win. Any time your quarterback has a chance to see and go through his reads, have vision in the pocket, it certainly helps. The pass protection, not just by the offensive line but by the backs and the tight ends, for the most part was outstanding. There are still some areas that we need to clean up."

(On the offensive line run-blocking well against Atlanta and then pass-blocking well in Chicago)

"It's encouraging, especially when you're up against a defense like the Bears. We're excited about our line; we've said that since the beginning of camp. We're the youngest group in football and we think we have the makings there to be outstanding."

(On difficulties running the ball)

"We had some good looks, some draw plays. Warrick [Dunn] had some nice looks. If you watch the game, they have a guy in every gap on every snap and it's hard to run. It's hard. It's a loaded box, a lot of single blocks, and they've got an extra man in support a lot of the time. It's an aggressive style of defense that they play. We've got to do a better job of scheming some runs,

certainly, we've got to block a couple of the better looks that we did have better, but Chicago's outstanding and they're committed to stopping the run with a defense like that. We chose to go another route."

(On TE Jerramy Stevens)

"He is an outstanding receiver and he's getting better as a run blocker. He is problem for people, I think, in the passing game. The better he gets as a blocker the more he'll play. He clearly stepped up. He's made a lot of big plays for us the last four or five games he's played as a Buccaneer. I think now with his closure his future is on. I think he's a very good part of this team. The players like him and he really stepped up and made some key plays yesterday."

(On what was working)

Well we had a lot of things that went pretty well yesterday. You know looking at the tape. We felt good about what we were doing going into the game. We got into a little bit of a rhythm. I think one of the things you have going for yourself in that type of situation at least towards the end of the game is that you have four downs to make ten yards instead of three. So your mentality is a little bit different. You're more apt I think to check the ball down here and there, throw it away because you know you have four opportunities to get a first down. It is a fast break style of play, which Brian really likes, has always liked. That has been a big part of his success here, his ability to operate at the line of scrimmage with the moving clock."

(On LB Barrett Ruud's interception)

"What a great play. He was in a tough situation based on the formation and the coverage that we had. We were in a man coverage and they shifted a back out to the strong side that became his coverage in that particular call. I thought he just played the receiver about as good as you could play it. Not a lot of linebackers get, middle linebackers get in that position very often. Not only was it very good coverage it was an unbelievable finish to the play. That might be the play of the year that I've seen in terms of linebackers making plays down the field that's for sure."

(On CB Ronde Barber's play)

"They made some plays. Obviously they have players, too. They have some good ones over there. Brandon Lloyd has been a guy that has been a little quiet the last couple years but he's very talented. We just got to say that is part of the game yesterday. They made some plays yesterday. Ronde Barber is the least of my concerns."

(On the satisfactions of the comeback victory)

"You are very proud of these guys. We had a lot of guys that were hurt yesterday, key players. Talib and Elbert Mack two key corners for us and obviously Davin Joseph and certainly Joey Galloway and to see the guys step up and compete. I watch the tape this morning and watch the physicalness in which we played with it was really exciting to be a part of. Proud of our guys, proud of our coaches and we're looking forward to playing at home this week."

(On what he was saying when DE Gaines Adams intercepted the pass)

"Go Gaines go. I was hoping he would get it in there and fortunately I got some information upstairs that we should challenge that play. That was a big play in the game, certainly. A screen pass, he diagnosed it well, made the play and his first NFL touchdown, I certainly congratulate him."

(On the penalty to extend the drive in overtime)

"It was a good feeling. It was like hey we got the ball back. That was a tough spot; the crowd was really into the game at that point in time. We were backed up inside our 10, an incomplete pass on first down, a run that netted us a yard or two, and Brian made a smart play against a preventative type defense throwing it into the flat to Jerramy Stevens. When you get awarded another opportunity, I think the big thing is we have to take advantage of this, we have to finish the game right now and I think that is the mentality everybody has."

(On T Jeremy Trueblood)

"Jeremy is a tough guy; he is a very physical player. There was a lot of that going on, on both sides, and the officials warned each bench repeatedly. But I love Trueblood, I like what he stands for and I can't comment on anything else other than that was a big penalty in the game and I'm glad it worked out the way it did."

(On the Green Bay Packers)

"They are very good, the tape I have, I have not seen the Dallas game yet, but they are very talented at wide receiver. Greg Jennings is coming into his own now, Donald Driver is outstanding and Aaron Rodgers looks comfortable. They have a strong running game, they are balanced. Mike McCarthy is an excellent coach, they are very diverse. You will see five receivers and no backs on one play, and you will see three tight ends and two backs on the next play. Defensively, these are the best two cover guys that we will see all season, I think, in Al Harris and Charles Woodson. Their front seven is very good, Aaron Kampman and Cullen Jenkins is really coming into his own as a superstar in the NFL. Nick Barnett and AJ Hawk are very good inside linebackers, so they are what they are. They are a team that is going to challenge for the Super Bowl and championships this year and we will have to be at our best."

(On the plane ride home)

"I thought a lot more guys would be celebrating than they were, but I think everybody was just pretty exhausted, there were a lot of guys just knocked out. It was a hot day; I think we had 90 plays of offense. I don't know how long the game lasted, but I think there were over 50 first downs. Just a lot of football played and guys were really tired. I think very proud, not only of themselves, but of their teammates. There was good camaraderie and it was fun for awhile but the lights were out pretty early on the plane."

(On Green Bay responding so well after their offseason)

"I am not surprised; they have a lot of great players. Aaron Rodgers is a first round draft choice that is in his fourth season in the same system. They know exactly what they are doing. Mike McCarthy is a great coach, they have a great prospect, he is a number one draft choice and they knew what they were doing when they drafted him. He was the heir apparent to Brett Favre and the time is now for Aaron Rodgers. I think they did what they thought they needed to do and I compliment them on that."

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