



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

HEAD COACH MIKE SHANAHAN

General comments

"I'm really proud of our football team and the way they played today. I'm especially proud of the defense and the way they came out in the second half. They really stepped up and made some plays. That is what you have to do in the National Football League. You're not going to win championships unless you have a great defense. They kind of had us on the back of our heels in the first half. I thought our defense came out and made some plays to set the tempo for the second half. Offensively, we knew we had to score some points today. We had to put the ball in the end zone and not settle for field goals. I thought our concentration level was there, and we obviously did some positive things, especially the way we started out the second half. On special teams, anytime that guy (WR Dante Hall) gets the ball in his hands, you feel like he has a chance to go the distance. So just to keep him out of the end zone made me feel pretty good. I asked [P] Micah [Knorr] one time to squib kick it and he kicked it back to him, and I thought I was going to have a heart attack – he just caught it wrong [on his foot]. We were up by -- I don't know how many points it was -- when I asked him to squib kick and he kicked it all the way back, and anytime he catches it you feel like he has a chance to go [for a touchdown]. Anyway, it's a good start. I told the players to enjoy this today and get ready for Cleveland because all this is for nothing if we don't go on and play well."

Is this as Good as it Gets as Far as Offensive Balance

"Yes, it was. We thought we had to throw the ball a little bit more initially, and then our game plan was to come back and to run the ball a little bit more in the second half. And, fortunately, that worked out. That is a heck of a football team, they are well-disciplined. They played extremely well. Anytime you look at special teams and you've got the No. 1 in punt returns and the No. 2 in kickoff returns and start looking at the offensive production and defensively they've been doing an outstanding job in turnovers throughout the year. If you get turnovers and play good defense, they haven't been giving up a lot of points and that's the key. If you take a look at your record and a defense that doesn't give up points and gets a lot of turnovers that is a very productive football team and one of the reasons they have the record they have."

On the Adjustments that Defensive Coordinator Larry Coyer and the Defense Made in the Second Half

"Well, Larry has done a great job throughout the year, especially minus a couple starting linebackers, and a few injuries here and there. I think the big adjustment was in third downs. I think they were seven-for-seven in the first half on third downs, and we had to get them off the football field. We stopped them a few times, but if you're seven-for-seven on third downs you're going to score some points and that's what they did. So, I thought we did a little bit better in that area [the second half] and it started to snowball for us. I'm not sure -- we had the first three series – that were three plays and out, or pretty close to that. I'm very proud of the way they came back in the second half and made some plays."

On the Extent that all the Trash-Talking by Players Affected Today's Game

"I thought it was a little fuel to the fire, but as I told our football team, if that doesn't get you motivated for a game like this, when your back's against the way, then you are really not made of the right stuff. Sometimes guys will say things and you're just got to deal with it, let a few days go, and then usually it's not a story – it kind of takes care of itself."

Does RB Clinton Portis Amaze You with the Things He Does, or Do You Expect it?

"I kind of expect it, to be honest with you, just every time he has the ball he has the chance to go the distance. In order to do that in the running game, he has to be playing extremely well, but that offensive line, tight ends, wide receivers, you've got to have a bunch of people working together, but he has made so many big plays. Seems like he gets stronger as the game goes on, and that was a big plus."

Has He Shown You Anything Different in the Past Two Weeks

"Not really. He has been pretty consistent since he has been here. It's nice to be able to see him – how many carries did he have today? I don't even know, 22? [Portis did have 22 carries] – it was really nice in Oakland to see him carry the ball 34 times in tough situations, especially when it's muddy because of the wear and tear on somebody's body. It's tough, especially when the game's on the line. But if we can keep him fairly healthy and not overuse him, I think he has the ability to make those big plays."



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

After Portis' Fifth Touchdown, Did You Realize How Many He Had, and if It Was a Record?

"I had no idea he even had five touchdowns. I knew he had a few, usually at the end of the game [VP-PR] Jim Saccomano will give me any time of stats that are pertinent for the football team. [TE] Shannon Sharpe's 11th season with 50-plus catches, and he went to 805 (total career catches), it's kind of a nice day offensively to get a little offensive back. It was nice to get [WR] Eddie McCaffrey back and get a little bit of rhythm there too, where we could switch off some of our wide receivers and keep them a little bit healthier, and keep them a little bit more into the game when you have a three-man rotation like we did. But it was nice to have Eddie back and playing at full speed."

DENVER BRONCOS RB CLINTON PORTIS

Was that the Most Fun He's Ever Had?

"I'm going to say that was pretty fun. Coming into halftime and being down 21-17 and knowing that their defense hadn't stopped us and our defense hadn't stopped them, and that our defense going out in the second half and putting out the effort they put out, and to not give up anything until that final drive means a lot. Our offensive line kind of took it personally that everyone was always talking about the Chiefs' offensive line, and how great they open holes for [Chiefs RB Priest] Holmes, and they went out and opened holes for me that anyone could have run through. So I take my hat off to our offensive line."

What was the Big Difference in the Second Half?

"Pretty much the offensive line. Anytime you have an offensive line that is determined to go out and man-handle people and to open up running lanes, this [gestures narrowly] is a running lane in the NFL, and they were giving me lanes like this [gestures very wide]. I was going through them, and just catching a slap across the chest or something. Anytime an offensive line does that, you've got to contribute and reward them."

What Does it Mean to Have a Big Game Like This Against the Chiefs?

"Well, I think it means more that we really needed the win. I think the Dolphins' loss put us in a great position and we know we need to win out. Last year we were at the same position, and I think we went to Oakland and blew it. When we needed to win out and win at Oakland. We've got to take it one week at a time. Every weekend, we can hopefully come out with a win, and hopefully I'll be talking to you guys. If we lose, no more talking (laughs)."

Which of the Five Touchdowns was Your Favorite?

"They were just happening, I can't tell you that last touchdown we were in the huddle and [QB] Jake [Plummer] said, "Come on, let's stuff this ball, we're going to drive and stuff it this whole series," and [WR] Rod [Smith] said, "No man, he's [Portis] going to score right here. Jake said, "Let's just move the ball and run out the clock," and Rod said, "Score a touchdown." And I scored. So, I need to stop taking Jake's advice, and start listening to Rod more often (laughs). I think Rod went out and played great, he's probably hot right now that I went out and stole his game, because he had a great game with key catches and key first downs in the first half to keep drive's alive. As a team I think Jake played great, Shannon played great. If you look at the offensive line, they played outstanding. If you throw me into the mix, along with those guys, anytime we all get rolling it's hard to stop us."

What was Said at Halftime?

"Well, there wasn't a lot said at halftime, the offense was thinking that we were going to shoot out and we can't go down and get three. We need to get touchdowns every time we go down. The defense pretty much felt like they needed to step up and we were doing a good job of moving the ball and if they get a couple stops, we could get ahead. Then they went out and stopped everything in the second half."

Explain the Championship Belt You were Wearing

"You know I've always admired Priest Holmes and I thought he was the best back in the NFL, and people always said to me, you MIGHT be the best back in the NFL. I felt that if I went out and out-performed Priest Holmes in head-to-head competition, I can't help but feel that I am the best back in the NFL. So I brought my belt just in case I out-performed him, and I think I did that, and now I feel like I am the best back in the NFL."

On Leaping Into the Stands and Giving the Ball to his Mom

"Just as I was walking out of the house, my mom gave me a kiss on the jaw and she said "Go out and have a big game for me, son". After the second touchdown, I didn't know I was going to have five, so on the second one, I thought that would



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

be a good time to give her the ball, not knowing if I was going to get back into the end zone. On the fifth one, I thought, well, I hope I'm done by now, so I gave her that one, too."

DENVER BRONCOS' PLAYER QUOTES

LB AL WILSON

On the defense: "Definitely, at halftime, we came in and told ourselves that if we wanted to win we had to get some stops. I take my hat off to the defense, because we picked it up and shut them down when we told ourselves we needed to."

On Eddie Kennison's comments: "For him to come out and say that type of stuff to the media, it really doesn't affect how we play. All that is is childish of him."

On Clinton Portis: "It is tremendous and it is an honor to be on the field with so many great players like that., just like the rest of our offense is. But, you can't say much about Clinton and what he did today – it was just amazing."

WR ROD SMITH

General: "Everybody came out hitting on all cylinders today. We stuck together and got the job done when we all knew it was on the line."

On the defense: "They'd bend a bit, but then they'd make a big play and get a sack or something like that. I have to give a lot of credit to our defense today, especially in the second half."

On Jake Plummer: "I thought that was the best game I've seen him play. We ride with him and we tell him that wherever he takes us we will go. He did a great job of getting us moving and into great situations today."

On Clinton Portis: "The guy has really earned a lot of my respect. The last two weeks he's been our MVP. I told him that's how you get to be a leader on this team -- you have to step up and show it on the field every week. A couple times I told him that he's been slacking off, and that's when he had three touchdowns. I told him he needed to score some more, and as soon as I looked up, he was just running away."

DE TREVOR PRYCE

On the defense: "I think the first half got away from us. We had to come in here (at halftime) and make some adjustments, and that was very important. Smart players and coaches have to make those adjustments to win games. (In the third quarter) when we stopped them the first time, we said 'Yes, they are human.' And we just kept on rolling from there."

On Priest Holmes: "I don't think they're running him much. I think they're saving him for the playoffs. But the first thing you do is you have to stop him. We knew that was a key coming in, and that's what we wanted to do."

On Eddie Kennison: "He's just a clown in the audience, and you don't pay attention to that. With or without him (and his comments), we still had to beat the Chiefs today."

OT EPHRAIM SALAAM

On Eddie Kennison: "Sometimes people get emotional, and he probably shouldn't have said that. Wait, he definitely should not have said that. But today was bigger than Eddie. We wanted to make a statement against the Chiefs, and that's what we did."

QB JAKE PLUMMER

General: "We obviously did some things we did not do the last couple of weeks in the passing game. Offensively, we did a good job today. We were efficient, and that's exactly what we needed to be."

On Clinton Portis: "He ran with a lot of heart and passion. We just kept plugging away (in the running game). We knew that if we kept cracking at them that things would work out. We have to keep giving him the rock. He's unbelievable. (In the fourth quarter) we were just trying to get some runs and work the clock, and then he goes out and makes a 60-yard run. Right now, he's our meal ticket and we are able to get some good stuff off of him."

On the defense: "We needed them to step up, and they did. They gave us a chance to get the ball and make things happen today."

DE BERTRAND BERRY

On Clinton Portis: "He's making it easy to play defense right now. He's keeping the ball in his hands, running up and down the field, and scoring when we need to score. That works well for us."

On the first Chiefs' game: "I think we got caught up in the hype of it and did not concentrate on the X's and O's. Maybe we weren't as ready as we should have been, but we were today. These guys weren't doing things that we had never seen, so we knew we could come out and play like this."

S NICK FERGUSON

On the first Chiefs' game: "Maybe I myself was a victim of that (too much hype). If it is a big game, you can get too excited and not play well. I think that happened for a few guys on our team. We knew we had to just settle down and relax, and we were able to do that well today."

On the score: "The only satisfaction we get is that it was a win. It can be 14-13 or anything, but as long as you can look at the scoreboard as a team and see that win, then it is great."



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

KANSAS CITY HEAD COACH DICK VERMEIL

General:

"First off, I'd like to congratulate Mike Shanahan and his coaching staff. They did an outstanding job. At halftime, we came in and I thought we had a real good shot at winning the football game; obviously, they played so much better in the second half than we did that there was no way – it wasn't even close.

"I don't know what the problem is, or what it was. We couldn't make a first down, we couldn't stop them – when that happens, you're not going to win many football games. I know we're better than that, but we weren't in the second half.

"Hey: When you coach against a Mike Shanahan-coached football team, he will give you some lessons. And he gave us some real good lessons."

On Clinton Portis:

"I said going into the ballgame that he was a better back this year than last year. But he had 31 yards at halftime. He was the same guy (in the second half). The same guy. But we weren't the same guys. I don't want to discredit him – he's playing better than he was last year. We did a great job on him the first half and we did a lousy job on him the second half. All their bootlegs and nakedts with Plummer and all that – they just embarrassed us."

On if the result of the game surprised him:

"Yeah. What do you think – that I expected it? I expected it to be more like at halftime. And, again, I credit those people (the Broncos) with doing a good job."

On the Chiefs' run defense:

"At halftime it was great. In the second half it disappeared. We got knocked off the ball. It's horse (expletive)."

On Eddie Kennison:

"Eddie Kennison is a fine young man. There were some things they said here in Denver that maybe they ought to be embarrassed about, but Eddie, no. The team was behind Eddie. Eddie took it out of context originally; he thought a player had said we were frauds, not a newspaper writer, and that's what upset him. That was not a factor in the ballgame in any way – either side.

"(The war of words between the teams before the game) had nothing to do with it. If it did, it should have hurt us in the first half. We played for 30 minutes with the same chatter prior to the game. That stuff's all baloney. Maybe it makes a difference in high school, but not in the National Football League."

KANSAS CITY CHIEF PLAYERS

FB Tony Richardson

GENERAL: "Obviously, Denver's a very good football team. To get where we want to be, we have to respond when things go wrong. We didn't do that today. But we're still a confident group, we just have to lick our wounds and get back to work this week."

ON SECOND HALF STRUGGLES: "They got the momentum going, and things just snowballed from there. We know how it feels to be on the other side. You get that momentum going and you just put teams away. But give them credit, they played extremely well in the second half. We just never could bounce back."

OLB Shawn Barber

ON THE CHIEF DEFENSE: "Overall, the defensive unit is very embarrassed. The amount of yardage, the touchdowns, the inability to stop the run... we knew they were running plays and we still couldn't stop them. We definitely have to look at ourselves before we can look at anybody else. We certainly give credit to Denver because of the way they executed. But before we give them (too much) credit, we have to look at ourselves. I think out focus and lack of execution is what's so disappointing."



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

ON PORTIS: "I put it on my shoulders to get the defense ready for Portis and the Broncos' offense. I just don't think we came out emotionally ready for 60 minutes. When the game is close, I have to step up and make a big play. I just didn't get the job done today, and anytime the defense doesn't perform, I'm definitely the one to take the brunt of the blame."

DE Vonnie Holliday

ON SECOND HALF: "We came out and did well in the first half, but in the second, they just seemed to make the adjustments and we didn't. I don't know what we did wrong; I'll have to check it out on the film. But speaking right now, I'd have to say there were breaks in the chain. I know I had one. Denver was persistent, and when they had the opportunity to make the big play, hey did it."

GENERAL: "We were 11-1 and we came in here with so much to gain. To lose like this, it's tough. We came out and were playing a good game for a while, but in the second half, we just got dominated."

ON PORTIS: "He's a very patient back. Again, I'll have to look on film to see what happened on some of those plays. I think we had breakdowns on all levels. Guys were not in their gaps. But he's a great running back... I remember on one play, he jumped over a guy and as soon as he hit the ground, he was gone."

QB Trent Green

ON PLAYOFFS: "It's a tough day to find that out (that they're in). Coming into the season, we had a lot of goals. The first was to make the playoffs, and we've accomplished that. In due time, I think we'll be excited about that. Our second goal was to win the division, and we had a chance to do that today but didn't get it done. We'll just have to see how that unfolds. The next goal is to clinch home field advantage, but we kind of took ourselves out of the driver's seat with today's loss. But we still have a chance to get that as well. If someone would have told me that we would be 11-2 after 13 games, I think we'd have taken it."

ON SECOND HALF TROUBLES: "I wish I could put a finger on it; I'm sure we'll see what we did when we break down the film. We just don't seem to come out ready in the second half like we need to be. And Denver's too good for that."

TE Tony Gonzalez

GENERAL: "Well there's obviously some adjustments to be made. We would have liked to have gone out there and put up some more points in the second half. We'll just have to learn from that. I can't stand losing, especially to the Broncos. We talked that trash all week back and forth, and I kind of like that. It made the game more exciting. I had a good time out there, until the clock read zero. We'll be all right, we'll bounce back from this, I know we will because we're true champions. Champions are teams that take obstacles like this and create them into stepping stones."

POSTGAME NOTES / Denver 45, Kansas City 27

- **SERIES STUFF:** The teams split the season series; Kansas City leads all-time 49-38 (not including a 1-0 postseason edge by Denver), but Denver owns a 36-24 edge since the second game of the 1973 season. **The 45 points by Denver was the most by the Broncos in the 88 games against the Chiefs** (it was only the 12th time Denver topped 30 against KC); the previous most came in a 38-17 win in Denver on Nov. 16, 1986. The **19-point margin** was the largest in the series since a 30-7 Denver win at Kansas City on Nov. 16, 1998.
- The 45 points by the Broncos marked the first time Denver **scored 40 or more** in 2003, and the first time since a 44-10 win over Cleveland in Denver on Oct. 15, 2000. It tied for the fifth most in franchise history.
- The Denver win denied the 2003 Chiefs from becoming only the fifth team to go undefeated in AFC West divisional play (in fact, Denver caught them to match division records at 5-1).
- Denver is now **36-0** at home when it scores 30 or more points in the Mike Shanahan Era.
- The **508 yards** by Denver was the 10th most by the Broncos in their history (previous season high was 468 against Kansas City); the **270 rushing yards** by Denver was also a season high, and its ninth most in a single game.
- Denver's **8.44** yards per rush (32-270), shattered the old team mark of 8.09, set against Arizona last Dec. 29.
- Denver's **8.33** yards per play (61-508) was the third most per play for a game in Bronco history.
- **Team effort.** On Denver's first touchdown drive of the second half, seven different players touched the ball, with eight of the 12 plays going for 5-plus yards and four for 10-plus.
- **Reversal.** Kansas City was 7-of-7 on third down in the first half (averaging 13.7 yards and only 5.8 yards to go); but in the second half, the Chiefs were just 1-of-6 (averaging 1.5 yards and 9.7 yards to go).
- Denver ran 31 plays in Kansas City territory; Kansas City ran 38 in Denver territory (22 in the first half), but none in the second half until Denver sprint ahead, 38-21.



Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003

- Denver ran 30 first down plays today for **310 yards**, averaging 10.7 on 19 rushing plays and 9.6 on 11 passing plays.
- In the decisive third quarter, when Denver outscored the Chiefs 14-0 to take the lead for good, the Broncos outgained Kansas City **167-36** in the quarter.
- **DENVER INJURIES:** DE Reggie Hayward (right shoulder bruise); CB Scott Turner (right knee strain); FB Reuben Droughns (left ankle sprain).
- **RB Clinton Portis (22-218, 5 TD rushing)**
 - He recorded the sixth 200-yard rushing game in Bronco history, and the second most of his career (he had 228 against Arizona last year). The 218 yards ranks as the third most in franchise history.
 - With 5 TDs (all rushing), he became the first Bronco to ever score 5 in a single game; he is only the second Bronco to score 4 or more rushing TDs in a game (Mike Anderson had 4 at New Orleans in 2000); Portis was also the only other Bronco to score 4 in a game (3 rush/1 rec.), which he did against Kansas City last year. The 30 points scored by Portis also set a Bronco record (Portis and Anderson held the old mark of 24); it's the sixth time a Bronco has scored 20 or more in a game.
 - The 5 TDs tied for the fourth most in NFL history (three players have scored six: Ernie Nevers, Dub Jones and Gale Sayers); he is the 12th to score five in an NFL game (joining such players as Jim Brown, Billy Cannon, Paul Hornung, Kellen Winslow and Jerry Rice).
 - This was Portis' fifth straight game over 100 yards (his ninth this year), and his 17th career (second by a Bronco).
 - Portis vs. Kansas City in Denver.** In two games against the Chiefs in Denver, Portis has 43 rushes for 348 yards (8.1 avg.), 5 receptions for 111 yards and 9 touchdowns (8 rushing/1 receiving).
 - He rushed **11 times for 188 yards in the second half**, that's the most in the NFL in a half since Nov. 11, 2001, when Seattle's Shaun Alexander had 192 against Oakland. The 188 for a half is a Bronco record, as it topped the 168 Davis had in the first half against Philadelphia on Oct. 4, 1998.
 - He now has **553** yards in his last three games (165 vs. Chicago, 170 at Oakland, 218 today), and has 1,452 for the season in his bid to join Edgerrin James and Eric Dickerson as the only players in NFL history to record back-to-back 1,500-yard seasons to open an NFL career.
 - Portis has rushed for 2,960 yards in his first two seasons, ranking fourth in most rushing yards in the first two years of a career in NFL history (trailing Dickerson 3,913; James 3,262; and Earl Campbell 3,147).
- **TE Shannon Sharpe (6-73 receiving)**
 - He became the 10th player in NFL history to record 800 career receptions, finishing the day with 805.