



# Denver Broncos Postgame Quotes & Notes

Denver Broncos vs. Kansas City Chiefs • INVESCO Field at Mile High • Sunday, Sept. 12, 2004

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## DENVER BRONCOS HEAD COACH MIKE SHANAHAN

### General

"Like always when you play Kansas City it's a heavyweight fight. They are an excellent football team, very well coached. It was back and forth throughout the whole game. Both teams made some mistakes but you saw both teams compete for 60-minutes."

### On the performance of RB Quentin Griffin

"He really stepped up. Obviously you could see what he did in the running game. What some people won't see is what he did in the passing game. He picked up the right guy on blitzes and knew what he was doing. It's nice to see Quentin come in and play at that level. It didn't really surprise me, but any time you go into your first game and you have a lot of pressure on you, it's always nice to see a guy step up and get it done."

### On what he said to QB Jake Plummer after second interception

"I talked to him on the sidelines and said, 'hey, you don't have to win the game on your own. We have a great defense out there; we just can turn the football over.' He knew he made a mistake, he made a couple mistakes. But the thing I love about him, he's going to go out there and compete. After he made a mistake he wasn't afraid to come back and make a couple nice throws and then he forgot about it. That's what you have to have. You have to have a short memory as a quarterback. You have to go out there and find a way to win and make some plays. That's what he did, and some people can't do that after a couple mistakes."

### On special teams and avoiding Chiefs WR/KR Dante Hall

"I thought Micah (Knorr) did a great job. I thought he did a great job on his kickoffs and did a great job on his punts. (Dante Hall) is a dangerous threat. A great football player, every time he touches it you feel like he's going to go the distance. I'm very proud of the special teams and especially Micah for the way he punted."

### On performance of CB/WR Champ Bailey

"Our plan was to play some dime, which Kelly Herndon and Champ were on the inside. Sometimes he went on Dante (Hall) and sometimes he went on (Tony) Gonzalez. It's two great football players, and we matched him up inside. He was used to playing inside when he was in Washington, so the switch was very easy for him. He played very well."

"He's got such great speed and he's got the ability to go deep. Any corner that's on him, they have to worry about the deep ball. He catches the ball extremely well and it was nice on that one blitz, he turned the ball up field and you could see how explosive he is. We're not going to use him too much, but it is sure nice to get the ball in his hands and for him to make some plays."

### On field goal attempt before halftime

"(The officials) were not listening to me and my picture. They would not even look at it, I was a little disappointed. That's the first time I think I've ever been in the huddle before. Bernie (Kukar) was pushing me back, but they got it right and that's all that matters."

### On performance of WR/PR Rod Smith

"He just makes so many big plays. He's smart, he has a good feel. He knows when to catch the ball and he does an excellent job of turning up field. I'm just really pleased with the way he handles himself."

### On if he is nervous about injuries

"I'm always nervous. You have to let your players play. I'm nervous about Champ playing offense. We are going to try and let our best players and hope they stay healthy."

### On 57-yard pass play for Kansas City during their first series

"We were in a two-deep coverage and obviously we got sucked up a little bit and the quarterback and a little bit more time to scramble and make the big throw. Unfortunately they made a big play. It should have been our ball, but those things happen. I was really proud of John (Lynch) the way he reacted. He gave him a great hit and we all make mistakes in those games."

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## On injury status of DT Luther Elliss

"He was close. I was just afraid if we put him in for just one day of practiced that we would set him back for the next week. He should be able to practice on Wednesday, I don't know if it will be full speed but I think he'll be pretty close because he did practice in Friday."

## On officials explanation of apparent fumble after Eddie Kennison's 57-yard reception

"With the replay, if you're not really sure what happened then they don't blow the whistle. If you're sure then you call their guy down. It's not reviewable if you call the guy down. In the officials opinion the wide receiver that caught the ball fumbled after he was on the ground. You can't review it and you go from there."

## DENVER BRONCOS PLAYERS

### RB QUENTIN GRIFFIN

#### General

"To come out and get a big victory at home against a team like Kansas City is obviously a huge deal for us."

#### On his Rushing Performance

"The guys up front made some clutch blocks for us, and we really took advantage of them."

#### On his Goal Line Fumble

"Honestly, I was careless, and I can't let that happen. Hopefully, I can learn from that mistake so I don't put us in a bad situation."

### WR ROD SMITH

#### On the Offense Rallying Late in the Game

"I told the 'D' [defense] that we'd get them back. We gave them [KC] ten points, and I said we'd get those ten back from them. When you like [DE] Trevor [Pryce] and [LB] Al [Wilson] who were playing hurt, that really shows you a lot. Obviously we can do some good things on both sides of the ball. Even when we have guys who make mistakes or aren't at full speed, we showed that we can come together and step up when we have to. 34 points?...We should have had 54 points. Those guys came to play, though, but obviously in the end we wanted it more. We are going to see them again, but a win is a win, and we'll take that right now."

### WR ASHLEY LELIE

#### On the run game/QB Jake Plummer

"Defenses can't help but try to stop that run first, and then look at Jake second. But when he can get out of the pocket on those bootlegs, that opens a lot of things up. It's kind of like, pick your poison with Jake because he can do so much. That gives us a lot of opportunities for big plays."

#### On Quentin Griffin

"I told everybody not to worry because we do have another special back. I saw him at Indy [Indianapolis] last year, so we all knew what he could do. That's not something that surprises me, or anybody in this locker room."

### QB JAKE PLUMMER

#### On Late Rejuvenated Play

"[I am] not proud. That's just the way I've always played. I've made some stupid plays and mistakes before, but those are things I try to come back and correct. I think guys know I'll always keep bouncing back and fighting, and that's what this team is going to do, too."

#### On his Rushing Attempts



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"It really wasn't in the deep-plan [for Jake to run a lot]. As a quarterback, you are never really excited about that. But I had a chance to make some plays with the ball in my hands tonight, and that's something that I will take the opportunity to do."

## FS JOHN LYNCH

### On WR Eddie Kennison's 57-Yard Reception

"I dropped for that. That was all me. [QB] Trent [Green] saw the Cover2. I thought he was going to go to [TE Tony] Gonzales down low, and I just dropped down for that. I came to the sidelines and said to the fellas, 'Hey, that was all my fault'. As I said, we can do a lot of things better, but the important thing is that we got the win."

### On the Big Hit on WR Dante Hall

"I did think it was clean. I thought it was legal. It's not defenseless if he's about to catch the ball."

### On the Defense

"Tonight was a great test, and I think we passed it in a lot of ways. But we can do better. You have to remember that this is a new defense, and we are still getting used to each other. I think, especially, we have to continue to work on our communication, and just get used to being around each other on the field."

## LB AL WILSON

### On the Defense

"I think we had a good game plan. What was important was that we stayed together, even as they were driving. We found a way to make a big play, and that's something that great defenses do. It was one of those games when you knew it was going to be battle. We had a few injuries but we fought through them and got it done."

### On RB Quentin Griffin

"I see him everyday in practice, and I watched him a lot in college. He is very elusive, and he creates the plays that make things happen."

### On the Bronco Offense

"I think they answered a lot of doubts tonight. They put some great points on the board. We came out and held up on our part. But I was really proud with the way that they stepped up big at the end."

## DE TREVOR PRYCE

### On Quentin Griffin

"You are seeing the start of something that is really special."

## KANSAS CITY CHIEF PLAYERS

### QB Trent Green

GENERAL: "We really had no consistency or rhythm for whatever reason. The first series, we scored on, we had that one big play (57-yard pass to Kennison) that stood out. In the second half, the defense forced some turnovers and gave us good field position. They did a great job, so give credit to their defense. There wasn't a lot of room out there (for the receivers), so you really have to credit their secondary. It seemed like on the pass plays we did complete, there was always someone hanging all over them. It was frustrating."

ON THE CROWD: "I think the crowd noise helped them. They were able to come off of the edges and forced me to step up into the pocket, and obviously, that shrinks it even tighter. There just wasn't any separation. Overall, they had a great game plan and did a good job."

ON THE NEW 5-YARD RULE: "It was interesting that Tony (Gonzalez) didn't get any calls on that one, because he was one of the ones that I would like to see them emphasize (the rule on). On the flip-side, he got a pass interference."

ON PRIEST HOLMES: "He did great. The offensive line did a really good job opening holes for him. He had a great game, especially that last TD run. That was simply incredible."

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## RB Priest Holmes

GENERAL: "Offensively, we definitely couldn't get into a groove early on. We did show some improvement in the third quarter, and our defense did some outstanding things in terms of forcing those turnovers. But it's definitely hard to play catch-up in this league, especially in this division."

ON HIS RUNS: "About on six of my runs, I felt like I could have broken. Denver did a good job of making that last minute grab, trying to trip me up or just grabbing that shoestring. They were making sure they at least had two guys on me wherever I went. They did a real good job as far as scheming the run game on our side."

ON THE FIRST GAME OF THE SEASON: "It's tough to start off like this, because the advantage that we could have had was winning this first game in our division and then not having to play another team in our division for a number of weeks. We did give up one to Denver, and that's one team that we did not want to give one to."

## TE Tony Gonzalez

GENERAL: "We put 24 points on the board, we can be a little proud of that. We certainly don't want to lose, especially to these guys on the road. But it's just one game. Back in my rookie year, we lost the first game, but we went on to be 13-3. I'm still optimistic; this doesn't make or break us in any way."

## WR Eddie Kennison

GENERAL: "It was ugly. They did everything right. They're playing good offense and playing good defense. It was the first game of the season, and obviously we would like to come out with the win but those things happen."

## LB Monty Beisel

ON HIS INTERCEPTION: "I was able to pop up, get my hands on it and fortunately come down with it. Fortunately, we were able to get three points off it."

GENERAL: "We gave up too many rushing yards; they're (Denver) just too good to give that many up to in one game. When you play a team like Denver, you have to be about perfect, and tonight we weren't. They just got too many plays. We were able to get some turnovers in the second half, but they just weren't enough. The bootleg hurt us, they got a few good plays on us (at the end) and that sealed the deal. We have to check the film, make the corrections and make sure things are good when we meet them again."

## OT Willie Roaf

GENERAL: "They did a good job, we've just got to play better. They made plays and we didn't. On the road, you have to take advantage of opportunities, and we didn't. They played hard like they always do. It's consolation to play early in the season, because they still have to play us later on. They did a good job mixing up the blitz, stunting, and overall really just confusing us."

## PK Lawrence Tynes

ON FIELD GOAL AT END OF HALF: "I got all the way back to the lockerroom, and then had to run back to the field. Then we had to wait another five or six minutes until they got the spot right. We knew that they had the spot wrong on the first field goal attempt, we just went through with it. I felt like I should have made the second kick."

## POSTGAME NOTES

- Denver now improves to **29-15-1** in season openers (fourth straight win), including 8-2 under Mike Shanahan.
  - The last time a Bronco defensive player caught a pass was on Dec. 5, 1993, when **LB Dave Wyman** had a 1-yard touchdown reception at San Diego.
  - **CB Champ Bailey** now has an interception in four of six season openers: Sept. 12, 1999 (vs. Dallas, 1-4); Sept. 9, 2001 (at San Diego, 1-5); Sept. 8, 2002 (vs. Arizona, 1-2); Sept. 12, 2004 (vs. Kansas City, 1-0).
  - **WR Rod Smith**. Smith had 128 all-purpose yards tonight (76 receiving, 55 punt, -3 rushing), giving him 9,583 in his career (8,704 receiving, 477 punt return, 93 kickoff return, 309 rushing). That total is third in Bronco history as he is now just 417 yards shy of the 10,000-yard mark (Floyd Little leads with 12,157; Rick Upchurch is next with 10,081).
  - **Tonight's chart**. **RB Quentin Griffin** established a franchise record for most rushing yards in a season opener. The top opening day rushing efforts in Denver Bronco history:
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Quentin Griffin	<b>23-156</b>	<b>2 TD</b>	Sept. 12, 2004 vs. Kansas City
Clinton Portis	<b>24-120</b>	<b>2 TD</b>	Sept. 14, 2003 at Cincinnati
Gaston Green	<b>24-116</b>	<b>0 TD</b>	Sept. 1, 1991 vs. Cincinnati
Floyd Little	<b>21-105</b>	<b>1 TD</b>	Sept. 14, 1969 vs. Boston
Floyd Little	<b>22-101</b>	<b>0 TD</b>	Sept. 17, 1972 vs. Houston
Terrell Davis	<b>26-101</b>	<b>1 TD</b>	Aug. 31, 1997 vs. Kansas City
Terrell Davis	<b>21-101</b>	<b>0 TD</b>	Sept. 10, 2001 vs. N.Y. Giants

It was Griffin's second 100-yard career game, to go with 28-136 at Indianapolis last December 21. It was the **31st** highest single game total in Bronco history, the 16th most by backs other than Terrell Davis.

- Denver tied its seventh most points scored in a season opener with the 34, the third time the Broncos scored that many against the Chiefs (all in Denver).

<b>1991 CINCINNATI</b>	<b>W 45-14</b>	<b>1975 KANSAS CITY</b>	<b>W 37-33</b>	<b>1989 KANSAS CITY</b>	<b>W 34-20</b>
<b>1987 SEATTLE</b>	<b>W 40-17</b>	<b>2000 at St. Louis</b>	<b>L 36-41</b>	<b>1994 SAN DIEGO</b>	<b>L 34-37</b>
<b>1986 L.A. RAIDERS</b>	<b>W 38-36</b>	<b>1969 BOSTON</b>	<b>W 35- 7</b>	<b>2004 KANSAS CITY</b>	<b>W 34-24</b>

## MISCELLANEOUS STATISTICS

	Denver	Kansas City
<b>First Down Plays/Yards.....</b>	<b>32/255</b>	<b>24/84</b>
<i>Average .....</i>	<i>8.0</i>	<i>3.5</i>
<b>Plus Territory Plays/Yards.....</b>	<b>33/232</b>	<b>20/96</b>
<i>Average .....</i>	<i>7.0</i>	<i>4.8</i>
<b>Third Down Plays/Average Yards To Go.....</b>	<b>12/9.3</b>	<b>13/9.8</b>
<b>Total Offense.....</b>	<b>66-413</b>	<b>61-318</b>
<i>First Quarter.....</i>	<i>14-70</i>	<i>15-99</i>
<i>Second Quarter .....</i>	<i>17-73</i>	<i>20-72</i>
<i>Third Quarter .....</i>	<i>15-169</i>	<i>15-111</i>
<i>Fourth Quarter .....</i>	<i>20-111</i>	<i>11-34</i>
<b>(Second Half.....)</b>	<b>35-280</b>	<b>26-135)</b>

### FIRST DOWNS EARNED LEADERS (Rush-Pass-Rec)

**Denver:** Plummer 14 (3-11-0), Griffin 8 (7-0-1), Smith 5 (0-0-5), Lelie 2 (0-0-2).

**Kansas City:** Holmes 9 (9-0-0), Green 5 (0-5-0), Kennison 2 (0-0-2), Morton 2 (0-0-2).