

DENVER BRONCOS  
OCTOBER 3, 2004

HEAD COACH MIKE SHANAHAN

(On today's game)

"We are very fortunate to come away with a win. The team we beat today was a heck of a football team; very well coached, and they played extremely hard. We battled back and forth for four quarters. Fortunately, we made a drive there at the end to keep the ball away from them. I am very pleased with the effort our guys played with, and them finding a way to win."

(On how John Lynch played)

"John always plays good. He is very consistent. I think that one play down there when Mike Clayton's helmet came off and he could have had a cheap shot, but he just sort of touched him right there. John has been fined a few times so I think he saw him down on the ground, and if push comes to shove again, he's going to take that shot even though the helmet was off. John, I think had a heck of a game. Hopefully, he will have many more games just like this."

(On scoring in the red zone)

"We have not been down there too much. Whatever our strategy is, it's not working. So, hopefully we can keep on working on it and get that ball in the end zone a little bit more."

(On not challenging the Michael Clayton touchdown)

"I knew he was up. I was right there watching it. I was watching Mike (Clayton) and I could see how quick he jumped up. I would not bet my house on it, but I thought there was a good chance. When I did see it on the replay he was off the ground."

(On sticking with the running game)

"That's what you do against a great defense. You have to try to wear them down. I'm not sure if we wore them down but we were able to get something going there in the fourth quarter. I know every once in a while a team will get a big game against this defense, but that doesn't happen very often."

(On saying anything to John Lynch before tonight's game)

"No, not really. He has enough pressure on him. This is a big game for John because he has so much going into it. He really cares for Tampa, the organization and his teammates. It's always tough to leave an organization where you really respect the people in it. For John, this is tough coming back and I think he did it extremely well. Like he said in the locker room, he has a lot of great memories here. I'm just happy for him that we were able to come out with a win."

## CB CHAMP BAILEY

(On coming a way with a win)

"That's all that matters. Put it any way you want to. All that matters is we got the win."

(On what happened to him during Michael Clayton's touchdown catch)

"He tripped me. He kicked me, but I jumped up and tried to make the play. I thought we had him down, but he got up and scored a touchdown. But, we got the win so it doesn't matter now."

(On John Lynch's welcome from the fans)

"It's amazing what he got here."

(On how proud he is of Lynch's performance)

"I just wanted to win for him and this team. I'm glad we got it because I know it meant a lot to him."

(On Lynch's demeanor in the huddle)

"You could see it in his eyes. The desire to want to win, but that's John. He does it every week. I knew this would mean a lot to him."

(On whether this will be the type of win the Broncos pull out every week)

"I don't think so. There will be weeks when we put up 20. We could put up 40. I know it's going to happen. We just have to play our game. We can't control what the offense is doing. We just have to play and keep ourselves in the game to win. Hopefully we'll win a lot of games."

(On how emotional Lynch was after the game)

"He put his heart into this. He won a Super Bowl here. The guy poured his heart out for this team. I'd be surprised if he wasn't emotional."

## S JOHN LYNCH

(On the emotion of the game)

"Last night, to be honest, I didn't sleep a wink. I don't know if I was that nervous at the Super Bowl. I didn't know what to expect. But I knew one thing, that it was about coming down here and winning the football game. I just wanted to compete as hard as I could. I am really proud of our football team. I told the guys all week that I know the character and resolve of that (Buccaneer) locker room, and that we were going to get a great shot from them. They came out and played hard and we were in a dog fight. I am very proud of my teammates for pulling out that one."

(On returning to Tampa and hearing cheers from the crowd)

“When I came out for introductions, even prior to introductions, when we came out to warm up it was there. I just can’t tell people here how mutual the feeling is. I hope they were all cheers. I feel so great about this community and so thankful for the way they’ve treated me and my family.”

(On the Bucs touchdown)

“It’s a shame. The responsibility relies on me there that I have to tackle him I guess. But there is a new league emphasis that if you hit them while they’re lying down you will be penalized 15 yards. So I tried to do the right thing for the first time in my career and try to keep Gene Washington out of my pocket. I got burned on it but it is something that I have to do better at.”

(On the game)

“I struggled to stay focused because those are the guys that I have always played with. I am just glad that I didn’t walk into the wrong locker room when I came. I am glad I went to the right sideline. I am proud of both of these teams. This is what the NFL is all about, coming out and leaving it all on the field, and I think this was done by both teams today.”

(On his performance)

“I had a feeling that I might play well. I try to play my heart out every week. In the second half I was struggling with cramps just because I was trying to control myself.”

QB JAKE PLUMMER

(On today’s win)

“We just had to keep fighting. It was an all-around team victory when you win like that. We were able to get the ball back from our defense on a big stop after a third down after they had a big return on special teams and got the ball on the 50-yard line. The defense stopped them and we got the ball on the 10. We were able to put together a drive that would waste the rest of the clock. It was an all-around team win. On the road you have to win however you can get it done.”

(On the pass interference call in the fourth quarter)

“It was big. We had a chance to pull a double move on them, and get by them a little bit. I had a guy in my face and I threw it up there and tried to give Ashley (Lelie) a chance. He (Dwight Smith) came over and hit him early. I want to complete those plays because they are a big chunk, but it was a big move because we were in some pretty bad field position for a while. It was a big play, but Ashley knew he was going to get hit. He sacrificed his body for the team and made a good play.”

WR ROD SMITH

(On Tampa Bay’s defense)

“Those guys played hard. They fly around, are in position, and they make plays. If their offense put up more points and gave them a chance to do the things that they want to do, their defense would be ranked in the top two or three like they have been in the last few years. They are tough and they are sound. Their defensive coordinator has them in the position to make plays. The key is to keep them on the field and that is tough to do. As an offense, we wanted to pick and choose our spots but we found a way to get by them and put some points up.”

LB AL WILSON

(On his personal contact over the past week with John Lynch)

“John is a professional. John was trying to keep pretty quiet, pretty low-key, pretty mellow...So we did the same for him. We respected him for it. Before the game today we simply just said ‘Let’s go win it for John.’ Let’s go out and get this win for him because it meant a lot to him.”

(On turnovers in the game)

“That is what a team has to do. Offensively, they have to hold onto the football. Defensively, we have to get the football out. We have to find a way to do that. We have to find a way to get our offense the ball in great field position. Anytime you can come into a hostile environment and get a win, it’s a big confidence boost to our team.”

(On Michael Pittman and the Bucs running game)

“He (Pittman) ran the ball well today. They schemed and game planned us well. They had everything they wanted to do down pat. It was up to us to get them stopped. We made the stops when we needed to. We really got the job done when it came down to the wire.”

(On John Lynch’s return to Tampa)

“It was a very emotional game for him (Lynch). He didn’t want to show his emotions. We were happy to go out and get a win for him just to show his fans and his team that they should have held onto this guy. We’re definitely happy to him on our squad.”

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS  
OCTOBER 3, 2004

HEAD COACH JON GRUDEN

(On loss and injuries)

"It's a difficult loss. I am proud of our football team. They competed very hard. Denver is a good team. I credit them. Frank Murphy ruptured his Achilles tendon. He will be out for the season."

(On what happened when the Bucs had good field position with the ball)

"We had a third-and-one situation, obviously we were rejected out. We had another chance on third-and-five, the primary receiver wasn't open. Maybe we have to do a better job of calling plays or finding an outlet in that situation. It was a game of field position. Denver did a good job offensively when they had to on getting out of trouble and converting some key third downs. I thought the pass interference call was very big in the game. They knocked the ball off their own goal line twice on the road. That's very hard to do."

(On the penalty by Chartric Darby)

It's a tragic penalty, obviously. You have a chance to get the ball back with time on the clock. (A) hard count in that situation is something you work on everyday and you expect it in that situation. We have to do a better job."

(On what he told the team at halftime)

"We make a couple of adjustments. We didn't do a good job of getting the stop. We get the opening possession; we go down and put points on the board to tie the game. The message was keep pounding the rock; the nut will crack. We just keep playing together. We had some rhythm offensively against the number one defense in pro football today. I felt we put some plays together. I thought early, we had a couple of key penalties to stop drives and negate big plays. We had a fumble to negate a big play. All-in-all, we just didn't get it done today and we are all sick about it."

(On Michael Clayton)

"I think he is going to be a great player. I thought he did some good things. We were asking him to do a number of things, for a rookie; returning punts; carrying the ball; being a go-to-guy. Being a rookie, I am so excited for him and his future. It's going to be a fun project to watch unfold."

(On losing)

"You play a good team like Denver, you can't make many mistakes. We turned the ball over one time and I don't believe we generated a turnover defensively. That's one of the pillars that we have survived on here for a long time, turnovers. We had some opportunities to get some. Once again, a credit to Denver for

protecting the football. We've lost three very, very tight games. I complement our team for competing hard."

WR MICHAEL CLAYTON

(On his touchdown)

"I'm not really concerned about the run after the catch right now. My main concern is just to catch the ball and keep the chains moving and it happened for me. We will do a drill where you have to get up after you fall down because some of the defenders are lackadaisical and you're able to make plays after and I was fortunate to get it tonight."

(On his hair cut)

"I had my barber come out this week and tighten me up this week; I didn't know I would cross the goal line with my hat off, but that's not important. The most important thing is us getting a victory in New Orleans next week."

(On the touchdown)

"We definitely prepared for it all week and got the perfect coverage. It was supposed to be an outside play but he played me to the outside. I went inside and Brad made a heck of a throw. We connected and executed well on that play."

(On not being hit by John Lynch on the touchdown play)

"I know it was just me and the corner on that route. When you get the perfect coverage, it's just me on the route and I'm thankful that he didn't hit me. He came up to me and tapped me and said, 'Man, that's how the league is.' He probably could have gotten fined for hitting me, but it turned out to our best. It allowed us to get a touchdown and we wished that could have sparked us a little bit. We fell short a couple of drives, but we have to stay positive."

(On his celebration after scoring the touchdown)

"Hopefully, we would get a chance to win. We're just begging for stuff to go our way. We execute in practice but just can't get over that hump in the game. But, we feel it coming. We feel that it's coming. The season is not over. This is the first quarter and we're not looking back. We have a whole new season ahead of us."

QB BRAD JOHNSON

(On the game)

"It is a tough game for all of us to lose. We have one of the best defenses in the league."

(On the fourth quarter)

“We did some good things today but we need to convert on third and short. The fourth quarter was tough on them as well. They made one great play to keep the drive alive on the pass interference call. They scored the points that they had to.”

(On third-and-four late in the game)

“We took a shot down the sidelines and did not come away with it and they closed the game out.”

(On Bucs RB Michael Pittman)

“It was great to see Mike in the game. The pass interference call early with the pass down the sidelines hurt. He really hit the hole well today. He really added some explosion.”

(On Bucs WR Michael Clayton)

“He was making some tremendous catches. He does not make the same mistake twice. He is going to be a Buccaneer for a long time.”

(On the team)

“We have to stick together and keep fighting.”

(On Broncos S John Lynch)

“He deserves the respect. You can’t ask for a better player or person.”

(On the Bucs record)

“We have had four close games and have not come away with a win. We need to keep working and making plays. We need to keep fighting and get better.”

S JERMAINE PHILLIPS

(On playing against John Lynch)

“Right now, every game is emotional, but it was exciting seeing John on the other side.”

(On learning from Lynch)

“He really helped me with my hitting and scheming. In general, he helped me to be the best player I can and be as quick as I can.”

(On Lynch being the motivation behind his big hits)

“Anytime I come on the field, I am trying to knock someone’s head off. Anytime, I have that opportunity I try and take advantage of it. I wasn’t thinking about number 47 on the other side, I was just thinking of helping my team to get a victory.”

(On seeing Lynch on the other side)

“It was hard at first, but once they announced the starting lineups he was just another player on the other team. I talked to him yesterday before they flew here and wished him good luck, wished him well, and asked how his family was.”

(On Michael Clayton)

“He’s a bright spot. He’s growing up before our eyes and he going to be a great receiver down the line.”

RB MICHAEL PITTMAN

(On how he felt getting back to playing)

“It just felt good to be back out there but I am disappointed we did not win the game.”

(On whether he can put a finger on one area that contributed to the loss)

“No, you never do that. We win together and lose together. There is no finger pointing on this team. We sputtered a bit in the red zone. We couldn’t get the ball in. There were some penalties, fumbles and big plays called back and we just couldn’t get the plays we needed.”

(On how he contributed)

“I was just trying to do my best and help the offense and supply a spark to this team. I guess I didn’t do enough because we didn’t win.”

(On the 0-4 record)

“Some guys are down a bit but we’re not going to give up of course. We’re going to fight together. There won’t be any finger pointing. We are just going to keep pressing to get better. We know we have a good team. We’ve lost three really close games, it’s just that one play that will turn it around that we aren’t getting it. We are just looking to win the next four and get back to .500.”