

**January 16, 2004**

**NFC FINALS**  
**Carolina Panthers at Philadelphia Eagles**  
**Pre-Game Day Press Conference**

**An Interview With:**

**COREY SIMON**

*Q. When N.D. went down this morning did any part of you say, oh, no, here we go again?*

COREY SIMON: N.D. went down this morning? I thought he was just taking a break, (laughs), got a little tired out there. We have come to the point in the season now where we just don't worry about things like that. We have lost enough guys to -- it's part of the game, so we don't really focus on that, we're not worried about that issue. We'll have our full compliment of players on Sunday.

*Q. Amount of yardage you guys have given up, a lot of talk about the Carolina defense. Is that kind of a rallying cry for you guys that there's not a lot of positive things being talked about the Eagle's defense?*

COREY SIMON: To be honest with you, doesn't really matter to us. You guys had something to say all season long, so what is the difference now? Why change? You guys might as well stay consistent. Seems like all the negative press that we have gotten earlier in the season has paid off. We're going to continue to go out there and focus in on our job and focus in on this team. We're not really concerned with everything going on on the outside.

*Q. Seems like the Panthers' offense is a little bit more run-oriented beginning of the season. Now they are more diverse. What new challenges are they going to present to you that maybe you didn't face in the regular season?*

COREY SIMON: I think they passed quite a bit in the first game. You really can't really worry about what they are going to do so much. We have to focus in on our jobs, understanding what our defense is and how we play our defense. I think once we go out there and we get ourselves together and we're playing the way we know how to play, understanding the scheme and believing what the coaches have set up, everything else is just second nature. We're not going to worry about what down they pass on or run on, we're just going to go out there and focus in on our jobs.

*Q. We have heard some interesting things here this afternoon but nobody said word one about the weather. You guys try to make yourselves oblivious about the weather? How do you approach it?*

COREY SIMON: Can't control it. Why worry about things you can't control? It is kind of like injuries. There's no point to make a big deal about it.

*Q. Gotten a lot of support from your teammates that are injured, that won't be able to play?*

COREY SIMON: We understand -- those guys have been with us all season long. They haven't disappeared. They are still around. So those guys know exactly what is at stake and they come in, they are just as pumped up as we are. They are still a very integral part of what we do around here. So it's not like when those guys get hurt they are not a part of the Philadelphia Eagles anymore. They want it just as bad as we do.

*Q. When you reacted to that question about the weather a minute ago, I am curious do you think that because you are up here that that's of any advantage to you or is it just neutral; that's a hassle for everybody?*

COREY SIMON: When it comes to the weather, everybody is cold, especially the weather these last few days, I mean, it's been brutally cold. Heck, I am from Florida and so, (laughs) you know, it's freezing. But like I said, we can't worry about that and nor do we care to worry about that. There's enough problems at the Carolina Panthers that they can give us, you know, why sit back and worry about things we can't control. We can control how we play defense and we can control how we tackle, how we do the fundamental things to help us win ballgames.

*Q. (Inaudible)?*

COREY SIMON: My whole view on the 0-2 start was it was 0-2. It's a long season. 16 games and 0-2, I mean, big deal. I mean, we would love to have those two games back, but the fact remains what would it change at this point in the season? Not a thing. We're still the No. 1 seed in the Playoffs. We still have had home-field advantage throughout the Playoffs. So it hasn't really changed anything. If anything, it's made us

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stronger as a team. Because it's brought us closer together, because we understand that everybody on the outside thinks we shouldn't be here. We're coming into Playoff atmosphere the No. 1 seed and everybody is giving us reasons why we're going to lose last week. So you know it really doesn't -- it wasn't a factor.

*Q. Having seen these guys once and seen the film on the St. Louis game. Your impression of their running game no matter what back is in there?*

COREY SIMON: They have a tremendous running game. Even **Stephen Davis**, if he plays, that's just -- that's another weapon, that's another bullet in their gun. But DeShaun Foster does an outstanding job. I think he's a little faster around the corner. He's able to hit those edges. The guy is -- he's strong. They are very similar in their styles. I think he's a little faster but I think **Stephen Davis** has that experience and experience is sometimes a factor that you can't account for. You know what, it's going to be a Playoff -- it's Playoff time and so you know, you are going to expect the best shot from everybody that you play against on every play, and so we're not really, you know, we know that we're going to have to go out there and play our best ballgame to win this week.

*Q. The fact that you think -- people have kind of discredited your team along the way, is that good for you guys that you are an underdog ---*

COREY SIMON: Like I said, at this point in the season, none of that really matters. If you can't get hyped up, if you can't get pumped up for this game, with everything that's around for that trophy, if you can't get pumped up for that, you know, you don't need to be out there. So everything -- all the extra curricula stuff on the outside, the chip on your shoulder, this person said this, this person said that, you know, it means absolutely nothing. If you need that to get your blood flowing, then you are in the wrong game.

*Q. One sack as a team two years ago against the Rams, none last year against Tampa Bay. How did the lack of pressure on the quarterback factor into the results of those two games?*

COREY SIMON: It's always huge. You always want to get into a quarterback's face, always want to force him into mistakes. And so that's our job. That's what we do. And we haven't done it very well over the last couple of years in the NFC Championship games. So that has to be something that we're going to have to really bear

down and get done this week to be successful as a team.

*Q. Expect **Stephen Davis** to play?*

COREY SIMON: You know what, it's Playoff time. I don't expect anybody to be hurt on Sunday. The Playoffs is that wonder drug. You understand that, you know what, if you don't come out there and play this week you may not be playing next week. So we're fully expecting **Stephen Davis** to play. If he doesn't, we still have to go out there and play to our capabilities to be successful.

*Q. What you were just saying before, did you not take it personally what Coach Vox said about you lose this game here --*

COREY SIMON: We were disrespected, okay, fine. Still got to play the game. Game has still got to be played. You know when, I line up on the other side of that guy, I am not thinking about what Coach Vox is saying, or what he said. I am thinking about trying to do whatever I can to help this team win. So ultimately when it comes down to everything, when it gets to the fourth quarter, I guarantee you nobody is thinking about what a coach said because he's not out there playing.

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