

January 20, 2006



An Interview With:

JAKE DELHOMME CAROLINA PANTHERS

Q. (Inaudible.)

JAKE DELHOMME: Absolutely nothing. I'll do the same thing. The regular season, postseason, pretty much preseason, also. I won't change.

I learned a routine a while back from a veteran quarterback, and I'm sure he learned it from a veteran. And I'm happy with it, and I stick with it. I don't change it.

Q. How is the Seattle defense different than the last two weekends you faced?

JAKE DELHOMME: I think the **Giants** game we knew they were banged up with the linebacker core. And last week going against Chicago, we knew we were going to see one of the better defenses in the NFL. We knew we'd get one-on-one opportunities. And we had to be smart with the ball. This team is a little different in my opinion because it just seems like they're young and sound.

Q. Coach Fox came in and called you and Steve Smith the odd couple, why do you think that is?

JAKE DELHOMME: We probably are. We're different. We're two different guys, but yet we get along great, on and off the field. There's a certain amount of respect.

I have a great deal of respect for him as a father first, as a husband, and football player. Hopefully he feels the same way about me. We expect big things from each other. I know I expect great things out of him. Hopefully he does the same thing out of me. He's a special player, we all know that. We have a great relationship. It's a give-and-take. We're two different guys, but I think we both want the same thing and we both want to go about it the right way.

Q. Can you explain how you guys are two different guys?

JAKE DELHOMME: Well, I'm a little more reserved than him off the field. On the field, I get pretty animated. But he's a very -- I don't want to say brash -- but a confident person, and he'll tell you if he doesn't like it. And he means it. Maybe I try to be a little more courteous. Smitty will tell you straight up, that's me. That's the guy we know. That's the guy we love. I'm over six feet, he's under six feet, that's another thing. I'm not fast, he's fast, that could be another one. We're different, yet we're a lot alike in some things.

Q. Jake, Steve certainly isn't going to sneak up on Seattle after the two games he's had this far postseason. How do you expect them to try and stop him?

JAKE DELHOMME: In watching them, they do play a safety over the top and the corner rolled up against some players. They did it somewhat last week against **Santana Moss**. Teams have tried that and done that, if that happens, we need to be able to run the football effectively. That's the key in any game. If you get in the playoffs and play sound defense, and run the ball effectively and have success, guys have to commit more people to the box. When that happens, there's one-on-one opportunities and you have to make the most of it.

Q. It seems as though the coach's mantra has run the ball, stop the run, how do you see that coming into effect in the playoffs?

JAKE DELHOMME: I think that's what playoff football, in my opinion, is all about. I'm not a big veteran when it comes to playoff experience, this is only my second time being in it. But that's how you win successfully in the NFL. I believe in this scheme, everybody else does. And we see it. When you can run effectively and they have the play action fakes, they make the linebackers come up and it holds the safety sometimes. It opens up for everyone else. That's the key in football. I don't think there's any doubt Seattle is a pretty good football team. And a lot has to do with **Shaun Alexander** and their line, because they can

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run the football. And Matt Hasselbeck will kill you. They run the ball effectively, and he's effective in throwing.

Q. Is it easier for an East Coast team to make a West Coast team than the other way?

JAKE DELHOMME: I haven't done it the other way, but I think it's easier traveling to the West Coast. But I'll be honest with you, this time of year it doesn't matter. You find whatever ounce you have inside of you, and you prepare, and you're ready to go. This doesn't happen often. And you just go on adrenalin. That's what it was two years ago for us, and I feel that's what it is now. You just have a little nick here, a little nick there, but you've got to go. This doesn't happen often. Last year I was home a good three weeks already. And this beats it.

Q. (Inaudible.)

JAKE DELHOMME: I think two years ago we were known, speaking from an offensive standpoint as a running team, and we evolved as a passing team. I think this year we start off better as a throwing team. And our running game picked up. I think there's some similarity. That's how we are different, I should say. Defensively, I think we're sound. A solid defense, good, strong special teams, and defense the same way this year. So that team had success because that team knew how to prepare. That team didn't think they were better than what they were. They just worried about doing their job. This team carries a lot of the same thing. We have a coach who harps on that, and we believe in it and we listen to it.

Q. With the success you guys have had on the road, how do you keep that momentum going that's obviously working for you when you don't have that home field advantage, and those fans backing you the way you would?

JAKE DELHOMME: I think the big thing when you go on the road is it's a business trip, but you've got each other, and that's it. There's something about traveling and just -- you're just with your guys, we're going to be locked up in a hotel, that's the way it should be. There's going to be meetings, but it's going to be total focus. There's not any other distractions or anything else like that. And when you get on that field, it's going to be loud. You look around, that's all you've got is these guys around you. It's just a total -- if we wanted to play home, we should have been better during the regular season. You can look at it that way. We weren't. We have to travel. That's the road we have to take. I'm glad we're able to get on

that road. That's the biggest thing, you just want to get in. How you get to the big show, you've got to play good football. It doesn't matter if it's home or away, it's who makes more plays. That's how we look at it.

Q. How important is it for you guys to stay the course of what you've been doing, not going out a day early. You're a creature of habit, can you give your take on that?

JAKE DELHOMME: If we have to go out a day early, we have to expect it. It's nice to know we'll stay on our same schedule. We'll leave a little early tomorrow morning, and instead of being in meetings, we'll catch it on the back end. You get routine oriented, you don't change, you don't waiver from it, and that's what we do over here. We don't change much from our routine. As a player, I like it. I'm a big routine guy. And we're not going to change much except flying out a little earlier. It will be only one night away instead of two.

Q. Do you agree with coach that you guys thrive off getting booed coming out of the tunnel?

JAKE DELHOMME: I think you ask any athlete, there's something about it. We sat in the tunnel for a while in New York, and you could hear some of the fans really getting after it, and there's something about it. And in Chicago last week, the same thing. We're stuck in that tunnel. And just to see the fans getting after it, they're so happy for their team and ready to go. It brings -- it's the whole atmosphere of it. There's just something about it. You know there's nobody else but the coaches and the players and that's it. And you've just got to focus in and get it done.

Q. How much did Nick Goings success last year give confidence that he can carry the same load?

JAKE DELHOMME: It gives us a ton of confidence not only to myself, the coaches and the players. And you can take a poll on this team, who is probably the most -- I don't want to say under appreciated, because we appreciate him, but he's a guy who everybody wants to do well, and he's going to do well. And he's done well on every opportunity. He had opportunities in the New York game and did great. And the last week, the second half we lose **DeShaun Foster** early. We feel great about Nick. We saw what he did last year, the last part of the season. Hopefully as an offense we can play well and give him

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opportunities, but we know we have a tough task in Seattle. It's going to be tough, but I know Nick is going to be ready.

Q. Why have you and Steve been able to raise your level so much in the playoffs, instead of the regular season?

JAKE DELHOMME: I couldn't answer that. This is why you play. This is it. And the big thing I always tell myself is just be me. I'm not trying to be anybody else. I know the thing with **Smitty**, he wants to be great in big games. And I don't know if he raises his level of play, because I think he's like that every week, but he wants it. He wants to be that guy. And I think it's evident the way he plays. I think a lot of our guys are like that. But I don't have an answer for you. I just feel we understand -- I think I understand it, because it took me so long to get in this League. You better make sure you make the most of it. And I think he really wants to do well because he lost last year. He lost the whole year of going into the season of expecting great things. So we realize how special this game is to us. It's done some great things for not only me as a player, but my family, and things like that. I mean it's we get compensated for what we do, we get compensated nicely. I like what we do. I like to have fun. And I think he's the same way. If you do something, you might as well try to be good at it.

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