

A GLIMPSE OF HOPE: PANTHERS FANS LOOK AHEAD TO WEEK 2 AFTER TOUGH WEEK 1

A Weekly Delusional Outlook by a Desperate Panther's Fan



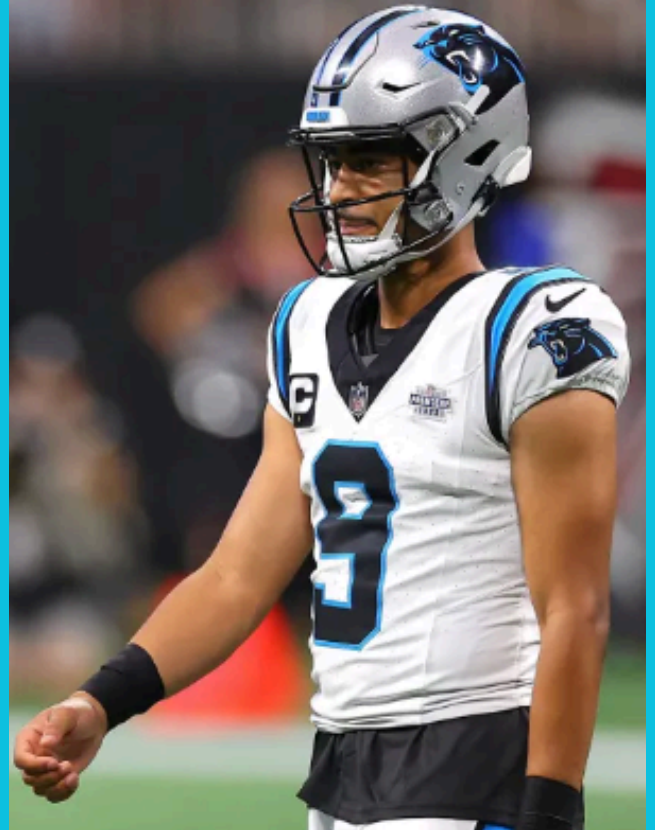
MAC AKA YABOY

The Carolina Panthers kicked off their 2024 NFL season with a disappointing 47-10 loss to the New Orleans Saints in Week 1. Quarterback Bryce Young struggled, throwing two interceptions and completing just 13 of 30 passes for 161 yards and two interceptions. Cornerback Mike Jackson led the defense with 7 total tackles, while outside linebacker Eku Leota recorded a sack and four tackles in the loss.

The Panthers' offensive struggles continued from last year as they managed only 11 first downs and 295 total yards. Bryce Young received no help from the Panther's ground game as they only managed to rush for 58 yards on the ground off of a combined 20 attempts, with Young rushing for the teams lone touchdown for the day. All the buzz surround the acquisition of former Steeler wide receiver, Diontae Johnson seemed to be all for naught as he only ended up with 2 catches for 19 yards, and rookie Xavier Legette out of South Carolina ended up with 4 catches for 35 yards. Stat lines that do no justice to the hype these two had coming into the season.

Defensively, the Panthers were no better giving up 379 yards of total offense which included 200 yard through the air for Derek Carr to go along with three touchdowns. Carr was surgical going 19/23 as he rarely felt pressured and took the Panthers' defense apart. Alvin Kamara seemed to have gotten his swagger back rushing for 83 yards and one touchdown on 15 carries.

The poor performance across all three phases of the game brings up a plethora of questions, but the one on everyone's mind is: Did the Panthers set themselves back taking Bryce Young with the 1st pick in 2023? To that, you can't blame anyone if they answer 'yes'. Anyone with functioning optical devices could see that he looked just as bad, if not worse, than he did a year ago. Young was sacked four times in the loss on Sunday, but three of those sacks came from Saints defensive back Alontae Taylor. The interior line held up well regarding protecting the second year QB, but had trouble trying to create running lanes for the backfield. Guards Robert Hunt (5 year \$100M) and Damien Lewis (4 year \$53M) seemed to be solid pick ups, but the lack of blitz recognition by the line, and Bryce Young will continue to haunt them unless they figure something out.



Looking ahead to their week two matchup with the Los Angeles Chargers, the Panthers have their work cut out for them. Their lack of pressure on Derrick Carr isn't a good sign when the Chargers are coming in with stand out rookie tackle Joe Alt on the line who held his own against the Raiders' All Pro defensive end Maxx Crosby, allowing only one sack on pressure in 29 pass-blocking snaps. Also, new HC Jim Harbaugh seems to have his team sold on the running game as QB Justin Herbert took a backseat to newly acquired RB JK Dobbins who rushed for 135 yards on only 10 carries.



Here's to hoping that the Panther's O-line put in some work this week in practice, and Bryce and his WR's worked on some quick routes when blitzes are picked up. As far as the running game, I hope we lean on it a bit more seeing how Joey Bosa and Khalil Mack are on the other side of the ball and would want nothing more than to help Panthers fans and everyone else in sports media, continue to question if Bryce Young was a mistake.