



Josh.Rupprecht@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jennifer.Rojas@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jamaal.LaFrance@chargers.nfl.com

Brock.Anderson@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Danny.Markino@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jordan.Colquitt@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Leonie.Strehl@chargers.nfl.com

Chargers Media Availability

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HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On an injury update regarding DL Sebastian Joseph-Day:

“Sebastian [Joseph-Day] has an MCL sprain. We will know a little bit more, in terms of his status for this week, in the next few days.”

On additional injury updates following yesterday’s game:

“[G] Zion [Johnson] had a shoulder injury. He was able to come back. He’s going to be day-to-day. [CB] Bryce Callahan has a core muscle injury, and he kind of had one going into the game. He was a competitor and gave it a go for us. He’s going to be day-to-day with that.”

On if Callahan’s injury ‘will require surgery’:

“It is not, not at this point. No.”

On injury updates regarding C Corey Linsley, T Trey Pipkins III and WR Mike Williams:

“Corey [Linsley] is progressing through the concussion protocol. Trey [Pipkins III] is still day-to-day with his knee. He’s trying to work back. Mike [Williams] is day-to-day with his ankle. I think that you should see him, at some point, in practice this week. [TE] Donald Parham [Jr.] will return to practice this week off of his hamstring.”

On the ‘pressure rate’ that the offense has been experiencing and ‘how much of that is related to running the ball and injuries along the offensive line’:

“I think that all of those are contributing. I think that there’s a formula there that you mentioned. I think the cumulative effect of all those factors adds up to the pressure. I think that being behind in the game — late in the game, when you’re having to work your way back, when you’re down 24-13 — that’s a contributing factor. At the beginning of that ball game, I think you could tell that their gameplan was to try and heat it up and force people to be on islands a little bit. I thought that we adjusted well throughout the game and made some good protection adjustments as the game went on. I liked the communication, in terms of how we were able to get that done. There has been pressure the last three weeks, that’s for sure, but I think that [QB] Justin has done a good job of protecting the football. I’ve mentioned that in other weeks, but I think it has been a bright spot for us. We’ve been able to protect the football and stay out of those killer takeaways that just give you no chance. We’re going to keep working hard at it, keep working on our mixture of run and — the types of passes, the type of runs. We’re trying to take pressure off of the O-line the best we can. That’s such a big part of what we try to do here. We’re going to keep working hard at it as we go, try to get some guys healthy on the O-line and keep it moving.”

On 'rectifying how opposing defenses respect the run game':

"I think you have to try to feature premium looks. You have to try to play premium hands in the run game. Then, the types of runs that are available, pairing that with advantage passing looks. Then, the different types of passes that change the launch point, or change the type of protection — if it is more of a drop-back protection or play-action protection — kind of change the math and how you do it. But, it's still going to come down to timing and rhythm and blocking people. At the end of the day, you still have to block people. There have been some tough matchups. [Raiders DE] Maxx [Crosby] and [Raiders DE] Chandler [Jones], those guys are a very, very high-level NFL tandem. The week before, you're talking about [Cardinals DE] J.J. Watt and some of those blitzers; [Cardinals OLB] Markus Golden and those guys — [Chiefs DT] Chris Jones and [Chiefs DE] Frank Clark and [49ers DE Nick] Bosa. We're playing against some good people, too. For sure, there has been a lot of pressure. The facts are that there has been a lot of pressure the last three weeks and we need to continue to improve our overall production in that phase."

On areas where the defense could have improved in the passing game:

"I think finishing plays. [Raiders WR Davante Adams] had some big-time finishes in the game. We were over and under [in coverage] on almost every rep. The flea-flicker was the one exception to that. The one on [CB] Asante [Samuel Jr.], the double-move, it's a one-handed catch in the end zone. But, otherwise, when you watch that movie — if you already haven't watched the game copy — we're over and under [in coverage] the whole way. There are only so many different types of over and under [coverage] that you can play, and we played pretty much every type of one that you can. You still have to have numbers in the run game. You still have to be able to take care of 28 [Raiders RB Josh Jacobs]. I thought that [Adams] made some plays that he makes. Asante [Samuel Jr.] fell down at the end of the first half, which we were over and under [in coverage] — [S] Derwin [James Jr.] was over the top of him, [Samuel] was underneath of him. That was a big chunk. The one in the end zone off of the double-move, it's like, 'Get back in the huddle.' I loved the way that Asante competed in that phase. The flea-flicker is a specialty play. If Bryce's wheel was right, you'd like to think that Bryce would make that, but we should probably have another backstop there. We have a half-field safety, but he ended up playing No. 1 [receiver] off of the flea-flicker. Give credit to them on that. If you watch the tape, we're on him. He made some good plays."

On the final fourth-down pass attempt:

"They were playing a double-double coverage on [WR] Josh [Palmer] and [WR] Keenan [Allen], so the ball has to go to the outside there with [WR] DeAndre [Carter]. We had 9 [-routes] on the outside, then a middle read inside. They played double-double [coverage] on Keenan and Josh, so the ball went exactly where it should have. We were just inches short there."

On 'explosive touchdowns allowed' yesterday to Adams:

"17 is a really good player. He made some plays yesterday. The touchdown run from [Josh] Jacobs was poor setup, we weren't aligned right to the tight end side of the formation, which was a disappointing one. It's just going to come down to covering and tackling better. It certainly changes the game when you give them up. That was the story yesterday, the explosions, because there were a lot of really good plays there in the heart of that game, but the big ones were big for them yesterday."

On an update regarding OLB Joey Bosa's recovery timeline:

"Status quo."

On if 'the keeper game' was in the gameplan:

"We had elements of that in the plan, the movement game, yesterday, but they play wide with their rushers, and they are also a huge perimeter blitz team — they bring the nickel a lot off of the edge. So, that can be discouraging in some of the keeper games. That had a lot to do with just the amount of it. We had a fair amount of move-the-pocket yesterday, but you have to know who you're playing against, too. Their edges are wider and they bring the nickel a lot, so that can be discouraging for the keeper game."

On if he 'spoke with' Raiders DL Jerry Tillery following the game yesterday:

"No, I did not talk to him after the game. I thought that he played a good game for them yesterday. I don't have much more to add on that."

On if he 'received an explanation' on the third-and-nine pass attempt to WR Keenan Allen in the fourth quarter that did not draw a penalty:

"I did not. I did think that he got, obviously, pulled down."

On the pass rush's performance yesterday:

"When it was known-pass, I thought that we had some good stuff in the interior, between [LB] Kyle [Van Noy] and [OLB] Khalil [Mack]. I thought that Foxy [DL Morgan Fox] did a couple of good things. A lot of the other stuff was just blocked up. Obviously, not good enough yesterday, but we had our opportunity. I would like to have seen the opportunities if we had had a two-score lead in the second half, where we were able to really rush them, but our four-man rush plan did not get there, that's for sure."

On the impact of being able to score after taking the ball away from an opposing offense:

"I think that when you can have the advantage off of a takeaway — when we fake a punt, things like that, where that's kind of a change of a possession — you have your opportunities to really separate in the NFL. I think that that is something that we haven't been able to do yet this season — truly separate to where you can look at that score and it's 21-3 at the beginning of the second half, then you go down and score and it's 21-10. Instead, you fumble. I think that we have missed on our opportunities to separate this year. That's why these games have been tight, as you know. You've been at these movies, they're tight. I know that we're trying hard. It's just going to come down to execution. We have to execute as a unit. We have to capitalize on our opportunities. Then, you have to make the winning plays. We haven't been able to do that yet consistently. We've been able to do it, at times, but we haven't been able to do it consistently. Those are the things that we have to learn to do as a team, to feed off of each other. It's the same way offensively. When they have a big-time touchdown, defensively, we have to have a three-and-out stop or a takeaway. Feeding off of each other in that way. We have to continue to search to play like that. It's been inconsistent, but we're, obviously, committed in trying to change that."

On DB Ja'Sir Taylor's performance on defense yesterday:

"He was calm. We have confidence in him. He can play outside or inside for us. He's a good tackler. He is smart. We have confidence in him as a player. You guys have seen what he has done on special teams. If he goes in there, we think he is fully capable. I think he had six to eight plays in the game, that's what I have written down, but he did fine. He played solid."

On offensive adjustments in the second half:

"I have full confidence in the plays that we are going to be running and how we are trying to attack an opponent, trying to set things up. I have confidence in that. Our execution hasn't been good enough, like you have talked about. I think this last game, just speaking from yesterday, we felt really good coming out of the half. We hit a screen and it splits for a first down, and then you fumble. That kind of inhibits your progress, for sure. We had a really good drive going on our second possession. It stalls out and we miss a field goal. We kind of felt like we had a lot of good plays up in that third quarter, but you come up empty. Then, you look up and it's 24-13, and a lot of those plans that you had in place, they have to change. We have to work hard to finish football games, finish football games playing our best. I felt like, in the Arizona game, we did that, where we finished the game playing at a high level. We gave ourselves a chance in this game. I thought that, offensively, we got it going in the fourth quarter of this game, but in the third quarter, all of those plays that we had that were positive plays, they didn't end up in any points for us, and that is where we have to have that high level of execution to score points. It hasn't been good enough."

On his message to the team today regarding playoff standings:

"They know where we are at in the AFC. They are aware that there are two teams with nine [wins], two teams with eight [wins]. Then, there are a couple of teams with seven [wins]. Then, there are two teams with six [wins]. We are a game out right now and we are playing a team with eight wins this week; a team that is a good football team, a team that played a team that we played recently. It's about this week. You guys have heard me say it after the bye week, the games do mean more as you go on. Every week, they are going to mean more and more because you are getting closer to the end, and there is a lot at stake in terms of positioning, but you have to pour yourself into that week and that's where our focus is, it's on Miami. My focus is on getting our team back physically, getting a couple of players back, and having a good week of practice and finding out how to win this game. That's what our approach is going to be this week."

WIDE RECEIVER JOSHUA PALMER

On Head Coach Brandon Staley's message to the team today:

"Just that we need to win the rest of these games. The playoffs for us really started last week. Just locking into the details and doing our individual jobs to the best of our abilities. Just focusing on the team, but at the same time focusing on our task individually."

On the growth of QB Justin Herbert over the last two seasons:

"Just small things like small adjustments within the play call or checking certain plays. Playing one-on-one or two-on-two on the outside of the receivers or in the inside with the receivers. I feel like we're doing a better job with that."

On if Herbert 'has improved in the mental side of being a quarterback':

"Yes."

On takeaways from the performance of Raiders WR Davante Adams:

"Yeah, he made some pretty big plays for them at the end, especially that one-handed catch that was out of bounds, but I was more impressed with [WR] Keenan [Allen]'s one-handed catch for a touchdown, honestly."

On the second half against Las Vegas:

"They definitely had the momentum in the second half, but we just have to roll with the punches. Like I said earlier, just have to focus on our individual jobs, do that to the best of our abilities and making sure that we are all on the same page. Making sure that we are all seeing the same things across the field."

On if there was a feeling that the team could come back in the second half:

"I think we have done it like four times this season already, being from behind. We were confident that we were going to score that touchdown and then come back and score again. Unfortunately, it didn't go our way, but we don't really flinch as a team. We can't be shooting ourselves in the foot with just the small little details, especially in the receiver room. We have to do our part to help the team win as much as we can."

On his performance since the bye week:

"Yeah, I guess so. I have just been doing a better job of being in the right places. Making sure I am being available for Justin [Herbert] in the game and practice. Just being on the same page. It's been helping a lot. We have been having a couple bad stretches, a couple bad series in the last few games, but I feel like the receivers, as a whole, we have just been working with the quarterback a lot more. We have been kind of backing up each other, in terms of having each other's backs and knowing what we want each other to do. Yeah, we still have our divots here and there, but I feel for the most part, we're starting to turn this thing around and be on the same page."

On the message teammates are saying to each other:

"We know we have to win. That's pretty much it. We know we have to win the rest of our games if we want to make it to the playoffs. Like I said earlier, our playoffs started last week. We just have to do our jobs."

On if he and WRs Keenan Allen and Mike Williams can be a 'lethal trio':

"We saw a glimpse of it against Kansas City in the first two series. Unfortunately, Mike [Williams] went down, but I feel like once we get everybody back together, it will definitely boost the offense, for sure."