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Chargers Week 7 Media Availability

Wednesday, October 19, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On his evaluation of the Seahawks' offense:

"A very well-coordinated group. [Seahawks Offensive Coordinator] Shane Waldron is their offensive coordinator, who I worked with at the Rams. He's doing an outstanding job with that team. They have a lot of weapons. I don't think it's a surprise, based on the players they have, just start with their wide receiver tandem — [Seahawks WR DK] Metcalf and [Seahawks WR Tyler] Lockett are as good of a tandem that you're going to face. I've had to face them. Tyler's been such an outstanding player for so long. He's a clutch player, a guy that can move around. He can make a lot of big plays in a lot of different places. Metcalf is one of the premier receivers in the game. His size and speed is rare. He can access the top shelf of the coverage. He presents a lot of challenges in isolation. Run after catch; if he catches it, he's a tough guy to bring down because he's so big. Then, he has enough gas to take it out the back door and finish it. A very big-time wide-receiver tandem. Then, [Broncos WR Dee] Eskridge, the guy that they drafted a few years ago out of Western Michigan, he's a guy that we did a lot of work on. He's having an outstanding season. Their receivers are really good. With them onboarding [Seahawks TE] Noah [Fant] in the trade, their tight end group is really, really good. [Seahawks TE Will] Dissly, I've played against him a bunch. He's an outstanding Y tight end. Noah can do it all. They play three tight ends. They have [Seahawks TE Colby] Parkinson, who they play, from Stanford, who is a big guy and allows them to do a lot of things. It was unfortunate that [Broncos RB Rashaad] Penny went down, but they have, essentially, two first-round backs with [Broncos RB] Kenneth Walker [III], the rookie who I know that they love and is having an outstanding season. They have a very, very complete skill group. The thing about [Seahawks QB] Geno [Smith] is that Geno has played a lot of football. He was a former high [draft] pick. He's been around the NFL and he's been in that system now for two years. You can see that he has full command over it. I don't think that it is a surprise that they are scoring the ball because they have the pieces to score the ball. I think that Geno is doing an outstanding job distributing, taking care of the football and really leading that group. A very, very tough cover and a very, very impressive group."

On the Seahawks' offensive line:

"The rookies, we did a lot of work on those guys, too — [Seahawks T] Charles Cross and [Seahawks T] Abe Lucas. Those guys have done a really nice job. It's not an easy position to transition to, but to get two rookies in the trade that you feel like are quality players, now setting up your future, I thought that that was a really good move on their part. Then, [Seahawks C] Austin Blythe, their center, is a guy that I was with when I was with the Rams. He's a real commander and I think he has given that group a lot of leadership, a lot of toughness. [Seahawks G] Gabe Jackson and [Seahawks G] Damien Lewis have played a lot of football. You have a line that has a little bit of everything and a tight end group that can really affect the run game and the passing game. A very, very good offensive group. It's come together, they've played against some good defenses and they put up a lot of points, a lot of yards."

On Smith's passer rating this season and 'elements of his success':

"I think that [Smith] is playing with really good rhythm, rhythm and timing. You don't see him hanging on to the ball for very long, in terms of knowing exactly where he wants to go with the football. I think that Shane [Waldron] is doing a great job getting that guy in rhythm, allowing him to progress quickly. He's doing a great job, like Shane always has, with the keeper, play [-action] pass game, RPOs. Then, they have a lot of playmakers that get open, that create separation. Geno is doing a good job of playing and rhythm and timing. He's been very accurate with the football. He's one of those, I think, really cool NFL stories of a guy that has really taken the road less traveled and is making the most of this opportunity."

On if Smith is experiencing 'a resurrection' with the Seahawks:

"Geno [Smith], certainly, was going to be a higher [draft] pick. He has an outstanding career at West Virginia. I think that he has all the tools to be a successful quarterback. Sometimes, in today's NFL, people don't want to be patient with young players. Sometimes it takes the right environment, the right group of coaches, the right group of players to bring out the best in the quarterback, and I can cite a bunch of examples in NFL history of an NFL player taking a little bit more time. I think, nowadays, you don't get that time. Geno has been fortunate to do a good job of staying in the NFL because he's such a quality player. He took advantage of his time as a backup. When you get a chance to go compete for a job, you're ready for it. The skillset, in terms of his ability to throw the football, his size, speed and playmaking ability, that's what made him a high pick. Now, you have almost 10 years' worth of wisdom of the NFL. Now, you're seeing a guy that's playing really fast. Credit to him for hanging tough, and then, for now, making the most of his opportunity in proving that he's an animal starter."

On working with young players through the development:

"It's an excellent point. I think that you have to have alignment within your organization. You have to have the calm in your organization and the patience of the process of what you see every day on film in practice. That's year-round, it's not just during the season. It's a year-round of what is happening. You have to have belief in your system of helping a player develop, and those timelines are all different with players. You want to try to take advantage of every year of that guy's contract and maximize it because you just never know when it's going to happen for him. I think we have several examples on our team, like you're seeing. It's tougher these days. but I think that you see that players usually don't disappoint you if you invest in them and stay with it. If they're made of the right stuff, eventually, they're going to be that player that they're capable of being."

On CB J.C. Jackson:

"J.C. [Jackson], like I said, had a tough night the other night, but we're going to make sure that we stay patient with him because he has all of the tools that we're looking for. I have to do a better job of coaching him, getting him in a comfort zone. We expect them to be out there this week, playing his brand of ball. I think that he is going to learn a lot from what happened the other night — what he needs to do with his game, what we need to do, as coaches. That's as much on me as anybody."

On if the team will 'change anything schematically' with Jackson entering this week:

"No, I don't think anything different schematically. Like I told you guys, he came here to do the job that he's doing, but I think it's just us getting him in as good of rhythm as possible. I think it's the practice time, the meeting time, the consistency of that. As you guys know, it was disrupted at the beginning of the season, and, I think, has caused a setback, in terms of his development within our team and getting him playing his game within our team. I think that there are just a lot of little things that go into that, but we're going to make sure that we have a great week of practice, starting today, and getting him to the game feeling his best."

On if Jackson will start at CB on Sunday:

"Yes, for sure."

On if he has spoken with Jackson since Monday night's game:

"Yes, for sure. This morning. We had the off day yesterday, but this morning. The conversations are the ones that we have all of the time. When you develop good relationships with people, it's not like some big pow wow, it's just, 'Hey, this is what we need to do; this is where we need to go.' Really define that plan of what we expect from you. I think that we're going to get a chance to go do it today and maximize today because there's a reason why we went and got this guy, because we believe in him. Just because it hasn't started in a Hollywood fashion doesn't mean that it's not going to end that way. What we have to do is stay with him because he has what it takes. It's our job to get him there."

On CB Michael Davis:

"It's similar to what we do with the other positions on our team. It's the same thing with Nas [S Nasir Adderley] and [S] Alohi [Gilman] last week. That's a good example. We put Mike in and he played well. This week is a new week and we're going to have to go out there on the practice field and we're going to have to earn it. That's going to be the message, just like it was last week with Nas and Lo, you're going to have to earn it. I think that's where it starts today. I think what you try to do with both guys is find exactly how it's going to happen, you're not leaving it up to chance. You're saying, 'Hey guys, this is how the week is going to go,' and I think everybody can operate a lot better that way."

On losing K Dustin Hopkins due to injury and 'how it doesn't grab headlines':

"Well, it grab headlines when it doesn't go well. It didn't grab a headline because it went well for us, just like all of the positions where your job is very impactful. Scoring the ball, your job is very impactful in terms of winning and losing. I think we've seen around the league this year, there has been a ton of kicking situations that have been in flux. I think you guys have seen that and you've seen it impact games. Fortunately, we've been through it one time with [K] Taylor [Bertolet] and I think that is hopefully going to be an edge for us that at least Taylor has time on task with our operation, wearing our colors and being out there. So, hopefully, we can take advantage of that and get him onboarded this week and in full swing. You can't say enough about Dustin and what he did the other night. You guys see it. I think when you go back and watch the game copy, you can have more appreciation of kind of the pain that he was in. Again, Taylor was able to answer the call on the road against Cleveland and we're going to expect him to do the same thing against Seattle."

On Adderley returning to the starting lineup last week:

"I thought Nas [Adderley] played really well the other night. I thought he was a real bright spot for our defense. I thought he had full command. Him and Derwin [James Jr.] back there, I thought that was one of their best games, maybe not their top game from a communication standpoint. I thought he was very active around the football. Had a couple of awesome overlaps where maybe if the ball was thrown a little better, he probably would have intercepted it. He was around the football, tackling. Again, he had great focus last week. Lo came in and did his job at a high-level last week. Like I said, competition is going to bring out the best in people. I know the storylines, and I understand them well, when you make decisions like that, the change. It's just about competition. Those guys performing to their ability. When Nas performs to his ability, he's our starting safety. It will be the same thing with J.C., that they have to perform."

On OLBs Chris Rumph II, Kyle Van Noy and Derrek Tuszka:

"Those three guys are doing really well for us. I think Kyle [Van Noy], leading the way with that group, is bringing Chris [Rumph II] along. You guys have heard me talk about Chris, and he continues to improve. Then, Derrek [Tuszka] has come in and done a nice job for us spelling those guys. Derrek had a big tackle the other night on the zone read on [Broncos QB] Russell [Wilson]. That was an outstanding, clutch play in crunch time. That was a big play, one of those plays that you look back and say, 'Man, that was a big-time play.' Like I said, it's going to be a committee approach. I think all of those guys are doing a good job. Khalil [Mack], the last game, I thought he was outstanding in the game and affected the game."

On the team's 4-2 record despite injuries:

"It's just part of the NFL. I think we don't make too much of it because that's just the way the NFL is. That's what I tell the guys; that's what the guys know is that's part of the NFL. There's a lot that happens and you have to be ready for it. It's just part of the job description. I think our guys have done a really nice job of playing together in all three phases and figuring it out. I think you've heard me say that, but week to week in this league, that's what has to happen. You treat each week like it has a life of its own. Each week, the injury report changes, you subtract some guys, you add some guys. Whatever that group is, you take it to the game and do the best you can. I think that this locker room believes in one another. I think that it's been on display through six games so far."

On Seahawks LB Uchenna Nwosu and CB Tariq Woolen and how they are contributing to their defense:

“Those first two guys you mentioned have made a lot of plays. Uchenna [Nwosu] is having an outstanding season, playing exactly the way that you guys have seen him play. A guy that I have the utmost respect for. He did such an amazing job for us last year. He’s just a complete player. He’s a playmaker. He’s doing the same things for them and playing with even more confidence because he’s earned it. Last year, his first year starting full-time, you can see that he’s playing with that type of confidence. [Seahawks DE] Shelby Harris is a guy I was with in Denver, who I think is an outstanding player. I think that group is just really coming together. [Seahawks DT] Al Woods has played a lot of ball. [Seahawks DT] Poona Ford, I know when I was with the Rams, that guy is a really hard guy to block. [Seahawks LB] Darrell Taylor on the edge was a guy that was highly regarded, that I think is really coming on. That linebacking group, I mean [Seahawks LB] Jordyn Brooks is one of the top young linebackers in the game, then [Seahawks LB] Cody Barton from Utah. That’s a really nice tandem of guys. I think what [Seahawks Executive VP of Football Operations/Head Coach] Pete [Carroll] has done a good job of in the secondary is really try and create that secondary group and the image that they believe in. I think Tariq Woolen probably represents that more than anything. When you think of a Seattle corner, you think of him. I think that you’re seeing that. I think what Pete has done a good job of is getting a team out there that he knows can win. You’ve seen it in the way he’s drafted, [Seahawks CB] Coby Bryant from Cincinnati. They re-signed [Seahawks FS] Quandre Diggs, one of the top deep safeties in the game, quarterbacking that group. They’re playing really well. They’re doing the things that Seattle has always done to make them formidable, which is attack the football, take it away, take care of it and play as a team.”

On injury updates:

“Like I told you, [WR] Keenan [Allen] and [C] Corey [Linsley] will be back in practice this week full-time. When I say full-time in practice, you will see them out there in individual [drills]. Then, just the three from the game, [TE] Donald [Parham Jr.], [RB] Josh [Kelley] and [K] Dustin [Hopkins].”

On coaching against Seahawks Executive VP of Football Operations/Head Coach Pete Carroll:

“I have a lot of respect from afar. He has stood the test of time in league. Since he’s become the head coach there, his results speak for themselves: multiple Super Bowls, countless division titles. You know what he did at USC, and you know what he did before he got to SC as a pro coach. One of the top coaches in the game. We have a lot of respect for him.”

On the possibility of placing Hopkins on the Reserve/Injured:

“Just because we have a bye week [upcoming], it won’t be an IR situation for right now.”