

Chargers Week 13 Media Availability

Thursday, December 1, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR JOE LOMBARDI

On the two-point conversion play:

“It was nice. Obviously, you get the [scout] carded look the way that you practiced it, and the best look possible. It’s a play that we have worked on a lot going back to training camp, and I have had it up in a lot of game plans. It was nice that it worked out like we hoped.”

On if QB Justin Herbert ‘is displaying more confidence’ as of late:

“I think he is playing with a lot of confidence. I think the rib injury was something that was lingering a little bit, and I think we’re past that. I think he feels good.”

On WR Keenan Allen’s return to action:

“It’s been huge. Obviously, he is one of the premier receivers in the league, so having him on the field is big. I think the first week back, he was back, but you weren’t exactly sure how healthy he was, and you felt a little better last week. I think we’re confident that he is full-go now. Having the player is a big deal, and just having the personality and the confidence in the huddle — the veteran presence — it’s big on a lot of levels.”

On Allen’s touchdown last week being his first of the season:

“You are not surprised because he hasn’t played. There’s a lot of production that he brings to this offense that, when he is missing, you feel it. Every week, it’s like, ‘Hey, we think he is going to [play], but there is a pitch count.’ There are all of these factors that go into it during the week, and you are trying to do the math in your head like, ‘All right, how much of Keenan [Allen] are we getting?’ After the last two weeks, I think we’re pretty confident we got the full package now, so that’s good.”

On the offensive line’s performance against the Cardinals’ blitz plays:

“I would say hit-and-miss. That fourth-quarter sack on third down was obviously disappointing. There are two ways you can operate. You get to the line of scrimmage, you take a look at what the defense is doing and you have a plan for how to handle it. That snap, we were trying to tempo into third down. I probably got the call in a little late. We weren’t fast enough and we weren’t slow enough to really handle it, and so we were in that no-man’s land and [C/G] Will [Clapp] kind of looked up, saw the defense, made a call, then he looked back to get the snap and the picture changed, and so we weren’t on the same page. That play, it bothers me now, but if we would have lost, that would have haunted me forever. I’m glad that we were able to have a good punt and the defense made a stand and we got a good return, and we were able to get a second chance on that. That one was disappointing. A team like that, they are going to get you a couple of times and, hopefully, you are going to get them a couple of times. It kind of balanced out, I guess, by the end of the game.”

On how the offense ‘decides to go tempo on third down’:

“What just happened the play before. Do you have the right personnel in the game? You may be in a personnel grouping where you are not able to do it. There are times where you know that a defense wants to be in dime [personnel] on third down and you are just trying to keep them from doing it. They were able to substitute because I was a little slow getting that call in. There are a number of factors; trying to keep them on their heels, maybe keep them from getting into that pressure call because they feel stressed and so they put a vanilla defense out there, which, obviously, they did a good job of being able to get to that defense in a timely fashion. There are a number of factors that go into it.”

On ‘if he would have liked to get the call in faster’:

“Yeah, they are not subbing or you catch them with 12 on the field and all of those things. I probably hesitated a little too long to get that call in and they were able to get the sub in.”

On ‘if there is a trend’ to the increasing total of sacks over the last three games:

“I think the rushers that have gotten those sacks have played a factor. [49ers DL] Nick Bosa, obviously, is a premier rusher. [Cardinals DL] J.J. Watt, I think, is a pretty good player. There is a little bit of that. Some of it has been the protection. We didn’t have an answer, like on that play we just talked about. A number of factors. Obviously, it is something we are aware of, something we are trying to avoid, and we’re working hard every week to make sure that we don’t get those four- and five-sack games.”

On WR DeAndre Carter:

“He is a guy that has been impressive since he got here. The thing that stands out about him is just toughness and smarts. He is always playing hard. He is always doing the right thing. There are two types of smarts, and he has got them both. It’s knowing what to do and then having the feel to make the adjustments based on coverage. He’s just a guy that is always in the right spot, is always doing the right thing and that makes him an easy guy to throw to. You ask about progression, he has kind of been the same way since he got here, which is a good thing.”

On Herbert’s development in operating at the line of scrimmage:

“I think he has just gotten a lot more comfortable. He is a real smart player. There is knowing what to do, and then having the confidence to be like, ‘Oh yeah, I know and I am going to do it.’ He’s a little bit of a perfectionist, so sometimes it’s like, ‘I don’t want to do the wrong thing.’ I just think that confidence of him, just like, ‘Hey, I got this and I know exactly how to handle it. This is my car. It’s not Joe’s car. It’s not the coach’s car. This is my car and I am driving it the way I want to.’ The more that we can get to that, the better. I like it. I called a play on Sunday and he shook me off. I was like, ‘Perfect. I love it.’ He knows what he wants sometimes and that makes it a lot easier to play call.”

On which play-call Herbert ‘shook off’:

“It was like an RPO [run-pass option], and he was like, ‘I don’t want to do that right now.’”

On if he saw Herbert shake his head to shake off the play call:

“I think he told one of the coaches on the sideline. They were like, ‘He doesn’t want that play.’ And I was like, ‘Awesome. Let’s go to another one.’ We ended up getting a completion on it, so it was good.”

On ‘the amount of game-planning’ the offense will do for Raiders DE Maxx Crosby:

“A ton. A ton. He is a guy that can just completely ruin your day. Just someone that we are going to be aware of. Him being on the field and where he is and what play we are running, we are taking a player like that into account every single play.”

On ‘if there is a special feeling playing in Allegiant Stadium’ after last year’s Week 18 game:

“No. Not for me, anyway. It’s a new day and a new game. A lot of different faces on both sidelines. Just trying to get this win this week.”

On 'how impressive it was for Herbert checking down to a screen pass on third-and-seven with the play clock running down':

"It was good. It was part of the play call. It's just kind of one word, one signal, in order to change it. As that clock is winding down, the more you are out there, the more comfort you have like, 'Hey, I have time to do this.' I just think that you are seeing the experience play out as he gets more time under center."

On Herbert 'scrambling more':

"You are always hoping that ball gets out and you get a completion when you call a pass play. His confidence in his health, and his ability to extend plays, has been huge. Being able to call some more quarterback sneaks on third-and-short, which we were avoiding after the injury, that has been helpful on short-yardage, as well."

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL

On preparing to defend Raiders RB Josh Jacobs:

“With their run game, they’re sticking to the plan. He is running hard. He’s being patient behind his offensive line. We have to do the same; we have to make sure that we match his tempo. If we get a little to nosy, you saw with his 86-yarder [last week] that he can hurt you. We have to be consistent and make sure that we make him try to trickle them down and not give up the home-run hitters. With our defense, being poised, not being shaken. They may hit a run here or there, but we have to make sure that we stay behind our scheme and make sure that we’re sticking with our plan.”

On preparing to defend both Jacobs and Raiders WR Davante Adams:

“It’s always a challenge when you go against them. [Raiders Head Coach] Josh McDaniels does a great job of complementing. They’re going to stick to the run game, be patient with that. We have to make sure that, at the same time, we’re still taking care of Davante [Adams] — knowing where he is at, knowing his different locations — and making sure that we have an eye on him at all times. They do a good job of complementing both the run and the pass, and we just have to make sure that we’re on top of both.”

On S Alohi Gilman’s performance last week:

“I thought that Alohi [Gilman] did a great job. He was physical. He did everything at the point of attack that we would have like to see him do, from the safety standpoint. When the ball did split, he was able to get it on the ground and minimize the gain. He showed command back there, and that’s what we expect from Alohi when he does come into the ball game.”

On last year’s Week 18 game against the Raiders:

“It’s kind of hard for some of our guys to realize it because we just have so many new guys a part of the defense. For those guys, they didn’t experience it the same way that the guys who have been here experienced it. We just want to treat it as such; a new year, a new opportunity. We’re a much better team than the team that we showed in Week 1. We just want to put that on display this week.”

On the defense’s performance in the fourth quarter last week:

“I just thought that we were a lot more comfortable. We had seen what they had done early in the ball game. Our guys showed urgency, but we need to show that at the beginning of the games. If we get that coming to the party this week, then we know that we will have a good product on the field. I just thought that guys were urgent. They knew that we had to get the ball back in those situations, and that is how you have to play throughout the whole game.”

On CB Michael Davis’ performance recently:

“Confidence. He’s confident in his play, he understands the scheme. He’s up for the challenge. We challenged him a lot this offseason and he responded big. I expect him to continue that throughout the year.”

On the ‘intensity level’ of practice this week:

“It’s always intense, being that it’s a divisional game. We know that we need to position ourselves for this playoff hunt. They’re our next opponent. We want to tackle it head-on. We know that we have a challenge with them and their run game, and having a big, star receiver on the outside lane. Our guys are up for the challenge. That’s the NFL, it’s a challenge every week, but we are looking forward to this opportunity here this week.”